

LEEDS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

9TH MARCH 2005

PRESENT: Mr M Willison in the Chair
Councillor C Fox, Councillor R Harington,
Mr F Hirst, Mrs Lawson, and Mr P Maude

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Welbourn - Service Development Manager
- Department of Learning and Leisure
Mr R Brookes - Public Rights of Way,
Senior Development Officer
- Department of Learning and Leisure
Mr J Grieve - Constitution & Corporate Governance
Unit
Legal and Democratic Services

21 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Coulson, Mr Dyer, Mrs Goodhall, Mr Hepworth, Mrs Metcalf, Ms J Smyth and P Bowers

22 OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the March meeting of the Leeds Local Access Forum and welcomed Councillor Fox to his first meeting of the Forum

23 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th November 2005 were accepted as a true and correct record

24 Matters Arising

News Letter and Consultation Papers from DEFRA (Minute No.16 refers)
The Chair requested to know if there had been any progress in applying for funds through the Access Management Grant Scheme. In responding officers reported that it was unlikely that any application would be submitted until the extent of the proposed open access land was confirmed by the Countryside Agency in November 2005

25 LEEDS RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN- FEEDBACK ON THE DRAFT QUESTIONNAIRE FOLLOWING THE PILOT SURVEY

Roger Brookes gave an update on the Leeds Rights of Way Improvement Plan – feedback on the draft questionnaire following the pilot survey. It was reported that the pilot survey had now been completed with many responses been received. The questionnaire had been subsequently amended in view of the comments received and was

now much improved. A copy of the revised questionnaire had been circulated to Forum Members for further consideration.

In passing comment on the questionnaire Members suggested a number of minor changes to the document. Mr Brookes confirmed that the requested amendments would be incorporated prior to the questionnaire being released.

In relation to how the survey would be conducted Mr Brookes said that the questionnaire would be circulated to the Citizen's Panel (1000 members providing a statistical sample) in addition known user groups and Parish Councils would also be consulted. Some advertising would be undertaken through the local press but this would be limited.

RESOLVED – That following the incorporation of the suggested amendments to the draft survey, the document be re-circulated to Forum Members for information

26 UPDATE ON THE PREPARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In providing an update on the preparation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan Mr Brookes said that the priority was to complete the Leeds Rights of Way – User Survey June/July 2005. It was further reported that Officers from the Rights of Way Section had recently attended a Seminar in Doncaster to obtain the Regional position, currently the timescale is on schedule.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted

27 UPDATE ON THE LATEST NEWS ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF ACCESS UNDER THE COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

The Forum received information from DEFRA providing an update on the right of access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

Commenting upon Section 35 Model Agreement (a mechanism to obtain agreement with a landowner to gain access to new access land) Mr Brookes said that the model agreement was a useful tool for officers if required.

RESOLVED – That the information from DEFRA be noted

28 DRAFT STATEMENT FOR THE WEST YORKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

An extract from the Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Progress Report was circulated to Forum Members for information. The report extract suggested how Local Authorities should contribute to Local Transport Policy Strategies by identifying any rights of way improvements or proposals than link to the delivery of transport objectives and shared priorities for transport. The report also suggested that prioritising rights of way improvements should be encouraged.

Commenting on the draft statement Members suggested some minor amendments. Mr Brookes said he would need to get the agreement of his colleagues in the other West Yorkshire local authorities to the suggested amendments.

RESOLVED - That the suggested amendments be referred to the other local authorities in West Yorkshire for agreement, and that any modified document be re-circulated to Forum Members.

29 ANNUAL REPORT – BUDGET INFORMATION

Forum Members received a report providing an overview of the budget for the Public Rights of Way Section. The report gave details of the income and expenditure and identified a number of capital works that had been undertaken

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted

30 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the following items be prepared for the next meeting of the Forum:

- (i) Membership of Forum
- (ii) Election of Chair/Vice Chair
- (iii) Update on the preparation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- (iv) Update on the Questionnaire Survey
- (v) Open Access
- (vi) Update on the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan
- (vii) Kirkstall Valley Development – Presentation by Officers from the Development Department

31 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the next meeting be scheduled for Tuesday 21st June 2005 at 6.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds

