

Plymouth Local Access Forum

Monday 17 December 2012

PRESENT:

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair.

Mr Stewart, Vice Chair.

Mr Attrill, Mr Curno, Mr Emery, Councillor K Foster, Councillor Fox, Mr Harvey, Ms Hitchens, Mrs Rodgers, Mr Skinner and Councillor Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Mr Goddard, Mr Pawley and Mrs Stewart.

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

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.

27. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

28. **MINUTES**

Agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2012 are approved.

29. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

Ray Fairchild, Chair, informed members that he had recently attended a South West LAF meeting.

30. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

The Forum noted the tracking resolutions and agreed that –

- (1) with regard to Minute 17, Bob Harvey would provide confirmation that a letter was sent to the Government in response to the Independent Panel on Forestry's report;
- (2) with regard to Minute 20, Bob Harvey would ensure that LAF members' email addresses were added to the CPRE distribution list;
- (3) with regard to Minute 23, the LAF Secretary would write a letter to the Director for Place explaining the Forum's concern regarding the lack of response to the Forum's requests about Coombe Dean School.

31. **ANNUAL REPORT 2011 - 2012**

Ross Johnston, LAF Secretary tabled a copy of the Natural England Annual Report proforma and informed members that the report needed to be agreed and submitted to Natural England by 31 December 2012.

Members of the Forum made a number of suggestions and amendments for inclusion in the final version of the proforma.

Agreed that the LAF Secretary would take into consideration all LAF members comments when finalising the Annual Report and provide a final version to Ray Fairchild, Chair for approval prior to the proforma being submitted to Natural England.

32. **CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND (CPRE) UPDATE**

Bob Harvey, LAF member, gave a presentation on the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and informed members that –

- (a) the CPRE were currently involved in a number of issues, which included –
 - work on promoting the impact of Ash die-back;
 - presenting 'Best Kept Village Awards' to Thurleston and South Poole;
 - raising awareness of the impact of wind turbines and solar farms;
 - responding to the government's consultation on the Triennial Review of the Environment Agency and Natural England;
- (b) the Triennial Review was of particular concern to the CPRE as it was felt that the amalgamation of Natural England with the Environment Agency would potentially have a detrimental effect on the natural environment.

Members commented that the effect of Ash die-back and other tree based diseases was a concern.

Bob Harvey was thanked for his update.

33. **HUDDLE UPDATE**

Hilary Winter, Regional LAF Co-ordinator for the South West, attended the Forum to give a demonstration of Huddle, an internet based social-network tool for LAFs.

Hilary commented that it was excellent to see the Plymouth LAF was so well attended, particular by elected members, and that the participation and involvement of all members was invaluable to the progress and work undertaken by LAFs.

Ray Fairchild, Chair, thanked Hilary for her demonstration and attendance at the meeting.

34. **SOUTH WEST COAST PATH UPDATE**

The Forum received an update on the South West Coast Path.

Members commented that –

- (a) when the steps in Royal William Yard had been constructed they would be included on the Ordnance Survey Map;
- (b) there had been a further landslip on the South West Coast Path, around Jennicliff;
- (c) on 21 April 2013 the South West Coast Path Association would be hosting a walk of the entire South West Coast Path in celebration of its 40th anniversary.

Agreed that Robin Pearce, PROW Officer, is requested to provide an update to all Forum members by email on the South West Coast Path's recent landslip at Jennicliff.

35. **GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE BILL UPDATE**

The Forum noted the written report on the Growth and Infrastructure Bill and agreed that in order to better understand some of the changes the Bill proposes a definition of the term 'affordable housing' is circulated to members by email.

36. **WORKING GROUPS**

There were no new working groups agreed.

37. **UNRECORDED PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Ray Fairchild, Chair, informed the Forum that –

- (a) the working group had most recently met on 20 November 2012, where it had focussed on noting the most important footpaths in the city that were under threat;
- (b) there were many footpaths identified as under threat, but in order to adopt these footpaths as PROW there needed to be evidence provided to back up the claim that the footpath had been regularly used by the public;

- (c) in order for the working group to achieve its aims of adopting more footpaths as PROW then the group needed to focus on sourcing evidence to claim PROW status.

Agreed that –

- (1) Robin Pearce, PROW Officer, is requested to provide an up to date priority list of footpaths to be adopted as PROW;
- (2) Robin Pearce, PROW Officer, is requested to provide members with details of how many footpaths have been adopted as PROW in the past 12 months;
- (3) a further working group is set up in February 2013 to review the evidence supporting the footpaths that are at the top of the priority list.

38. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The forum noted the work programme for 2012 – 2013 and agreed that –

- (1) a Definitive Map update is added to the work programme for the Forum's meeting in March;
- (2) an update on the recording of PROW is added to the work programme for the Forum's meeting in March;
- (3) an update on the Plym Valley Cycle Trail is added to the work programme for the Forum's meeting in March;
- (4) Bob Harvey would provide a further update on the CPRE at the Forum's meeting in March.

39. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence for the Forum to consider.

40. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed that the next meeting of the Forum is held at 10.30am on Monday 18 March 2013.

41. **ISSUES ARISING FROM FORUM MEMBERS**

John Emery provided a report on the recent public enquiry into the Footpath Extinguishment Order at Ridgeway School, Plympton.

It was commented that although Forum members acknowledged that the PROW Officer had been unable to attend due to ill-health, they were concerned that Plymouth City Council did not provide adequate resource to this post whilst the PROW Officer was absent from the workplace.

Agreed that Ray Fairchild, Chair will write a letter to Plymouth City Council highlighting the Forum's concern regarding the insufficient resourcing of the PROW department.

Members were further informed that the Regional LAF Conference would be held on 5 March 2013 and it was anticipated that four members from each Forum would be able to attend.