

MINUTES of a meeting of the **DERBY AND DERBYSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM** held in Room G, Derby City Council, Corporation Street, Derby on **Friday 20 March 2015**.

PRESENT

Chris Allen, David Blackburn, Councillor Mike Carr, Geof Cole, Richard Curzon, Councillor Rob Davison, John Disney, Ian Else, Marilyn Hambly, Lyndsay Jones and Brian Nicholls.

County Council Officers:

Gill Millward (Countryside Access Improvement Officer) and Richard Bonner (Assistant Head of Countryside Service).

City Council Officers:

Ray Brown (Senior Planning Officer, Neighbourhoods Directorate).

1/15	<p><u>Membership and Recruitment</u> The Chair welcomed Brian Nicholls to his first meeting as a LAF member.</p> <p>Discussions were on-going with regard to the appointment of the other two candidates interviewed after the last meeting. Forum Members' preference was for new members to be Derbyshire residents and for the interest group not to be duplicated. A place for a student from Derby University or Derby College would be pursued and hopefully appointed to in the Autumn.</p> <p>It was reported that recruitment of members would now be a continuous process and remain on the County Council's website. It was also hoped that this information could be forwarded to all County and City volunteers. Members were also encouraged to inform their own interest groups.</p>	GM/RB
2/15	<p><u>Appointment of Sub Groups</u> It was agreed that this matter be considered further once new members had been appointed. Brian Nicholls stated that he would think about the sub group(s) he might wish to join.</p> <p>The Lost Ways Sub Group would be moved into the active groups and the HS2 Sub Group into Mothballed groups.</p>	BN LAF Secretary
3/15	<p><u>Minutes</u> It was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2014 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.</p>	
4/15	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes</u> (a) <u>Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Derby City Council – Service Update (Minute 72/14(b)</u> It was noted that Lyndsay</p>	

	<p>Jones had formulated a response to the City Council's budget consultation and this had been submitted before the closing date.</p> <p><u>(b) Exploring Targets and Alternative Funding Sources for the LAF</u> It was noted that Harriet Fisher, Derbyshire County Council and an officer from Derby City Council would be happy to attend a DADLAF meeting to discuss the Section 106 process.</p> <p><u>(c) Engaging with Local Nature Partnerships and Local Enterprise Partnerships</u> It was agreed that Rosy Carter (Lowland Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire LNP Co-ordinator) be invited to attend the September 2015 meeting instead of the June 2015 meeting.</p>	<p>GM/RB</p> <p>LAF Secretary</p>
5/15	<p><u>Update on Funding for Rights of Way and Countryside Service for 2015/16</u></p> <p><u>(a) Derby City Council</u> Ray Brown reported that for the financial year 2015/16 the City Council would continue to support his post and provide funding to support the LAF. Beyond March 2016 no indication could be given on the level of funding. If the City Council withdrew its support for the LAF it would have to undertake a statutory procedure. The City Council would be continuing the walks and activities programme for 2015 however this would be promoted through the City Council's website and no booklet would be produced. Any new circular walks would also be promoted through the website. Individuals and groups on the walks and activities mailing lists have been advised that future information would be on the website and tourist information service would alert the public to this.</p> <p><u>(b) Derbyshire County Council</u> Richard Bonner reported that the County Council had to make cuts of £157m and was in the process of identifying budget cuts for 2015-2018. The Countryside Service was required to identify £1m of cuts to the core revenue budget, which was currently £2.8m (excluding grounds maintenance). A review of the management structure with a possible saving of £120,000, was currently at staff consultation level. Savings of £0.5m have been identified, however it was likely that there would be significant staff reductions. The County Council property review would identify properties that were no longer required and the asset sold. Capital projects funding continued to be fairly generous for public rights of way and Greenways. Work would continue to generate more income from catering franchises, leasing land, partnership working and sponsorship. Officers would look to the LAF for its opinions on any proposals concerning Rights of Way, and also land management and income generation.</p> <p>Richard Curzon suggested that Elvaston Castle and Allestree Hall might prosper better in private ownership. However Councillor Davison stated that the County Council had made a commitment to the residents of Derbyshire that Elvaston would not be sold.</p>	

	<p>Councillor Carr stated that Allestree Hall was a listed building and the City Council had been unable to sell the property.</p> <p>David Blackburn asked if public access sites would continue to be maintained by the County Council or would consortiums be considered. Richard Bonner stated that all options would be considered and if any sites were disposed of, the Council would look to protecting existing routes and permissive routes.</p> <p>A Combined Authority was a formal, legal step to allow the councils in Derbyshire to act as one authority in the best interests of the County in the areas of economic regeneration and transport. There were many moves to seek devolved regional powers and control of budgets. Nottinghamshire County Council and the Districts in Nottinghamshire were also considering a combined authority and currently was a part of the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) Local Economic Partnership.</p>	
6/15	<p><u>Role of the LAF and assistance for officers</u></p> <p>Ray Brown felt that the LAF had a low profile in the City and members should consider what issues were of importance, these could include health – getting people out and active.</p> <p>A DADLAF seminar to promote the strengths of the LAF and boost its profile could be a way forward to understand the issues of importance to residents.</p> <p>Chris Allen felt that it would be beneficial for members attending events to have a quick and easy descriptive sentence about the LAF and what it does – a strap line.</p> <p>The RoWIPs were massive achievements for the LAF. As a tool to indicate and argue for grant bids they have secured additional access and funding.</p> <p>The LAF needs to consider how it can engage with the public and raise awareness through posters, banners and the use of new technology.</p>	
	<p>Officers withdrew from the meeting to allow members to discuss the next item</p>	
7/15	<p><u>Future Direction of the LAF</u></p> <p>Geof Cole facilitated this session.</p> <p>The issues considered as projects included the RoWIP, Lost Ways, Better Access, more information in the public domain, links into public health budget, and use of volunteers.</p>	
8/15	<p><u>Way Forward for the LAF – Debate</u></p> <p>Gill Millward stated that the health agenda was crucial and has</p>	

	<p>been flagged up by the Peak District LAF (PDLAF) as an area to explore in terms of the types of funding which were available and which areas could be tapped into for LAF projects. It was felt that joint meetings with the PDLAF could be productive in the areas of health, Lost Ways and Pedal Peak. Concern was expressed that DADLAF issues might be overlooked by the PDLAF. It was therefore suggested that a Sub Group from each LAF could be formed for any joint working. It was agreed that the content of any future presentations about public health should be LAF directed and the officer briefed accordingly.</p> <p>Work on the RoWIPs beyond 2017 would also require the input by LAF members to forge them forward.</p> <p>Networking – members promoting the LAF through their own interest groups and gathering opinions on a possible way forward. Views on accessibility could be gathered by inviting 3 or 4 groups to an informal meeting to discuss their aspirations.</p> <p>Members were asked to consider 1 or 2 topics they felt the LAF should focus on.</p> <p>A meeting with the PDLAF would be progressed to discuss Pedal Peak. Chris Allen, John Disney and Lyndsay Jones agreed to be part of this group.</p> <p>The appointment of an Access for Mobility Sub Group would be considered at the June 2015 meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Davison suggested that Parish Councils should be involved in identification of Lost Ways and accessible routes. Volunteers could be encouraged to research these paths in their Parishes. Derbyshire Association for Local Councils should be able to provide contacts for the Parish Councils.</p>	<p>GM</p> <p>LAF Secretary</p>
<p>9/15</p>	<p><u>Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Derby City Council - Update</u></p> <p>Ray Brown reported that Derby City Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan had been adopted in October 2014. A full update report would be prepared for the June 2015 meeting.</p>	<p>RB</p>
<p>10/15</p>	<p><u>Rights of Way Improvement Plan – Derbyshire County Council – Progress Report</u></p> <p>Gill Millward updated members on progress towards delivery of Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) in 2014/15.</p> <p>The report summarised the main work in progress under each of the five RoWIP aims.</p> <p>Under Aim 1 the path condition surveys continued in 2014 with a combined pass rate of 73% pass rate for the year; the contract to install 307 roadside signposts was nearing completion and</p>	

	<p>Countryside Service area teams have dealt with a further 110 requests; and funding bids have been submitted for the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme for 2015/16.</p> <p>Aim 2 included continuing to keep the on-line public rights of way information up to date; since September 2014 15 legal order cases have been reported to committee, 6 progressed to order making stage and 16 orders have been brought in to effect.</p> <p>Aim 3 undertakings included work towards the delivery of various aspects of the rights of way improvements and Greenway schemes where funding has already been secured; and the Pedal Peak II cycling project. The County Council has agreed in principle for a Cycling Strategy to be developed and this was being coordinated by Derbyshire Sport. A draft strategy for walking and cycling routes in Chesterfield and its surrounding areas to support sustainable economic growth and enhance connectivity was also emerging and there should be an opportunity to comment on the document.</p> <p>The National Park Cycle Fund for Pedal Peak II included the introduction of the Bike Bus project which would be a Demand Responsive service linking the trail network with the towns of Matlock, Bakewell and Buxton.</p> <p>Under Aim 4 a countryside volunteering banner has been produced for use at events and exhibitions and leaflets should be available later in 2015/16. Volunteer elements of the website were also being redesigned. A leaflet produced by the national Trust on behalf of the Sheffield Moors Partnership, which features five bridleway routes, was now available.</p> <p>For Aim 5 Countryside Service staff and key volunteers have been consulted on the draft guidance being produced for volunteers. The final version should be available for reporting to the Cabinet Member in the summer. Several voluntary groups were gaining momentum and becoming increasingly self-sufficient. A presentation has been given to the Derbyshire Older People's Advisory Group in response to its idea of exploring the setting up of an intergenerational group of volunteers.</p> <p>Following a question from David Blackburn it was noted that all new byway and bridleway signs were metal. Wooden signs were now only used for footpaths.</p> <p>RESOLVED to note the contents of the progress report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan in 2014/15.</p>	
11/15	<p><u>Public Access and Cattle</u> Geof Cole presented his information document on Public Access and Cattle. It was suggested that the heading 'Advice for Users'</p>	

	<p>should follow the introductory paragraphs.</p> <p>Marilyn Hambly suggested that this document should take the form of a press release to all local papers and Parish Councils. It would also be beneficial if it could be put on the Ramblers website.</p>	GC/GM/RB
12/15	<p><u>Open Access Signage</u> It was suggested that this item be considered at the June 2015 meeting.</p>	LAF Secretary
13/15	<p><u>Effective Use of Volunteers and Liaison with Accessible Derbyshire</u> These items would be held over for a future meeting.</p>	
14/15	<p><u>Report of Sub Groups</u> <u>(a) Open Access</u> Nothing to report.</p> <p><u>(b) Erewash Strategy</u> The Highways Engineer was looking at the proposal.</p> <p><u>(c) Public Rights of Way</u> Nothing to report.</p>	
15/15	<p><u>Regional and National LAF Matters</u> <u>(a) East Midlands Chairs' Meeting</u> It was noted that the Chair and members of the Executive Sub Group were unable to attend the East Midlands LAF Chairs' meeting on 25 March 2015.</p> <p><u>(b) Natural England funded LAF Regional Co-ordinators</u> Members noted the content of the letter from Ian Fugler, Director, Access and Engagement, Natural England. The Regional LAF Coordinators contracts would cease on 31 March 2015, however Natural England Area Teams would continue to work with LAF's to provide opportunities for everyone to enjoy the natural environment.</p>	
16/15	<p><u>Huddle and Social Networking</u> Marilyn Hambly reported that the LAF's letter on the Definitive Map Modification Order Application Process has been re-issued on Huddle. Five responses have been received and a written report would be submitted to the June 2015 meeting.</p> <p>The following items had been uploaded onto Huddle:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Protecting our Public Rights of Way' consultation event in January 2015 could now be viewed in slide format on Huddle. The Chair's introduction was good and it was agreed that the Chair's letter be circulated to DADLAF members. • Toolkit for LAF's – copy to be circulated to DADLAF 	<p>MH</p> <p>MH/LAF Secretary MH/LAF</p>

	Members	Secretary
17/15	<p><u>News Items from Members</u></p> <p>(a) <u>Deregulation Bill</u> Members were advised that the Deregulation Bill should receive royal assent before the next DADLAF meeting. (NB Royal Assent of Deregulation Bill – 26 March 2015)</p> <p>(b) <u>Bus Consultation</u> Councillor Davison informed the LAF that the County Council Cabinet meeting on 24 March 2015 agreed to provide funding to each Community Transport scheme until 2016. It was also hoped that there would be more transport co-ordination under D2N2 initiatives.</p>	
18/15	<p><u>Natural England LAF 2013/14 National Annual Report</u> The Natural England LAF 2013/14 Annual report was received and noted. Member's attention was drawn to section 10 – Appointing Authority feedback.</p>	
19/15	<p><u>Dogs on your Land</u> The guidance document from Hampshire County Council's Countryside Service relating to Dogs on your Land was received and noted.</p>	
20/15	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u> It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Friday 5 June 2015 commencing at 10.00am in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock.</p> <p>It was hoped to arrange a site visit to look at progress of Pedal Peak in the afternoon.</p> <p>Agenda items required by Friday 8 May 2015.</p>	
21/14	<p><u>Matters Arising from the Minutes and Action Sheet not covered by Agenda Items</u> The Action Sheet was noted and where action has been taken the entry could be deleted.</p>	
22/15	<p><u>LAF Annual Review Form 2014 - 15</u> Ray Brown reported that the review form was now available and work would commence on completing the document.</p>	RB/GM