

**Notes of a meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum held at
County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday 25 November 2008.**

Present

Mr. R. J. Denney (in the Chair), Mrs. V. Allen, Mrs. H. Brown, Mrs. R. Camamile CC, 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

260. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

261. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

262. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 August were agreed as an accurate record.

The notes of the inquorate meeting held on 2 October were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

That Minute 243 be amended to read as follows:

'There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda. Mr. Tame subsequently declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the matter discussed at minute 254 below as the Co-operative Society had a majority membership on the NFU.

263. Matters arising from the minutes

Meeting held on 12 August 2008

(i) Minute 220: Matters arising from the minutes

Mr. McWilliam reported that the footpath in Donington had now been re-opened, though an application for the same diversion would likely be submitted again next year. Mr. Warren reported that he had still yet to receive a formal response to the letter he had sent to the County Council's Highways, Transportation and Waste Management

SW

Department. Mr. Warren was asked to supply Mr. McWilliam with the date and reference number of the letter in order that he could enquire with the Department as to why he had not been sent a formal response.

(ii) Minute 232: Ditches

Mr. McWilliam informed members that a representative from the Highways, Transportation and Waste Management Department would be invited to Forum meetings as and when there were specific issues that required their attendance.

Inquorate meeting held on 2 October 2008

(iii) Minute 242: Matters arising from the minutes

There had still been no offers to produce articles for the newsletter. It was hoped that members would volunteer to produce articles for their specific areas of interest/expertise.

ALL

264. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

265. Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

266. Developing Green Infrastructure

Mr. Williams delivered a short presentation on Green Infrastructure (GI). A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the subsequent discussion, the following points were noted:

- It would be important for the Forum to submit comments on the River Soar & Grand Union Canal Emerging Strategy;
- Partnership working with Leicester City Council was ongoing in respect of flooding issues and Strategic River Corridors;
- Access issues would be a important consideration in view of the ongoing GI work.

AGREED:

That the presentation be noted.

267. Eco-Town, Stoughton

Mr. Kirby informed members that he had recently attended a workshop on the Pennbury Eco-Town being proposed for Stoughton.

Mr. Williams updated members of the following in respect of this issue:

- The Draft Planning Policy Statement for Eco-Towns had recently been published by the Department for Communities and Local Government;
- A financial appraisal had been delayed;
- The County Council's Scrutiny Review Panel would continue to meet, with a view to publishing its Final Report in the New Year;
- The Co-operative Group would continue to be holding workshops.

AGREED:

That Mr. Kirby attend future workshop events on behalf of the Forum.

TK

268. Rights of Way and Community Involvement

Mr. McWilliam delivered a presentation on working with communities and volunteers. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

The following points were noted arising from the presentation:

- There was some concern that the Definitive Maps that were being circulated to Parish Councils would not be fully understood by members of the public as they did not include permissive routes;
- The efforts to engage members of the public and encourage physical exercise was commended, however more work was required in this area.

AGREED:

That an item be added to the County Council's next annual meeting with Parish Councils on engaging communities via ROW.

269. Correspondence

- (i) A14 trunk road – Mr. McWilliam had been contacted by Suffolk LAF regarding crossing difficulties. There were currently no safe crossing points. As the road was the responsibility of the Highways Agency, it was stressed that Suffolk LAF would need to liaise with them direct.

- (ii) LAF funding – Neil Lewis at the National Access Forum had informed Mr. McWilliam that the NAF was providing some funds for LAFs. Regional LAF Chairs would be discussing how they would like the money to be spent in the coming months.

AGREED:

That Mr. McWilliam liaise with Mr. Lewis further and that an update be provided to the Forum as and when appropriate.

270. Guide to Definitive Maps and Changes to Public Rights Of Way

Mr. McWilliam guided members through the 'Guide to Definitive Maps and Changes to Public Rights Of Way' document, which had been circulated by Natural England. A copy of the document, marked 'C', is filed with these minutes.

AGREED:

That the information be noted.

271. LAF Membership

Mr. McWilliam reported that, due to the resignation of several members, the LAF membership was now at 14 out of a possible 22 members. Recent attendance issues had resulted in the inquoracy of the LAF on two occasions this year.

As the membership was now quite low, Mr. McWilliam reported that the County Council would be advertising for new members over the coming months.

In respect of its Terms of Reference, the Forum had elected at its meeting on 18 August 2003 to adopt Defra's Local Access Forum Regulations. The quorum was prescribed in that document as follows:

"5.2 The meetings shall be deemed to be quorate when 9 members are present."

The Regulations were revised in 2007 and the Forum agreed at its meeting on 22 March 2007 to adopt those changes within its Terms of Reference. No changes were made to the quorum in the revision.

It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Mr. Sutton "That the meeting shall be deemed to be quorate when 9 members or half the membership at that time, whichever is smaller, are present."

The motion was put and carried with a unanimous vote.

AGREED:

That the quorum of the Forum be amended to read as follows:

“5.2 The meeting shall be deemed to be quorate when 9 members or half the membership at that time, whichever is smaller, are present.”

272. Sub Groups and Working Parties

Barrow LTP

The Sub Group had met and discussed some ideas. The Sub Group had discussed the possibility of looking in detail at the local footpath area

Bardon Quarry

A response to the Bardon Quarry consultation had been sent. The Chairman thanked Mr. Poole for his hard work in tying this information together.

Verges

Mr. Williams had still not received a response from Mike Sheldrake about sending a representative to this Sub Group.

AGREED:

That Mr. Williams follow the matter up with Mr. Sheldrake in the New Year.

PW

LDFs

Blaby District Council has sent a copy of their LDF to the County Council as part of their consultation exercise. LDFs from the remaining districts and boroughs would also be sent to the County Council soon. It would be important for the Forum to look at the LDFs in detail, particularly in respect of access issues.

AGREED:

(a) That a meeting of the Planning Sub group be convened specifically for discussion of LDFs. All Forum members;

SW/EM

(b) That Mr. McWilliam formulate a generic template for responses in order that issues related to the specific LDFs could be incorporated.

EM

273. Path Proposals

Mr. McWilliam reported that the Countryside Section of the County

Council was currently looking at sites in the County with a view to allowing increased access. Bosworth Park was one specific site which was highlighted, as it did not have a designated access route.

274. Open Forum

There were no matters for discussion.

275. Agenda items for the next meeting

There were no items.

276. Date of next meeting

NOTED:

That the next meeting would take place on Thursday 29 January 2009 at 6pm in the Guthlaxton Committee Room at County Hall, Glenfield.

6.00pm - 8.30pm
25 November 2008