

Plymouth Local Access Forum

Monday 12 December 2011

PRESENT:

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair.

Mr Stewart, Vice Chair.

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

Apologies for absence: Mrs Roberts.

The meeting started at 10.30 am and finished at 1.25 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.

34. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name	Subject	Reason	Interest
Mr Skinner	Item 39. Ridgeway School Extinguishment Order	Member of the Ramblers and Open Spaces Society.	Personal
Mr Emery	Item 39. Ridgeway School Extinguishment Order	Member of the Ramblers and Open Spaces Society.	Personal
Councillor Wheeler	Item 39. Ridgeway School Extinguishment Order	Member of the Planning Committee	Personal
Councillor Wheeler	Item 45. Planning Consultation – Barrier Busting	Member of the Planning Committee	Personal
Councillor Wheeler	Item 48. Working Groups	Member of the Planning Committee	Personal
Councillor Churchill	Item 39. Ridgeway School Extinguishment Order	Member of the Planning Committee	Personal
Councillor Churchill	Item 45. Barrier Busting	Member of the Planning Committee	Personal
Councillor Churchill	Item 48. Working Groups	Member of the Planning Committee	Personal
Mr Pawley	Item 43. Public	Secretary of Mayflower	Personal

	Slipways Update	Boat Owner Association and the local representative for the South West Coast Path	
Mr Pawley	Item 44. South West Coast Path Update	Secretary of Mayflower Boat Owner Association and the local representative for the South West Coast Path	Personal
Mr Curno	Item 43. Public Slipways Update	Representative of the Royal Yachting Association	Personal
Mrs Rodgers	Item 48. Working Groups	Employed by the National Trust	Personal

35. **MINUTES**

With regard to the minutes of 12 September 2011 it was commented that at the end of minute 20 it should state in brackets that ‘Councillor Wheeler and Councillor Churchill declared an interest in this item and as such took no part in the discussion’.

Agreed that subject to the inclusion of the above amendment the minutes of 12 September 2011 are approved as a correct record.

36. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

Ray Fairchild, Chair of the LAF informed members that he had recently received an email regarding Mary Creagh MP submitting a question to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what progress was being made on recording historic rights of way.

Members acknowledged that it was pleasing to see such issues being discussed in the House of Commons and they looked forward to responding to the potential consultation on streamlining the processes for recording potential rights of way.

Agreed that a copy of the email be circulated to all members.

37. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

The Forum noted the tracking resolutions document. Following comments made by members it was agreed that in response to –

- (1) 28.03.11- minute 67 position statements would be included as an agenda item for discussion at the Forum meeting on 12 March 2011;
- (2) 12.09.11 – minute 30 a site visit would be arranged for the

afternoon of the next Forum meeting on 12 March 2011.

38. **NATURAL ENGLAND UPDATE**

Dot Isgrove, Natural England representative provided members with an update on Natural England. Members were informed that –

- (a) the National LAF meeting would be held in Bristol on 6 March 2012 with one member from each LAF invited to attend;
- (b) it was hoped that a new national co-ordinator would be appointed by Natural England in January 2012;
- (c) Huddle was a new user friendly network website for LAF's to use, although at present there was only enough funding available to have three members from each LAF licensed to use the site. The licences would be reviewed in the future with the aim of having all LAF members licensed to use the site;
- (d) there was a new requirement on LAF's to produce an annual report in an approved pro-forma to enable DEFRA to collate and compare data more efficiently;
- (e) Plymouth had recently been successful in acquiring funding to develop a Local Nature Partnership and this should provide an exciting opportunity for LAF's to have a positive and influential role in getting involved in the future of nature within the local area;
- (f) a new government scheme was being developed called 'Paths for Communities' which would provide grants to landowners to work with local communities on improving access and public rights of way.

Agreed that –

- (1) a letter is sent to Colin Jones, former national co-ordinator for Natural England, thanking him for his service and contribution to the LAF in the past;
- (2) Dot Isgrove, Natural England, would provide an email on the new 'Paths for Communities' scheme to be distributed to all members;
- (3) Ray Fairchild, Chair will attend the National LAF Conference on 6 March 2012 and John Skinner will be the first choice reserve member;
- (4) Dot Isgrove is thanked for her attendance.

39. **RIDGEWAY SCHOOL EXTINGUISHMENT ORDER**

Robin Pearce, Public Rights of Way Officer provided members with an update on the Ridgeway School Extinguishment Order. Members were informed that –

- (a) there was an administrative error in the Order which had meant that the order had to be quashed and a new Order made;
- (b) following the advertisement period a decision would be taken by Plymouth City Council legal officers as to whether the order would need to be re-submitted to the Planning Committee.

Mr Emery and Mr Skinner raised concerns about potentially not re-submitting the extinguishment order to Planning Committee as they felt that this was a new order and as such should be re-determined by Planning Committee members.

Agreed that the forum make no comments on the extinguishment order and conclude that its original resolution as was stated at the 13 July 2011 meeting still stands.

(Mr Skinner and Mr Emery declared a personal interest in the above item.)

(Councillor Wheeler and Councillor Churchill declared an interest in this item and as such took no part in the discussion.)

40. **WHITLEIGH: SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL PROJECT UPDATE**

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

- (a) the LAF members' contribution to the project through information provided on walks in and around Whitleigh was much appreciated;
- (b) the project, which aimed to improve travel in Whitleigh by making it safer and more sustainable, had focused on three main themes walking, cycling and public opinion;
- (c) public opinion had been gathered through leaflet responses and from public engagement sessions in school play-grounds and doctor surgeries;
- (d) the main concerns raised by the public regarded high traffic speeds and children's safety;
- (e) improvements to be implemented in Whitleigh included –
 - 'welcome to Whitleigh' signage;

- '20 is plenty' signage to encourage motorists to drive slower;
 - improvements to bus stop accessibility on Taunton Avenue;
 - improvements to school crossing patrols and re-inforcing school keep clear zones;
- (f) in order to deliver the improvements the Sustainable Transport Team would work with the local community, the Police, access to nature projects and local public transport providers;
- (g) the Sustainable Transport Team were also working with the Road Safety Team to improve local children's education on road safety throughout all local schools;
- (h) to promote walking in the Whitleigh area a number of local footpaths had been identified to be defined as public rights of way and to be improved with maintenance and signage;
- (i) the main improvements in the area were behavioural or cultural rather than engineering changes and as such it was hoped that these would all be implemented in the 2011 – 2012 financial year.

Rosie Dale, Major Schemes Officer (Sustainable Transport Team) was thanked for her attendance.

41. **LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIPS**

Robin Pearce, Public Rights of Way Officer presented a report on Local Nature Partnerships and informed members that –

- (a) a Local Nature Partnership (LNP) was being developed in Plymouth and a group of consultants had been tasked with appointing to the LNP;
- (b) Plymouth LAF was a nominated body for the consultants to approach when appointing members to the LNP;
- (c) the LNP was a separate entity to the Nature Improvement Area (NIA).

Agreed that nominations to the LNP be conducted by the LAF Secretary in consultation with Ray Fairchild, Chair of the LAF.

42. **RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FUNDING**

Robin Pearce, Public Rights of Way Officer provided an update on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan funding. Members were informed that –

- (a) the initial investment of £10k had been increased to £17k and there

was a possibility that a further £16k could be added to the funding as other transport initiatives were unlikely to spend allocated monies; this money would continue to be spent on the republication of the South West Coast Path booklet and improvements to the historic trails;

- (b) the republication of the South West Coast Path booklet was progressing well with local historian Chris Robinson and a local design firm commissioned to design and print the booklet;
- (c) the South West Coast Path booklet was hoped to be launched in March 2012 with the forum being provided with an opportunity to review the booklet before publication;
- (d) five historic city centre footpaths were being improved through increased and re-designed signage;
- (e) it was hoped that if further money was received then another five historic footpaths in the city would be created.

43. **PUBLIC SLIPWAYS UPDATE**

Pauline Burrows, Parking Systems Manager provided a verbal update on public slipways. Members were informed that –

- (a) a number of improvements to the public slipways website were being undertaken following suggestions from Dave Pawley and Dave Curno, LAF Members;
- (b) the Parking Department had been working with the Cattewater Harbour Commission to deliver improvements to signage at a number of public slipways.

It was commented by members that maintenance of public slipways had been significantly improved.

Agreed that Dave Pawley, Dave Curno and all Parking department staff involved in improving public slipways are thanked for all their efforts.

(Mr Pawley and Mr Curno declared a personal interest in the above item.)

44. **SOUTH WEST COAST PATH UPDATE**

Robin Pearce, Public Rights of Way Officer provided an update on the South West Coast Path. Members were informed that –

- (a) new signage at Breakwater Road had now been fully erected;
- (b) improvements and engineering works would be undertaken at the currently closed Jennicliffe section of the South West Coast Path in

early 2012 and it was hoped that the path would be open to the public by the end of February 2012.

The report was noted.

(Mr Pawley declared a personal interest in the above item.)

45. **PLANNING CONSULTATION - BARRIER BUSTING**

John Emery submitted a proposed response to the Barrier Busting consultation.

Agreed that the proposed response is formally submitted to the planning department from the LAF in response to the Barrier Busting consultation.

(Councillor Wheeler and Councillor Churchill declared an interest in this item and as such took no part in the discussion.)

46. **HUDDLE**

Ray Fairchild, Chair provided an update on a new network tool for LAF's called Huddle. Members were informed that –

- (a) Natural England had purchased licenses for only three LAF members to access Huddle, however, it was hoped that all LAF members would receive access in the future;
- (b) there was a concern that the Huddle site could lead to the loss of the Regional Co-ordinator;
- (c) there was a request from Natural England for the LAF to nominate three members to be users of Huddle and for one member to be nominated as LAF Champion.

Agreed that –

- (1) Ray Fairchild, Chair is nominated as the LAF Huddle Champion;
- (2) Dave Curno and Ross Johnston, LAF Secretary are nominated as the two other licence holders to access Huddle.

47. **ANNUAL REPORTING 2011 - 2012**

Ross Johnston, LAF Secretary informed members that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) required LAF Annual Reports to be submitted in a new format.

Agreed that a working group is initiated in January 2012 to consider and agree the wording for the new annual report.

48. **WORKING GROUPS**

a) **PLYM VALLEY CYCLE TRAIL WORKING GROUP**

Ray Fairchild, Chair informed members that –

- (a) a group of LAF members met with Jim Pascoe, National Trust, to have a tour and discussion on the proposed Plym Valley Cycle Trail. Following this meeting the members agreed that the LAF would make no formal objection to the planning application;
- (b) since this meeting the Plym Valley Cycle Trail planning application had been withdrawn.

Members were further informed by Steph Rodgers, National Trust, that –

- (c) the application had been withdrawn following a legal covenant being discovered in the area that the café was proposed to be sited;
- (d) the whole application was being reviewed and as such a public consultation programme would be undertaken for a period of approximately six months;
- (e) in order to collate the consultation information received a key stakeholder group would be set up in January 2012.

(Mrs Rodgers declared a personal interest in the above item.)

(Councillor Wheeler and Councillor Churchill declared an interest in this item and as such took no part in the discussion.)

49. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted their work programme and agreed that an update on the Definitive Map be added to the meeting on 12 March 2012.

50. **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Forum noted its correspondence.

51. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed that the next meeting of the Forum is held at 10.30am on Monday 12 March 2012.

52. **ISSUES ARISING FROM FORUM MEMBERS**

A member of the Forum commented positively on the erection of public rights of way signage at the bottom of Novorossiysk Road, Plymouth.