

**Notes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at
County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday 29 January 2009**

Present

Mr. R. J. Denney (in the Chair), Mrs. V. Allen, Mrs. H. Brown, Mr. H. Eppel, Mrs. L. Forman, Mr. T. Kirby, Mr. J. Law, Mr. M. Parr, Mrs A Pyper, Mr. B. Sutton, Mr. S. J. Warren.

Officers in attendance

Mr. E. McWilliam, Mr. S. Weston and Mr. P. Williams.

Action by

277. Election of Chairman

It was proposed by Mrs. Forman and seconded by Mrs. Allen that Mr. Denney be elected Chairman of the Forum.

AGREED:

That Mr. R. Denney be elected Chairman of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum for 2009.

278. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

It was proposed by Mr. Denney and seconded by Mr. Warren that Mr. Sutton be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Forum.

AGREED:

That Mr. B. Sutton be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum for 2009.

279. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the first meeting of 2009. He also welcomed the following attendees to the meeting:

Sam Forster from the County Council's Stepping Stones project
John Kitching of the Trail Riders Fellowship
Mrs. Brown's husband

280. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were reported on behalf of:

Mrs. R. Camamile CC

Ms. A. Pyper
Mr. P. Tame

281. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2008 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

282. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

283. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

284. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

285. Donington Closure Update

Mr. McWilliam updated members in respect of the temporary closure of a right of way in Donington, an issue that Mr. Warren has raised several queries with the Highways Department on. It was reported that the way had now been re-opened.

He reported that procedures and processes in respect of temporary closures were now being reviewed. The Highways Department had passed on their apologies to Mr. Warren for not responding to him in a timely manner.

Discussions were ongoing between the Countryside Team, Legal Services and the Highways Department.

AGREED:

That an update on the progress made with the review be delivered to the Forum at its next meeting.

EM

286. Soar & Grand Union Consultation

Mr. Williams circulated a supplementary report on the emerging strategy for the Grand Union Canal. A copy of this report is filed with the minutes.

Members were disappointed by the short consultation period for the emerging proposals. Mr. Williams acknowledged that there were issues with the consultation period, but that the County Council had made robust comments on the proposals. In particular, comments had been made on the proposals' lack of reference to Green Infrastructure, which it was felt

should be seen as an important part of the strategy for the Canal. Mr. Williams closed by adding that a revised document would soon be issued, taking into account the comments made by the County Council and other bodies, and that the Forum would have the opportunity to make comments on the document.

AGREED:

That the Forum endorses the comments made on the proposals by the County Council and that it welcomes the opportunity to comment on a revised version in the future.

PW

287. Bardon Quarry Update

Mr. Denney reported on a site visit to the Quarry that had taken place prior to Christmas. It was reported that the site visit had been informative and that more public meetings on the proposals for the Quarry were being planned. A representative from Aggregate had offered to come to a meeting of the Forum to present in detail the proposals for the site.

A DVD provided by Aggregate showing a moving 3-D plan for the transformation of the site was showed to the Forum. Members would like to see high voltage power lines on the site placed under ground.

AGREED:

That a representative from Aggregates be invited to attend a meeting of the Forum, when the application is submitted.

EM

288. Wind Farm, Bottesford

Mrs. Allen reported on the following wind farms that were currently in the planning stages:

- Palmers Hollow, Bottesford
- Queniborough
- Swinford

At this stage, proposals were only preliminary and it was felt that as and when hardened proposals were published, the Forum should make robust comments.

AGREED:

That the Forum submit comments as and when formal proposals were published.

289. Member Recruitment

Mr. McWilliam reported that Mr. Poole in the Countryside Team was currently reviewing the job advert and application pack associated with the recruitment process for Forum members. In view of the statutory obligation to formally advertise for positions, it was felt that there was limited scope to simplify this process, though discussions with Legal Services were ongoing.

AGREED:

That there should be an update on member recruitment at the next meeting of the Forum.

AP

290. Annual Report

It was reported that articles had been submitted for the Forum's Annual Report, which was a statutory requirement for Local Access Forums.

The Chairman indicated that the submission of further articles was welcomed, though would need to be received as soon as possible in order to be included in the final document.

AGREED:

That the information be noted.

291. Correspondence

East Midlands Local Access Forum

Mr. McWilliam reported that this meeting would be taking place at County Hall on 9 February 2009 at 1pm. The Chairman and other members of the Forum had been asked to make suggestions for items.

Draft Side Road Orders for Trunk Road scheme – A453

The Forum was being consulted on these proposals and was being asked to submit comments by 30 April 2009. It was suggested that a meeting between officers and members of the forum who were aware of the issues be organised to discuss in detail how the Forum should comment.

292. Pennbury Update

Mr. Williams and Mr. Weston provided an update on the situation in regard to the Co-operative Group's proposals for an eco-town in Stoughton.

The County Council's Scrutiny Review Panel had published its Final Report, which had particularly brought into question the proposed location

of the eco-town and their proposals for employment. The Panel's Final Report would be going to the next Cabinet meeting on 10 February 2009 for approval.

Halcrow had also published its critique of the Co-op's proposals, on behalf of the four Local Authorities and this document was readily available to view online.

AGREED:

That the information be noted.

293. Subgroups

Members discussed the Forum's proposed formal responses to the Blaby, Charnwood and Hinckley and Bosworth Local Development Framework. A copy of each of these responses is filed with the minutes marked 'B', 'C' and 'D' respectively.

AGREED:

That a meeting be organised to discuss the latest LDF proposals for NWL.

EM

294. Quorum and Terms of Reference

It was AGREED that this matter need not be discussed, as it had already been covered under Minute 289.

295. East Midlands LAF

It was AGREED that this matter need not be discussed, as it had already been covered under Minute 291.

296. Open Forum

Parkway Train Station

Members discussed an expensive car park charge that had been introduced at the new station.

Park and Ride at Birstall and Enderby

Members discussed a lack of progress being made with the Birstall park and Ride. More advanced proposals for the Enderby site were now available and the diversion of the public footpath crossing the site was discussed.

Connect 2

Work had now commenced with the Connect2 scheme that had successfully secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund. Extra funding had been secured for work to complete the tarmac loop around King Lear's Lake at Watermead Country Park. Mr. McWilliam suggested that it might be worthwhile for a site visit to be organised to the Park for Forum members.

EM

Natural England Awards Event

Mr. McWilliam reported that an invite had been extended to all LAF chairs to attend a Natural England Awards Event.

297. Agenda items for the next meeting

It was NOTED that the following items be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Forum:

- Representative of Aggregate to speak on the Bardon Quarry proposals;
- Sharon Jefferies to speak on Green Infrastructure.

It was NOTED that Andy Jackson of the Stepping Stones project would be invited to attend the following meeting of the Forum on Wednesday 27 May 2009.

298. Date of next meeting

NOTED:

That the next meeting would take place on Tuesday 31 March 2009 at 6pm in the Guthlaxton Committee Room at County Hall, Glenfield.

6.00pm - 8.00pm
21 January 2009