

Tees Valley Local Access Forum

Minutes

8th December 2015, 4:00-5:30pm
Summerhill, Hartlepool

Present: Robin Daniels (Chair), Rob Brown (Vice Chair), Yvonne Ramage, Mike Roff, Chris Scaife, Rob Morrow, Malcolm Thompson, Beryl Bird, Stewart Williams, Rob Morrow.

Apologies: Fiona Campbell, Judith Underwood, Graham Clingan, Councillor Rooney, Councillor Rose, Councillor Clark, David Reed, Mike Cherrett, Christine Corbett, Deborah Jefferson.

1. Introductions and Welcome

Robin (RD) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies – as above.

3. Ratification of meeting held 8th September 2015

All agreed the Minutes of the meeting were correct.

4. Matters arising

4.1 CS has studied the documentation supplied by Defra and is in contact with IPROW and ADEPT to establish the legal construction of Dog Control Orders for HBC. RD thought the Regional group were interested in supporting this initiative.

4.2 Network Rail has addressed the last regional meeting and they have been asked to take part in the National Conference in spring 2016.

4.3 Jeremy Garside of the TVLNP had replied describing an impasse in funding between the partner authorities. As soon as the position improves, he will let the TVLAF know.

4.4 Anne Louise Orange of RTR has returned from sick leave and is pencilled in for the March AGM.

4.5 CS reported that Tata Steel hope the redundant rail bridge (on the Teesdale Way) will be repaired by March 2016.

5. Friends Group AGM

5.1 RD described the present position of the Friends of TVLAF and recommended a new way forward; to meet to move a project forward instead of meeting to search for projects. All present with the exception of YR, were existing members of FoG and YR had expressed an interest in joining the group.

5.2 The Working Practice proposal circulated in advance of the meeting, for an Executive Group of Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and one other member would meet to take projects further and call a full meeting of the membership when required. No changes need to be made to the existing Constitution in order to agree this. Following some discussion about what support for a bid could be available, it was agreed to support the Proposal.

5.3 RD nominated Deborah Jefferson as Chair, seconded by RB.

RM nominated Beryl Bird as Secretary, seconded by SW.

RD nominated Chris Scaife as Treasurer, seconded by MT.

5.4 BB and CS outlined the background and detail for the recent Sita bid to improve the access to North Gare on a permissive byway. At the time of writing, the bid remains in the running.

6. Chairman's Report and Regional Roundup

6.1 RD described the renewed interest by Northumberland JLAF in the Regional Access Priorities project, and the presentation by Network Rail to the Regional Group.

6.2 The Three Rivers LNP have merged with the Northumberland LNP, the geographical area mirrors the new combined authority in the north east.

6.3 Jim Milner is now Lead Advisor for Coastal Access, and at least in the short term remains our Regional LAF contact. He intends to contact Redcar and Cleveland to encourage attendance at the Regional meetings.

7. Members Activities

7.1 Co-ordinate LAF Activity – Natural England have let all members know that huddle usage will continue and have taken on board all recommendations as to improving the system. The Development Officer quarterly activities had been circulated; the Action Plan is with RoW Officers for revision.

7.2 Coastal Access – CS described the proposed detail of the future section of the England Coast path from North Gare to the Transporter Bridge. Those private and public companies contacted have varied in their initial responses, but the co-ordinating team set up by Natural England are confident of submitting a final report to the SoS in the spring of 2016, with all proposals agreed with all partners.

RSPB Saltholme are considering whether to allow dogs along the section of path that would run alongside the East Lagoon and would be stock-proofed fenced. The SBC and HBC hope to future proof the path when under construction concentrating on boardwalk, bridges and future cycling provision when funding is available. The access path was described as employment friendly - with the path running alongside the Tees Road/A178.

SW outlined the report awaiting SoS approval between Newport Bridge and Filey, which he hoped would be available before the year end.

7.3 RoWIP Review – the Defra Guidance available for Local Authorities to prepare RoWIPs initially remains current. HBC will be the first to review in 2016 and SBC and DBC will both be preparing for a re-launch in 2018. MBC will be reviewed in 2024. MR believed that any revision should be simple changes, errors and omissions, CS agreed - any revisions would reflect changing ambitions and be a smaller undertaking.

7.4 The northern National Conference is planned for Leeds on March 1st, two members are invited to attend from each Forum, and if anyone would like to address a Workshop, would you please get in touch with either RD or BB.

7.7 The Chancellor had not supported the Cycling Strategy as expected and the members moved the discussion on to the CTC editorial supplied by YR. After some debate, it appears that the editorial is misleading with legal permission required for cyclists to use a bridleway – the status cannot be changed as of right.

7.11 A full day meeting is scheduled for 17th December 2015 for the partners of Limestone Landscapes, with a final report due to be published shortly.

7.12 The Bright Water successful HLF bid update had been circulated by MT. It was expected to recruit in the spring. The bid had to be altered to reduce the amount available to fund access.

Action: RD asked BB to draft a letter to the HLF HQ drawing attention to the perceived poor status of access in regard to Lottery funding.

7.14 AA Planning - RM and CS brought the meeting up-to-date with the planned and proposed developments at Wynyard, all will have dedicated pedestrian and cycle routes incorporated into the designs with traffic management on each roundabout allowing safe access across the A689 and a footbridge across the dual carriageway.

7.15 The Access Officers will devise a programme for the training they are able to deliver and in what format at the AGM in March 2016.

Action: RoW Officers to agree subjects, delivery and availability.

8. Rights of Way Officers Reports

8.1 No written report from Middlesbrough. SW hopes to double to RoW available in Middlesbrough by adding 40km of unrecorded public RoW to the Definitive Map as well as 10km on private land recorded as access routes. SW's department is currently undertaking an internal review of the services provided; he will update the Forum as to the outcome.

Action: RD will contact MBC reminding them of their legal responsibilities should SW deem it necessary.

8.2 MT described a funding being made available via Groundwork from Cummins which has led to the planned installation of 20 new gates on locations across the Borough. The recent heavy rain appears to have led to river bank erosion at Hurworth.

8.3 RM described a recent project on the Riverside of the installation of 25 lighting columns, which has enhanced an already lovely area. The trenching to install the electric supply had been sunk to lower levels to try and avoid cable theft.

8.4 CS described two recent diversions and one closure as part of the Limestone Landscapes project at Elwick, taking walkers off the road which had recently been completed with no objections.

Please see papers already circulated.

9. Issues raised

The CTC editorial was again discussed and all agreed it was misleading.

10. AOB

None reported.

11. Date of next meeting

8th March 2016 at Middlesbrough, 4:00pm - 5:30pm. This meeting is the AGM.

Meeting closed at 5:30pm