

TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd July 2013 at 1.30pm at The Studio, Graham Building, Wrekin College, Sutherland Road, Wellington, Telford

PRESENT: Anthony Francis Jones (Telford Bridleways Association), Marion Law (Rambler), Janet Mees-Robinson (British Carriage Drivers Association), Bob Alton (Rambler), Jim Roberts (Landowner), Malcolm Morris (STROWP), Cllr Liz Clare (Telford & Wrekin Council), Cllr Tracy Hope (Telford & Wrekin Council), Peter Holt (Land Owner), Bob Coalbran (Wellington Walkers are Welcome), Marilyn Pietroni (Disability), Fiona Smith (Disability) and Paula Doherty.

ALSO PRESENT: Andrew Careless (Senior Rights of Way Officer), Carly Burd (Parks for People Project Manager), Nicola Allen (Town Park Manager) and Jayne Clarke (Democratic Services Support Officer)

LAF-01 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Bob Alton thanked the Chair, on behalf of the LAF, for all of the hard work that he had done during the year previous year. The Vice-Chair asked for nominations for the role of Chair of the LAF for the coming year. Janet Mees-Robinson nominated Anthony Francis-Jones to continue his role as Chair. This was seconded by Peter Holt. As there were no other nominations for the position of Chair a vote took place and it was

RESOLVED – that Anthony Francis-Jones be elected as Chair of the Local Access Forum.

LAF-02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Bob Alton had decided to step down as Vice-Chair, but expressed a wish to remain as a Member of the Local Access Forum.

The Chair, on behalf of the LAF, thanked Bob Alton for all of his hard work, especially with the Rights of Way Volunteer Group.

The Chair sought nominations for the role of Vice-Chair. Cllr Tracy Hope nominated Fiona Smith to be Vice-Chair. This was seconded by Marilyn Pietroni. As there were no other nominations for the role of Vice-Chair a vote took place and it was

RESOLVED – that Fiona Smith be appointed Vice-Chair of the Local Access Forum.

LAF-03 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24th April 2013 be agreed.

LAF-04 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Helen Cork and Sarah Faulkner (National Farmers Union) and Cadi Price (Severn Gorge Countryside Trust)

LAF-05 CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

The Chairman gave a brief overview on the work that was being undertaken by the LAF in close liaison with the Senior Rights of Way Officer, which included:

- LAF Annual Review
- Weekly checking of Planning Applications for Rights of Way Issues
- Telford Millennium Community – Rights of Way Issues
- Rail Crossings at Wombridge
- Multi-user Routes
- Telford Town Park
- Gresham Drive – cutting of Right of Way Network by the Grazing Cow
- Fly Tipping
- Trundle and the diversion orders
- Car Park on New Works Lane
- Appointment of Staff in Legal/Rights of Way

The Chair had become aware that Shropshire Council were taking out a blanket Dog Control Order. This was believed to cover areas not already controlled by rights of way legislation and parks and open spaces. The Chair would check for further developments on this matter and it may be brought as an Agenda item to the LAF in the future as something to consider.

LAF-06 MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

The Chairman welcomed Paula Doherty as a potential new member of the LAF with a view to helping the LAF with landowner liaison and land ownership. Paula Doherty then gave a brief overview of the work that she had undertaken over the last few years. Marion Law proposed that Paula Doherty become a member of the LAF which was seconded by Janet Mees-Robinson. A vote took place and it was

RESOLVED – that Paula Doherty become a member of the Local Access Forum.

LAF-07 RIGHTS OF WAY DEVELOPMENTS IN TELFORD TOWN PARK – PRESENTATION BY CARLY BURD

The Chair welcomed Carly Burd, Parks for People Projects, together with Nicola Allen, Telford Town Park Manager, to the meeting to give a presentation on the developments and improvements taking place within the Town Park including:

- Developments/Improvements to the furniture
- Rights of Way
- Multi-use gating
- Motorcycle nuisances

Carly Burd also introduced Chris Pettman from Friends of the Town Park Group who would also be able to answer questions on the developments.

Following the presentation a discussion took place including:

- Silkin Way – Rights of Way status
- Tourist gain for allowing carriage drivers access to the Park - ie specialist events

- Car parking for disabled people
- Fly Tipping issues
- Dark Lane Car Park / Line marking of Dark Lane
- Rotten Row site

It was envisaged that work within the Park would start in September 2013 with a grand opening Easter 2014.

LAF-08 EDGMOND RIGHTS OF WAY PROJECT – PRESENTATION BY PAULA DOHERTY

Paula Doherty gave a presentation of the Rights of Way Project that had been undertaken in Edgmond which included:

- The work on the ground to identify rights of way
- The splitting of Edgmond into two Zones
- Work with land-owners to re-route the rights of way where necessary
- Cropped routes
- Inability at present to produce leaflets and maps of walking routes
- Good demonstration of the complexities of rights of way issues
- Enforcement for blocked access to rights of way
- Publishing of Diversion Orders
- Examples of good practice
- Volunteers – keeping the momentum and morale

LAF-09 RIGHTS OF WAY – TELFORD AND WREKIN COUNCIL UPDATE

Andrew Careless gave a verbal update on staffing position within Legal Services and the Rights of Way Team.

Legal Services had now employed a new member of staff, Anne Sharkey, to primarily work on the Modification Orders. This was a 2 year post and it was hoped that this would make a significant difference.

With regard to the Rights of Way Officer, this had not yet been advertised, but it was hoped that this would be done in the very near future. The post would mainly be dealing with the day-to-day issues surrounding rights of way and complaints.

LAF-10 REVIEW OF DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER APPLICATIONS

The definitive map modification orders could be dealt with in two areas, what was easy to do and what was necessary. The Senior Rights of Way Officer had tried to identify what was necessary and what would make the most difference to the rights of way network. Silkin Way, Hutchinson Way and the bridleway which was part of the Shropshire Way were suggested as possibilities.

It was suggested that a priority list be made showing the key orders as there were currently 74 orders in the backlog with some of them being there some considerable time. The Senior Rights of Way Officer hoped to identify all of the orders that were on Telford and Wrekin Land and these could be dealt with by way of dedication rather than modification order.

A discussion took place including:

- Applications by area
- Planning applications and houses being built on Rights of Way
- Popular areas ie The Nabb and Cockshutt
- What was good for the Borough

LAF-11 RIGHTS OF WAY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME – BUDGET

The capital improvement budget currently stood at £80,000 for the year 2013/14. This budget is not pre-programmed and is used to address what comes in on a daily basis.

LAF-12 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Items of urgent business included:

- Closure of Forest Glen Car Park – which was thought due to rock fall
- Green Infrastructure Review presentation
- Shaping Places Consultation Document
- Walking for Health – information about the funding position – invitation for the Walking for Health team to attend at the LAF meeting

LAF-13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the LAF was to be held on 9th October 2013.

The Meeting ended at 4.01pm