

Leeds Local Access Forum

Tuesday, 14th September, 2010

PRESENT: Dr M Willison in the Chair

Mr P Maude, Mr S Wood, Mr J Pearlman,
Councillor C Fox and Councillor
J Illingworth

In Attendance:

Mr R Buckenham – Assistant Countryside Access Manager
Mr R Brookes – Parks and Countryside
Mr B Brady – Neighbourhoods & Housing
Mr K Bell – Legal Service
Mr J Grieve – Governance Service

18 CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance.

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received for Linda Boadle

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Illingworth declared a personal interest on any issues associated with Kirkstall Valley Country Park, Councillor Illingworth being a Director and Company Secretary of that Organisation

21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13th July 2010 were submitted for approval

Mr J Pearlman highlighted a number of minor corrections

RESOLVED – That subject to the inclusion of the minor corrections, as identified, the minutes be accepted as a true and correct record

22 MATTERS ARISING

- (a) Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Leeds Local Access Forum (Min No. 1 refers) – At the last meeting Dr Mike Willison was appointed Chair of the Leeds Local Access Forum, the position of Vice Chair being determined at the following meeting.

The Chair now sought nominations for the position of Vice Chair.

Mr S Wood nominated Mr J Pearlman, Mr P Maude seconded the nomination

RESOLVED – That Mr Jerry Pearlman be elected Vice Chair of the Leeds Local Access Forum for a one year period

- (b) Chair's Opening Remarks (Minute No.2 refers) – It was reported at the last meeting that the Clerk to the Forum, Miss Laura Pilgrim (Governance Services) had left the employ of the Council to take up residency in New Zealand.

The Chair reported that Governance Services had since given notice that they would no longer be available to service future meetings of LLAFF and had written to the Director of Development requesting that alternative arrangements be put in place.

In passing comment, the Chair said it was not so much whether or not alternative arrangements had been made regarding secretarial support for the LLAFF, but rather the funding for running it.

Councillors Illingworth and Fox offered to investigate the matter further and report back to the next meeting

RESOLVED – That Councillors Illingworth and Fox be requested, on behalf of the Forum, to investigate the mechanism as to how LLAFF obtains funding and to seek an indication as to how much is owed to the LLAFF budget

- (c) Local Transport Plan and ROWIP Integration: Good Practice Note (Minute 6 (ii) refers) – It was reported that on two separate occasions representatives from the Transport Section had been requested to attend and provide a presentation to the LLAFF.

The Assistant Countryside Access Manager explained that no one was available for tonight's meeting but reported that assurances had been given that a representative would be in attendance at the next meeting

RESOLVED – That the item be deferred to the next meeting

- (d) Review of the England Access Forum (Minute No.12 refers) – It was agreed at the last meeting of the Forum that a representative from Natural England be invited to the next meeting of the Forum

The Clerk to the Forum reported that a request for a representative from Natural England to attend the meeting had been made but due to other commitments, no one was available to attend

RESOLVED – That the item be deferred to the next meeting when a representative from Natural England would be in attendance

23 GATING ORDER - ST JAMES'S MEWS, ARMLEY, LEEDS 12

The Chief Highways Officer submitted a report seeking authority to temporary close an adopted highway. The highway in question is described as a narrow footpath at the end of St James' Mews between 21 and 28 St James' Mews, Armley Leeds 12.

Addressing the report Mr B Brady, Community Safety Officer, Neighbourhoods and Housing Department said that the path had been the focus for anti-social behaviour and crime following the completion of a new housing development which takes in the St Marys' estate. Concerns from local residents had been raised with the Police, Elected Members and Council Officers on many occasions.

It was considered by local residents that the path offers a quick escape route for offenders. Restricting access to the path would make policing of the estate easier.

It was reported that a planning application to gate the footpath was granted in April 2010.

In the discussion that followed it was the opinion of Members that alternative measures be tried prior to proceeding with the gating of the footpath. Members suggested additional street lighting, look at the gate design with a view to designing out crime and gathering more information on the use of the footpath. If concerns continued to be received the issue of gating could be looked at again.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the proposal to gate the footpath crossing St James' Mews, Armley , Leeds 12 be not supported at this time.
- (ii) That Street Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be circulated to all LLA Members

24 GATING ORDER - BACK HOVINGHAMS/ DORSETS & SANDHURST AVENUE, LEEDS 8

The Chief Highways Officer submitted a report seeking authority to temporary close the highways due to the high level of crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. The highways in question cover Back Hovinghams/ Dorsets and Sandhurst Avenue, Leeds 8

Addressing the report Mr B Brady, Community Safety Officer, Neighbourhoods and Housing Department said that the path had been the focus for anti-social behaviour and crime for many years. Concerns from local residents had been raised with the Police, Elected Members and Council Officers on many occasions.

All residents and owners of property in the area were contacted as part of the consultation process, the majority of respondents were in agreement that gating the proposed highways would improve their quality of life and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

It was reported that a planning application to gate the highway was granted in September 2010.

In the discussion that followed it was the general opinion of Members that the proposals be supported

RESOLVED – That the proposal to temporary close the highways at Back Hovinghams/ Dorsets and Sandhurst Avenue, Leeds 8 be supported

25 AN INVITATION TO SHAPE THE NATURE OF ENGLAND - DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

Members received and considered a discussion document prepared by defra “An Invitation to Shape the Nature of England”. The purpose of the document was to kick-start the debate as to how to contribute, protect and enhance the natural environment.

It was reported that the deadline for responding to the document was 30th October 2010.

In the discussion that ensued Members raised the following issues:

- The document did not refer to “Access”
- There was a worrying trend that landowners were reluctant to allow access to their land because of possible insurance claims following an incident on their land
- Concern that the document provided little information
- Once a beauty spot becomes popular, there becomes a need to establish proper paths and car parking facilities, unmade areas being given over to hard-standing
- The RoW network is the cheapest health resource; it should be protected as a whole and protected from development
- Access including coastal access should be protected
- In Scotland, access under the Land Reform Act is much more widespread than access in England and Wales under CRoW Act 2000
- A need to prevent the degradation of the natural environment
- White Paper on the Right to Roam

RESOLVED – That the comments made by Members be forwarded onto Defra

26 ST AIDAN'S COUNTRY PARK – UPDATE

With reference to Minute No. 14 of the previous meeting and the discussion around the St Aidan's Country Park. The Assistant Countryside Access Manager provide an update of events since the last meeting:

Mr Buckenham reported that UK Coal had applied for a new rights of way network but some outstanding issues remain associated with access and egress. Discussion ongoing with the RSPB about the signage for the site. It was further reported that UK

Coal had applied to extinguish part of Astley Lane (150 metre section) and to create a bridleway.

The Final Plan for the Country Park Site was now available, it was anticipated that the Park will open Spring 2011

Referring to other projects within the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Mr Buckenham provide the following information:

Riversider Paths – Many projects identified but the schemes require further negotiations with landowners

Meanwood Valley Trail – Footpath Link – Possibility that the scheme may be delivered this year but new footpath required

Manston – Wetherby Disused Railway – Public ROW officers consulted on an outline Planning Application for the site but further progress unlikely until a scheme to redevelop the old Vickers Tank Site was submitted

Skelton Lake and Footbridge – An alternative location for the provision of a footbridge was currently being investigated

A647 Leeds – Bradford Road Pegasus Crossing (for Pudsey Link Bridleway) – The Chief Highways Officer had recently informed Public ROW Officers that this scheme was not being pursued

RESOLVED – That the update provided by the Assistant Countryside Access Manager be noted

27 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) Yorkshire & The Humber Regional Access Forum – The Chair provided feedback on a recent meeting of the Yorkshire & Humberside Regional Access Forum, held at the Town Hall, Wakefield. Forum Member Jerry Pearlman also attended the meeting as a representative of the Yorkshire Dales LAF.

In offering comment Mr Pearlman said that many interesting points were raised at the meeting;

Referring to the Stepping Forward Report, and the issue of “missing paths”, Mr Pearlman suggested that it was very unlikely that further works would be carried out from now until the cut off date of 2026, although there was discussion that the date may be extended. He further suggested that examination of the records submitted by parishes to surveying authorities in 1949 may be a useful starting point for those claims not taken forward at that time.

The Chair referred to the Local Transport Plan (LTP3) and announced that a 10 week Pre- Consultation on the full Strategy and outline Implementation Plan for WYLTP3 would shortly be taking place.

The Chair said he would be representing the Regional Access Forum at a meeting on 4th October 2010, the venue for the event was Metro's offices, Wellington House, 40-50 Wellington Street, Leeds, LS1 2DE. An invitation to attend was also extended to all Forum Members

- (b) Dunkirk Hill, Armley Leeds 12 – Councillor Illingworth highlighted the need to establish a footpath link over Dunkirk Hill, Armley. It was reported that planning officers wished to pursue the establishment of the path but a mechanism was required in order to progress the matter

28 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the next meeting of the Leeds Local Access Forum be arranged for Tuesday 23rd November 2010 at 6.30pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds