

# **TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 19 December 2018 at 2.30pm  
at The Business School, Wrekin College, Sutherland Road, Wellington, Telford**

**Present:** Anthony Francis-Jones (Horse Riding / BHS), Fiona Stevenson (Disability), Chris Hallam (Madeley Town Council), Paula Doherty (Rights of Way Projects/TES Ramblers), Dave Hopkins (Dawley Hamlets Parish Council) and Cadi Price (Severn Gorge Countryside Trust). Cllr Arnold England (TWC), Ann Sharkey (Legal Assistant, TWC), Alex Ford (Shrewsbury & Telford NHS Trust), Sally-Anne Robinson (Telford Bridleways Association) and Jan Mees-Robinson (British Driving Society)

**In Attendance:** Andrew Careless (Senior Rights of Way Officer, Telford & Wrekin Council), Nichola Stallard (Legal Assistant, TWC), Jayne Clarke (Democratic and Scrutiny Officer, TWC) and Maria Farley (Democratic and Scrutiny Officer, TWC)

## **LAF-1      Election of Chair**

**RESOLVED** – that Anthony Francis-Jones be elected Chair of the Local Access Forum for 2018/19.

## **LAF-2      Election of Vice-Chair**

**RESOLVED** – that Fiona Smith be elected Vice-Chair of the Local Access Forum for 2018/19.

## **LAF-3      Minutes**

The LAF considered the minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018. The following amendments were suggested regarding the minutes from 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018:

### **Horsehay to Station Road**

- The word DMMOA be substituted with the word DMMO
- Public enquiry on Festival Gardens and Sylvan Close bundles had not yet been sent

### **Any other urgent business**

- Paula Doherty raised ongoing project work encouraging people to visit the area of Caynton and Calvington

**RESOLVED** – that subject to the amendments detailed above the Chair be authorised to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2018.

#### **LAF- 4      Apologies for Absence**

Peter Holt (CLA/ Landowner), Trevor Davies (Shropshire Ramblers). Bob Coalbran (Wellington Walkers Are Welcome), Naomi Wrighton (Wellington Walkers are Welcome)

#### **LAF- 5      Review of the terms of reference of the LAF**

**The Senior Rights of Way Officer informed the LAF of the following changes to the constitution**

**4.5** - Members will not be able to appoint substitutes to attend TWLAF if they are absent from a meeting with the exception of elected Councillor Representatives

**4.6** - Members who represent a local or national organisation will have to provide the Council with written confirmation from that organisation that they accept the representation within 2 months of being appointed to TWLAF.

**4.7** - Appointees to TWLAF will have to sign an acceptance form to adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct immediately upon accepting their appointment.

**4.8** - Members may be dismissed from TWLAF by Telford & Wrekin Council if:

- They are absent from meetings for a period of 1 year without consent of the Council
- If they cease to be a member of the organisation they represent or that organisation withdraws their nomination for that member to represent them.
- They breach the Council's Code of Conduct.

P Doherty asked for clarification on section 8.1 regarding declarations of interest and the Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that this section relates to pecuniary interests only.

#### **LAF- 6      LAF Code of Conduct**

P. Doherty asked for clarification on using LAF membership as an authority figure when communicating with outside bodies. The Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that members cannot speak on behalf of LAF members without prior permission.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer suggested that a sub-committee/working group should be formed in order to deal with day to day issues relating to LAF rather than having to wait for the full LAF committee meetings that are only held 4 times per year. The group should have a balanced membership with equal representation from groups involved.

S. Robinson asked whether receiving a bursary for the cost of submitted DMMO's would be deemed as a financial gain. The Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that a bursary is acceptable and is not considered financial gain.

F. Stevenson asked for clarification on what are considered 'reasonable expenses' as her transportation to enable her to attend LAF meetings costs £30 for a round trip.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer confirmed that this was considered a reasonable expense to enable F. Stevenson's attendance at LAF Committee meetings.

The Chair asked the Senior Rights of Way Officer to provide clarification on who the accepted members of the LAF were. He noted that permission to speak on behalf of the accepted member's relevant bodies should also be sought.

A. England suggested that parish and town councils should also have representation. The Senior Rights of Way Officer suggested that having members from Shropshire and Staffordshire councils to attend at least one of the LAF meetings would be beneficial as there were occasional cross boundary issues. SALC should also have a LAF member representative.

#### ACTIONS –

- (i) The Senior Rights of Way Officer to ensure the LAF is constituted and membership is confirmed in writing by the next LAF Meeting.
- (ii) Natural England and a representative from SALC or NALC to be contacted to join the LAF to inform the group of any issues. Young farmers and other land ownership groups are encouraged to be involved.
- (iii) The web map for footpaths to be circulated.

#### **LAF- 7      Any other urgent business**

A.Ford shared that he had been working on a project trying to reopen an old railway line for public footpath access. He had secured half of the funding needed for a new footpath located on the east side of the Princess Royal Hospital. There were signage issues along pedestrian access from Wellington railway station to the Princess Royal Hospital. New signs would benefit train commuters.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer suggested a new project to maintain the Borough's paths. The project should have achievable targets and should include one path for each parish to be maintained (26 paths total). LAF members would be able to bring rights of way issues to their individual parishes.

Additional resources should enable more DMMO's to be dealt with. J. Mees-Robinson pointed out that some DMMO's require more work than others.

A.England suggested that the LAF should look at the access to paths. If individual access issues to paths were present, this should be looked at.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer shared that the project should contain short term achievable goals. This could be completing routes on the definitive map or creating short achievable routes in key areas.

A.England suggested that Rough Park Way/Silkin Way path access needed looking in to, along with access from Telford Town Park to Shawbirch along the Silkin Way.

P. Doherty suggested that individual Parish Council's rights of way representatives needed to be involved along with members of the public. Routes should be

publicised to encourage more use of the paths. The LAF needed to develop ways to engage the public and interest them.

F. Stevenson shared the importance of having wheelchair friendly routes.

S.A Robinson suggested there should be a competition/prize for the best kept route to create an incentive.

J. Mees-Robinson shared the importance of ensuring access for everyone, including cyclists and horse riders. The paths shouldn't just be used for walking.

The Senior Rights of Way Officer shared that he held presentations for Parish Council groups and suggested that the LAF could be included in this.

C. Price thanked others for their hard work in pulling the LAF meeting together.

P. Doherty shared that at the time of the meeting the AGM agenda and some minutes were not available on the LAF website. It was confirmed that the AGM Agenda would be put onto the website and the Minutes would be added once approved.

Signage along Hutchison Way needs looking in to.

Walking directions for Hutchison Way needed to be revised which would be a big project for the Ramblers.

The T50 route had been completed and opened which was a big success.

The Chair advised that the British Horse Society had provided the funding for the finance maps from Kew docs to be used for general use.

Members of the LAF agreed to cancel the next scheduled LAF meetings due to be held in January and March and instead replace with one meeting, provisional date being 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

The meeting ended at 3:50pm

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** .....