

Plymouth Local Access Forum

Monday 28 September 2015

PRESENT:

Mr Fairchild, in the Chair.

Mr I Stewart, Vice Chair.

Mr N Attrill, Councillor Ken Foster, Bob Harvey, Ms P Hitchens, Mr D E Pawley, Mr J Skinner and Councillor George Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Mr Curno and Councillor Sam Davey

Also in attendance: Dean Blagdon (Community Physical Activity Practitioner – Plymouth Community Healthcare), Kaja Curry (Natural Infrastructure Manager), Steve Flaxton (Transport Planning Officer), Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager), Helen Rickman (Democratic Support Officer) and Liz Wells (Public Rights of Way Officer).

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.

15. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were made in accordance with the Code of Conduct –

Name	Subject	Reason	Interest
Mr Pawley	South West Coast Path	Representative for the South West Coast Path Association	Personal
Mr Skinner	Public Access to Plymouth Hoe	Member of the Ramblers Association	Personal

16. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2015 were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting subject to the following changes:

- Minute 7 – ‘Working Groups’ to change ‘...they had a lack of understanding’ to ‘a member of the Rambler’s Association had a lack of understanding...’

The minute would therefore read the following:

‘Mr Stewart highlighted to Members of the Ramblers upcoming campaign, ‘The Big Path Watch’ and queried whether the LAF could assist? Members felt that the Ramblers had made judgement on paths and not public rights of way (PROW)

and that a member of the Rambler's Association had a lack of understanding on what is PROW'.

- Minute 9 'South West Coast Path Update' section (a) read that Mr Pawley had recently carried out a condition survey of the South West Coast Path – this should be changed to read that he had recently carried out a condition survey of the Plymouth section of the South West Coast Path.
- Minute 10 'Huddle Hot Topics' read that Mr Stewart highlighted that the Cornwall on-line map was very good. It should read that the online map was very good however the search facility would bring up every individual street instead of prioritising them.

17. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

18. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

Members were provided with an update on the Forum's tracking resolutions and were advised that –

- (a) Minute 43 – Mr Harvey confirmed he had not contacted Hilary Winter (Regional LAF Co-ordinator) to determine if contact could be made with local AONBs to ascertain their plans for the next 12 months as she was no longer Regional Secretary. Instead he advised Members that the Torbay LAF had recently received an informative presentation on AONBs by Tracey Brooks and questioned if she, or Kathy Fitzroy from Natural England could be invited to a future meeting of the LAF to provide an update. The Chair advised Members that he had recently spoken to Rob Leek who was helping to co-ordinate the Plymouth LAF; he would check if Rob was available to come to a future meeting of the LAF to provide an update on AONBs.
- (b) Minute 53 – Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager) advised Members that an update on Modification Orders would be provided later on the agenda.
- (c) Minute 7 – Mr Skinner advised Members that Pathwatch had asked people to survey Plymouth, the majority had been completed by members of the public other than Members of the Ramblers Association;
- (d) Minute 7 – The LAF Secretary would continue to make arrangements for the Working Group from Morrisons to Beechfield grove.

19. **NEW PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY OFFICER UPDATE**

Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager) provided Forum Members with an update on the New Public Rights of Way Officer post.

Members were advised that Liz Wells was appointed as the new Public Rights of Way Officer until March 2016; Liz had worked for Plymouth City Council for several years within the Planning department.

20. **FORDER VALLEY UPDATE FROM THE WORKING GROUP AND PRESENTATION**

Steve Flaxton (Transport Planning Officer) provided Forum members with an update on the Forder Valley development.

Members were advised that –

- (a) key growth areas around the city included the main development at Sherford, the Hooe Lake Development and Derriford;
- (b) the Council had secured funding for two schemes; the first scheme was the Marjon's link road to the north of the city whereby the University of St Mark and St John had agreed use of their access road allowing two way bus movement. The second scheme was the Derriford Hospital Interchange Scheme which had received £2.2m of funding – it was hoped that that would alleviate a lot of congestion outside the hospital;
- (c) the new walking and cycling link for the Laira Bridge was due to be completed in approximately three weeks; this would provide better access to the Ride and an improved gradient for accessing the bridge had been installed;
- (d) the Coach Station was being relocated from Bretonside to secure the long term future of coaches within the city;
- (e) as part of the Forder Valley Link Road development, a new slip road was due to be introduced on the A38 for city bound traffic as well as a site for a park and ride facility (accommodating 1000 spaces);
- (f) Derriford Transport Scheme was going out to public exhibition on 8 October 2015 (3-7pm) and 10 October 2015 (10-2pm) to present further developed plans. A preferred option was an upgraded roundabout at Derriford with a junction upgrade on William Prance Road; this scheme aimed to improve capacity along the corridor whilst allowing buses to thread their way through the network. Funding for this scheme totalled £12.72m however further funding was required from the Growth Fund to allow the scheme to progress.

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (g) it was unlikely that Laira Bridge would be used as a railway bridge in the future as the route had been severed and new infrastructure would be required to be implemented;
- (h) the developer responsible for the Hooe Lake development was obliged to provide everyone that moved in to a voucher for £250 for sustainable travel;

this could be used to buy a bike, to pay for bus fares or get tickets for the Mount Baton Ferry;

- (i) the presentation slides would be emailed to Members for their information.

The Chair thanked Steve for his attendance at the meeting.

21. **WALKING FOR HEALTH SCHEME**

Dean Blagdon (Community Physical Activity Practitioner – Plymouth Community Healthcare) provided Forum Members with an update on the Walking for Health Scheme.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the aim of the scheme was to get people more physically active to help with recovery from illness and was managed by the Ramblers Association;
- (b) Dean Blagdon co-ordinated the volunteer led scheme which focused on health deprived neighbourhoods within the city; he also provided training for walk leaders;
- (c) the programme was not specifically linked with schools however anyone was welcome to attend sessions;
- (d) GPs did not refer patients to the Walking for Health Scheme however should promote the walking groups to patients that could benefit from participation;
- (e) the scheme was publicised on the Visit Plymouth website.

The Chair thanked Dean for his attendance at the meeting.

22. **GREEN SPACE DESIGNATION**

Kaja Curry (Natural Infrastructure Manager) provided Forum Members with an update on the Green Space Designation project.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gives communities the opportunity to protect green areas through the new Local Green Space (LGS) designation; this scheme was required to be done through the Local Plan process and added the same level of protection to spaces as ‘green belt land’. Public nominations needed to be received by December 2015 and could be submitted by accessing the following link, or by going along to a local library or Plymouth Pan community consultation event:
www.plymouth.gov.uk/localgreenspace
- (b) assessment criteria linked to the Green Space designation included the following:

- Does the Green Space have existing planning permission?
 - Is the space already designated?
 - Size limits – the LGS should be local in character and is not an extensive tract of land
 - Is it demonstrably of local significance? Applicants will need to make a case demonstrating beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity and richness of wildlife
 - Is it local in character and close to the local population?
 - Can it endure? Is there an active Friends Group linked to the space or planned investment?
- (c) Plymouth City Council Officers would filter out any green spaces that already had planning permission;
- (d) Green Space nominations would be published on the Council's website and assessed by Officers; a draft list would be published by January 216 – landowners would then be identified.

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (e) all of the information provided in the presentation would be listed on the Council's website; this would form part of the Plymouth Plan process;
- (f) the Plymouth Plan part 2 was due to go out for consultation in June 2016;
- (g) a list of land already designated could be found on the maps contained on the Council's website under 'neighbourhood toolkits';
- (h) a response would be provided to Members as to the ability to nominate a green space with planning permission that was due to relapse.

The Chair thanked Kaja for her attendance at the meeting.

23. **WATERWAYS EXERCISE AND PUBLIC SLIPWAYS UPDATE**

Liz Wells (Public Rights of Way Officer) provided Forum Members with an update on the Waterways Exercise and Public Slipways. Members were advised that this agenda item linked to the missing information from the Council's website relating to public slipways which was undertaken by Members of the LAF several years ago. The work has since been found, reformatted and uploaded to the website however contained several errors.

Agreed that Mr Pawley and Liz Wells would work with Mickey Goble (Pier Master) to correct errors on the slipways information contained on the Council's website.

24. **PUBLIC ACCESS TO PLYMOUTH HOE**

Mr Skinner, Forum Member, provided an update on Public Access to Plymouth Hoe, specifically linked to the recent MTV Crashes event hosted in July 2015.

Members were advised that Mr Skinner was contacted, in his capacity as Access Officer for Ramblers in Devon, by a Plymouth resident seeking advice from the Ramblers following the apparent closure of Plymouth Hoe to public access for several days in July due to the MTV Crashes event; people were unable to walk across the Hoe or drive along the seafront.

Agreed that the Chair of the Local Access Forum would write a letter to Tracey Lee, Chief Executive of Plymouth City Council, requesting a response to the following questions linked to the closure of Plymouth Hoe to public access:

- What reason or justification is there for closing the Hoe in its entirety, such as was the case for the MTV Crashes event?
- How a decision to close the Hoe is arrived at, that is, is it a delegated officer decision or is it a decision of the entire Council or one of its committees?
- Whether any direct financial benefit is gained by the Council as a result of such closure

25. **PLYMOUTH PLAN**

Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager) provided Forum Members with an update on the Plymouth Plan. Members were advised that Part 1 of the Plymouth Plan was approved unanimously at the last Full Council meeting held on 21 September 2015 and Part 2 of the plan was now underway. The Plymouth Plan toolkit would be made publicly available as of 28 September 2015 on the Council's website and public consultation would close at the end of December 2015. The LAF, as with the first part of the plan, would have the opportunity to be involved.

Agreed that the LAF Secretary would make arrangements for a Plymouth Plan Part 2 working group to be held at Ballard House.

26. **ANNUAL REPORT**

Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager) provided Forum Members with the Local Access Forum Annual Report for 2014/2015. Members commented that progress had been made encouraging the progression with DMMO claims and should be included within the report. It was also highlighted that the three Local Councillors on the LAF should be included on the form as 'members representing other interests'.

27. **LAF RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN**

Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager) provided Forum Members with an update on the LAF Recruitment Campaign.

Members were advised that

- (a) the Council's Plymotion Team, that had the responsibility for promoting walking, cycling and exercise in the city had knocked on 20,000 doors in the city since July 2014 and had attended 80 events. As part of this project volunteers involved had also helped to promote the LAF however no responses had been received as to possible new members;
- (b) the Smarter Choices Manager and colleagues had attended the University's Fresher's Week and spoke to several students regarding the LAF, the next step was to send out mailshots to specific organisations that might have an impact upon the work of the LAF in the hope that it would promote interest in the forum;
- (c) it was expected that the Plymotion project, which was run under the Sustainable Transport Fund, had spent approximately £0.9m this year however this also included cycle training in schools, the Sky Ride Events and the 34 bus service.

28. **MODIFICATION ORDERS UPDATE**

Robin Pearce (Smarter Choices Manager) provided Forum Members with an update on Modification Orders. Members were advised that Liz Wells (Public Rights of Way Officer) would be working to progress the remaining six applications and would provide an update at the next meeting. It was confirmed that the Kloof at St Budeaux and Elizabeth Cottage in Estover were the top priority orders.

29. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

30. **WORKING GROUPS**

Agreed that the LAF Secretary would continue to make arrangements for a LAF Working Group specifically with regards to the public rights of way from Morrisons Supermarket leading to Beechfield Grove.

31. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members of the LAF raised the following as part of work programme discussions:

- The South West Coast Path Challenge – the event was taking place on 24 October – those wanting to take part needed to sign up and sponsorship was required;
- Natural England was due to look at the Devon Coast Path at the end of the year; it was hoped that this would lead to a better path around Millbay Docks.

32. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Agreed that the next formal meeting of the Local Access Forum is held on 14 December 2015 at 10.30am in the Council House.

33. **ISSUES ARISING FROM FORUM MEMBERS**

Mr Harvey advised Forum Members of the following issues arising:

- that this was a critical time of year for 'dieback' disease particularly in ash trees and phytophthora affecting larch trees; he advised Members to keep an eye open and to be careful;
- he was concerned that a lot of hedgebanks were slowly disappearing resulting in a loss of habitat for wildlife and for Members to be aware of this when driving around.