

Plymouth Local Access Forum

Monday 28 March 2011

PRESENT:

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair.

Mr Stewart, Vice Chair.

Mr Attrill, Councillor Browne, Mr Emery, Councillor K Foster, Mr Goddard, Ms Hitchens, Mr Pawley, Mrs Rodgers, Mr Skinner and Councillor Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Miss Roberts

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 1.00 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration of interest was made by a member in accordance with the Code of Conduct –

Name	Subject	Reason	Interest
Mr Pawley	South West Coast Path (minute 68 refers)	Is the new Plymouth local representative for the South West Coast Path.	Personal

61. MINUTES

With regard to the minutes of 27 January 2011 members commented that –

- (a) regarding minute 55a (f) the Secretary of State should replace DEFRA and read ‘when organising working groups the LAF should follow the guidance provided by the Secretary of State’;
- (b) regarding minute 56, ‘it was important that the LAF remain an independent body’ should read ‘in its statutory role as an independent advisory body’.

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2011 are confirmed as a correct record subject to the above amendments in (a) and (b).

62. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

Barbara Mickley resignation

Ray Fairchild, Chair of the LAF informed members that Barbara Mickley had recently tendered her resignation as a member of the Plymouth LAF.

Agreed that a letter be sent to Mrs Mickley to thank her for her service to the LAF.

63. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

Members noted their tracking resolutions.

64. **ACCESS WHITLEIGH PROJECT**

Rosie Dale, Major Schemes Officer (Sustainable Transport Team) provided an update on the Access Whitleigh Project (now called Whitleigh: Safer and Sustainable Travel). Members were informed that –

- (a) the project, which had requested £180K to improve sustainable transport in the Whitleigh neighbourhood, was progressing well through the council's decision making process;
- (b) the project had been separated into four stages which were:
 - (i) a feasibility stage, where data would be collected on accident statistics, road speeds and audit's into street maintenance, public transport and walking and cycling provision in the community;
 - (ii) a community engagement and consultation stage, where information would be gathered from members of the public from surgeries and partnership working, which had / would include–
 - one engagement surgery at Whitleigh Green;
 - two engagement sessions with local schools;
 - a Whitleigh fitness festival being led by the Public Health Team & Sports Development Unit;
 - a community leaflet and local map being produced;
 - (iii) an implementation stage;
 - (iv) a monitoring stage;

Following questions from members it was reported that –

- (c) the community leaflet, for the Whitleigh: Safer and Sustainable Travel project would be distributed to all public venues including schools and doctor surgeries once produced;
- (d) the Sustainable Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation for Whitleigh had been run in conjunction with the project's engagement and consultation sessions;

Members commented that –

- (e) putting the community leaflet in local bus stops and community venues in neighbouring areas such as Southway may help advertise the project more widely;
- (f) a working group reviewing walks in Whitleigh would help inform the outcome of the project.

Agreed that a working group is initiated entitled 'Access Whitleigh Project – Working Group' and is led by Mrs P Hitchens. The membership of the working group consists of Councillor Browne, Dave Pawley, John Skinner and Councillor Wheeler. The working group would provide their findings to the LAF Secretary and the PROW Officer by 31 May 2011.

65. **LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND**

Rosie Dale, Major Schemes Officer (Sustainable Transport Team) presented a report on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. Members were informed that –

- (a) the City Council was preparing to submit a bid to obtain funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund; a fund from central government;
- (b) this was an exciting opportunity where the council could obtain significant investment to improve sustainable transport in the city;
- (c) the submission of the bid had been approved by the Cabinet at their meeting on 8 March 2011;
- (d) if the bid was successful the monies would be spent on delivering improvements to sustainable transport provision in the city and providing opportunities for people to use more sustainable modes of travel (as detailed in the accompanying briefing note on the agenda);

- (e) some of the improvements would include –
 - (i) restoring Laira Rail Bridge as a pedestrian and cycling facility;
 - (ii) developing off-road cycling facilities;
 - (iii) improving traffic flow to enable easier on-road cycling;
 - (iv) delivering new bus services;
- (f) it was hoped that the LAF would provide support to the bid for the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Following questions from members it was reported that –

- (g) the bid did not include improvements to rail facilities due to the prohibitive cost of such measures;
- (h) in order to promote and improve sustainable transport the Transport and Highways department, if the bid was successful, would be working with individual households creating personalised travel plans and were planning to improve the travel information on the council's transport web pages.

Agreed that

- (1) the report is noted.
- (2) the LAF Secretary would send an approved letter of support to Plymouth Transport and Highways, for inclusion in the bid to the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

66. **SCHOOLS ACADEMY STATUS**

Members received a report on the Notice of Statutory Land Transfer for Ridgeway School and Coombe Dean School. The PROW Officer informed members that –

- (a) a number of schools had applied for academy status; if granted these schools would no longer be in the control of the local authority;
- (b) the local authority would need to lease land to the schools who were granted academy status which could impact on public rights of way and other highways issues;

- (c) the two schools had presently been provided with temporary leases, with formal leases being consulted on and it was important that the land leases correctly incorporate all highway's issues;

Members commented that –

- (d) before the Coombe Dean lease was finalised existing footpaths should be formally adopted as public rights of way and recorded on the definitive map;
- (e) if footpath's were not recorded on the definitive map then they should remain as permissive footpath's or not be included in the lease;
- (f) if the footpath's were not recorded and they were to be included in the lease then there should be conditions in the lease that ensure the school do not obstruct the footpath;
- (g) local resident's could also apply for the footpath's to be adopted as public rights of way;
- (h) the Ridgeway school extinguishment order was a separate issue and should not be considered with the notice of land transfer.

Agreed that –

- (1) the LAF Secretary in consultation with the Chair formally respond to Ian Gillhespy, Senior Valuation Surveyor on the notice of land transfer at Ridgeway School;
- (2) the LAF Secretary in consultation with the Chair formally respond to Ian Gillhespy, Senior Valuation Surveyor on the notice of land transfer at Coombe Dean.

67. **LOCAL ACCESS FORUM DEVELOPMENT**

Ross Johnston, Secretary of the Local Access Forum (LAF) and Robin Pearce, Public Rights of Way (PROW) Officer presented a report on Plymouth Local Access Forum Development.

Members commented that –

- (a) in January 2011 only 50 per cent of members had completed the evaluation questionnaire and not the reported 86 per cent. The additional 36 per cent had completed the questionnaire subsequently;

- (b) in the terms of reference the word 'preferably' should replace 'where reasonably practicable' in the section that reads "Election for the post of Vice-Chair will then take place and, where reasonably practicable, candidates eligible to stand for the position shall be those drawn from a different category or type of interest (set out in paragraph 3.1) to that of the newly elected Chair".

Following members questions it was reported that –

- (c) 'in and around Plymouth' meant areas outside of Plymouth, which included, but were not limited to Tamerton Foliot, Saltash, Belliver, Cann Woods and certain parts of Burrator;
- (d) the proposed changes had been implemented into the terms of reference, which were attached to the report for approval.

Agreed that the LAF approve –

- (1) the proposal to reduce the number of business meetings from six to four annually is approved;
- (2) and agree the creation of position statements are approved;
- (3) the Chair and Vice-Chair should preferably not represent the same interest group,
- (4) delegated authority is provided to the PLAF Secretary, in consultation with the Chair, to deal with issues and consultation responses using the approved position statements where a response is required before the next meeting of the Forum;
- (5) the amendment's of the PLAF Terms of Reference (as attached at Appendix 1 to the report) to reflect the proposed changes;
- (6) the Chair and Vice Chair continue in their position until the next meeting of the Forum.

68. **SOUTH WEST COAST PATH**

Robin Pearce, Public Rights of Way Officer, gave an update on the South West Coast Path and informed members that –

- (a) the council had recently received the geotechnical survey report and had distributed the report to those members that had requested it;
- (b) the report stated that a full failure of the slope was extremely unlikely, although there continued to be a localised failure risk;

- (c) the section of the South West Coast Path would remain closed during Summer 2011;
- (d) recommendations and remedial engineering work would be discussed in a management meeting to be held on 29 March 2011.

Following members questions it was reported that –

- (e) all LAF members would be informed of the action recommended by the council;
- (f) the options available to remedy the footpath were quite costly, although it was believed that the works would qualify for funding from a capital fund on emergency works.

Dave Pawley, Forum member updated members on Royal William Yard developments and informed members that –

- (g) planning permission had been granted for both the Urban Splash applications at Royal William Yard; work was progressing slowly due to funding difficulties;
- (h) other funding options were being explored by the South West Coast Path Trail, the South West Coast Path Association and the Friends of Devil's Point who wished to designate the footpath through Royal William Yard as a public right of way;
- (i) the Millfields Trust, an organisation set up by the Regional Development Agency, had been approached in the hope that they can take on the lease and management of the Royal William Yard to promote public access through the South West Coast Path.

Agreed that Dave Pawley, LAF member, would provide a written response to the LAF Secretary who would then forward the letter to Clive Perkin, Assistant Director for Development and Regeneration (Transport), offering the LAF's formal support of the actions being taken by the Friend of Devil's Point in their efforts to secure the link from Royal William Yard up to and through Devil's Point Park.

69. **REVIEW OF STATUTORY DUTIES**

Members were advised that there was currently a consultation from the Department for Communities and Local Government about the Review of Statutory Duties. Members were informed that the government were currently reviewing the statutory obligations that were on local authorities, which included the need to have a Local Access Forum and a Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Members commented that the LAF should provide a formal response highlighting the importance of LAF's in providing a positive influence and adding value to local communities.

Agreed that John Skinner, LAF member would provide a written response to the LAF Secretary who would then use this to formally respond to the Review of Statutory Duties consultation on behalf of the Forum.

70. **SALTRAM COUNTRYSIDE PARK CONSULTATION**

Members were informed that the Saltram Countryside Park Master Plan was currently under consultation. A draft consultation response, created from members comments emailed to the LAF Secretary prior to the meeting, was circulated to all members for approval.

Agreed that the LAF formally respond to the Saltram Countryside Park Master Plan consultation using the approved response.

71. **SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSULTATION**

Members were informed that the Sustainable Neighbourhood Development Plan was currently under consultation. A draft consultation response, created from members comments emailed to the LAF Secretary prior to the meeting, was circulated to all members for approval.

Agreed that the LAF formally respond to the Sustainable Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation using the approved response.

(At the conclusion of this item the following members had left the meeting Mr Attrill, Councillor Browne, Councillor Foster, Mr Goddard, Ms Hitchens, Mr Pawley and Councillor Wheeler and so the meeting was no longer quorate. The following items 71 – 78 were not discussed)

72. **HEALTH AND OUTDOOR ACCESS UPDATE**

This item was not discussed.

73. **LAF CHAIRS MEETING UPDATE**

This item was not discussed.

74. **WORKING GROUPS**

This item was not discussed.

75. **WORK PROGRAMME**

This item was not discussed.

76. **CORRESPONDENCE**

This item was not discussed.

77. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

This item was not discussed.

78. **ISSUES ARISING FROM FORUM MEMBERS**

This item was not discussed.