

LEEDS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Terms of Reference

Title

The Forum shall be known as the **Leeds Local Access Forum** and will cover the whole of the Metropolitan District of Leeds

Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Leeds Local Access Forum shall be a function under the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and associated regulations. Principally to act as a statutory advisor to the City Council on the improvement of public access to land for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area.
2. The Forum shall provide advice to the City Council and the Countryside Agency on all relevant countryside access issues, in ways that address social, economic and environmental interests, bearing in mind the needs of land management, conservation and all other varying interests.
3. The Forum shall consider and provide advice on issues regarding the statutory right of access to the countryside and improvements to the rights of way network.
4. The Forum shall be aware of, and responsive to, any national and local guidance and "good practice" issues.
5. The Forum shall work to develop a constructive and inclusive approach to recreational access to the countryside.
6. The Forum shall seek to reach consensus wherever possible regarding their advice, where this is not possible, the differing views shall be made known.

Membership

7. The Leeds Local Access Forum shall consist of 10 Members.
8. Two Members of the Forum shall be nominated by Leeds City Council and may be elected Members of Leeds City Council.
9. Eight members of the Forum shall represent either:
 - a. Users of the rights of way network and rights of access to open country;
 - b. Owners or occupiers of land over which rights of way pass or access land;
 - c. Any other interests relevant to the work of the Forum;and provide a balanced representation of a and b above.
10. Members not experienced in the topics at paragraph 9a or 9b, or aligned with any particular interest group, but having a specific interest relevant to Leeds may be appointed.

11. Members of the Forum will be appointed by Leeds City Council using the "Member Specification" and current selection and appointment procedures. The selection panel shall consist of the Executive Member for Lifelong Learning and Leisure (or their nominee), the Director of Learning and Leisure (or their nominee), and the Human Resources Manager of Learning and Leisure.
12. Members of the Forum shall serve for a period of one, two or three years, based on their individual preferences. A Member replacing another member who has retired or otherwise vacated membership, may also choose their period of appointment between one to three years.
13. The Chair and Vice-chair of the Forum shall be elected by the Forum Members at their first, and as necessary any subsequent, meetings, so as to provide a balance of interests.
14. The Chair and Vice-chair will hold office for a period determined by the Forum of not less than one year or more than three years as may be determined by the Forum at its first meeting.
15. The Chair may suspend any meeting if in his/her opinion the meeting does not accord with paragraph nine above, or if the meeting falls below a quorum of one third of members currently appointed.
16. Any member who does not attend for three consecutive meetings may be removed from the Forum by the Forum or Leeds City Council.

Administration

17. Meetings will be held at least twice a year and more frequently when necessary.
18. An Officer of Leeds City Council shall provide secretarial support to the Forum by:
 - a. Distribution of papers.
 - b. Arranging and publicising meetings.
 - c. Liaison between the Forum Members, City Council and the Countryside Agency.
19. Meeting agendas will be agreed between the Chairman and the Secretary and distributed ten days before any proposed meeting (except in the case of an emergency). Members may suggest items for inclusion on agendas, all papers for inclusion on an agenda will be submitted to the Secretary three weeks before any proposed meeting (except in the case of an emergency).
20. Meetings will be advertised in advance and held in public. Except with the permission of the Chair, they shall not be recorded or broadcast.
21. Agendas, papers and minutes of the meeting will be available to the public.
22. The Forum may invite observers to the meeting when appropriate. Leeds City Council and the Countryside Agency shall be entitled to send observers to any meetings who may contribute to the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

23. Members of the public may ask questions on the business of the meeting at the discretion of the Chairman at the start or end of any meeting.
24. The Forum may decide to set up such committees, sub-committees and working parties as it considers necessary and they will be subject to the same rules (altered as necessary for the circumstances) as the Forum.
25. The Forum shall prepare an annual report that shall be available to the public.
26. Members of the Forum are entitled to claim reasonable expenses (relating to travel and subsistence costs and the cost of arranging care of their children or dependants) incurred by them in connection with attending meetings of the Forum.