



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2013, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.05 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 11.40 AM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr J Elfes, in the Chair

Mr D Briggs, Mr C Hurworth, Mr A T A Lambourne and Mr J Coombe

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr J Clark, Ms J Taylor and Mr M Walker

GUESTS PRESENT

Mr P Harris, Mr H Hancock and Mr R Johnson

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Richard Pushman, Glyn Thomas, Neil Harris, Viv Lynch and Gavin Caspersz.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2012 TO BE CONFIRMED

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2012 were confirmed subject to the following amendment:-

Page 5, Item 6, 2nd paragraph, line 6 the word 'not' be added after Quainton are. So that the sentence now reads 'It was noted that because Waddesdon and Quainton are not within the AONB there would be more interest in that area'.

4. MATTERS ARISING

David Briggs asked for an update on the Cycle project. Jon Clarke advised that an Officer, Sarah Randall had recently been appointed to the Cycle Towns Initiative and that the project was looking at 3 or 4 market towns and were likely to include Great Missenden, Chesham and Princes Risborough.

5. OUTER AYLESBURY RING

Roy Johnson, Aylesbury Ramblers Association was welcomed to the meeting and gave a presentation on the Outer Aylesbury Ring (OAR).

Key points from the presentation are as follows:

- The OAR is an 85km/53 mile walking route
- The OAR is due to be launched on 18 May at Wendover Woods
- There are 23 circular walks
- Guides are available on the Aylesbury Ramblers website www.aylesbury-ramblers.org.uk

Roy advised that the Ramblers Association wrote to Parish Councils asking them if they would like to receive copies of the guides. Parish Councils who responded to say they were happy to take delivery of the guides will receive them shortly.

Roy talked members through the OAR and how it evolved. He highlighted the following timeline:

- July 2011 – Idea conceived
- Oct 2011 – outline route
- Nov 2011 – Presentations to LAF & AGM
- Dec 2011 – Decision to progress
- March 2012 – Route and 23 circular walks published on ramblers association website
- April 2012 – Decision to progress & fundraising
- Oct 2012 – Way marking and materials ordered
- Dec 2012 – Route re-checking completed
- Feb 2013 – All walk guides completed
- March 2013 – Way marking completed and guides printed
- April 2013 – Pre launch publicity activity
- May 2013 – official launch in Wendover Woods on 18 May.

David Briggs asked if the route was all on the public rights of way. Roy said that the route is all on public open ways or areas open to the public.

Joanne Taylor congratulated Roy on his achievements with the route.

Paul Harris asked Roy whether there was access information regarding the route for people with disabilities on the website. Roy said unfortunately there wasn't and commented that some areas such as the Chilterns had a low number of stiles whereas other areas had a high number of stiles.

David Briggs enquired if the circular routes were waymaked and Roy advised that they weren't.

Roy was thanked for attending the meeting and providing an update and congratulated on his hard work in getting the route established.

6. RIGHTS OF WAY GROUP REPORT

Members had received the Rights of Way Group Report.

Jon Clark took Members through the Strategic Access Update.

The following updates were provided:

- The Strategic Access Officer comments on approx 250 planning applications a year
- The date in paragraph 54 should be November 2012 not July 2012

The Chairman commented that he was expecting to have a meeting with HS2, although he was not sure yet when this would be. Jon Clark said he would chase.

Action: Jon Clark

Joanne Taylor took Members through the Operations Update.

The following updates were provided:

- The path clearance scheme will need to be launched so that Parishes can fit in with the contractors or look for contractors to carry out the clearance.
- A notice will be included in the Parish newsletter shortly

John Coombe asked what was required to be an approved subcontractor. Joanne said that an approved contractor must comply with Health and Safety regulations and be a properly run business. She said that she thought it was unlikely a contractor for a Parish Councillor would be compliant with requirements.

John Elfes commented that he believed one of the biggest issues was likely to be insurance. Joanne said that briefing notes including a checklist would need to be sent to Parish Councils to ensure insurance was in place and risk assessments carried out.

Paul Harris enquired if this was to replace what the County Council did through the Ringway Jacobs contract. Joanne said she anticipated that take up would be low. She said that she anticipated that the County Council would still carry out clearance works this year but that as the scheme was publicised some Parishes may come forward. Joanne stressed that whilst Parish Councils could assist the County Council with the works, the County Council had a legal duty and this duty could not be devolved.

Paul Harris asked how long the £40k fund would be available for and whether Parish Councils had to match fund. Joanne said that the funds had been identified for 2 years, possibly 3. She said that the idea was to pump prime parishes.

John Elfes asked the officer whether the summary of works; Appendix 1 of the report included the work of Parish Councils. In response Joanne advised that the list did not currently identify the work carried out by Parish Councils but that it did include work

carried out by Volunteers.

Joanne advised that damage was done to Quainton Bridleway 36. Following enforcement, £30k of repairs was undertaken from the landowner/railway contractor. Joanne also advised that Buckland Bridleway 22A has been resurfaced. She said that diversion was considered but due to the number of trees needed to be removed resurfacing of the existing route was considered the best option.

Mike Walker then took Members through the Definitive Map Update. He advised that he had just attended the Rights of Way Committee and could provide some update to the report.

The following updates were provided:

- Points 1 and 2 of the report are being treated as the same public inquiry
- Points 3, 4 and 5 of the report are being put together for one inquiry
- The Council's decision regarding the application at Fawley Court was challenged. The claim was rejected by the County Council and was challenged in the High Court. The judgement is awaited.
- Point 16 of the report. The officer recommended that the application be rejected and this has been accepted by the Rights of Way Committee.

John Elfes asked what position the County Council would be taking regarding points 1-6 of the report. Mike said that the Council was not supporting the proposals.

Mike commented that the Village Green application in Iver related to the Pinewood Studios application. He also advised that the land which is part of the Village Green application in Great Missenden was owned by approx 100 people and commented that it would be an interesting inquiry.

Chris Hurworth enquired if there was legislation to prevent Village Green applications. Mike advised that there was legislation going through Parliament which will prevent Village Green applications being made as a means of delaying proposed development. When the legislation is in force a Village Green application can only be issued before a planning application has been submitted, it will not be possible to submit a Village Green application after a planning application has been submitted.

7. LAF MEMBERS REPORT

Members had received the LAF Members' Report.

The Chairman advised that at the end of the meeting with HS2 the HS2 representative said that they would need to look through the proposals again with economies in mind. The representative said that they would not be looking to save money on the Rights of Way network but would be looking for economies elsewhere for example bearing in mind that if structures are higher then bridges would need to be longer.

The Chairman said that if any member attended a Community Forum to let Jon Clark know.

John Coombe said that he believed Natural England had recently released a statement on National Trails. Paul Harris commented that there was a paper which went to the non-executive board and that a public document would be issued in a few

days.

Jon Clark commented that the National LAF Conference was well attended with approx 80-90% of LAFs represented. He said it was a good conference with lots of interesting speakers.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman referred members to a letter in the agenda received from a member of the public. Members discussed the correspondence and the Forum agreed to support the proposal in principle but said that more information was required such as how long had the path been used for. The Chairman agreed to write to the landowner in the first instance.

Action: John Elfes

The Chairman said that social media was now being used a lot by various organisations and asked whether members felt it would benefit the Forum. In response it was suggested that this item be noted for the time being.

Members were informed that there was a meeting of the Oxfordshire LAF on 30 April, County Hall. Jon Clark said he would send an email to members to see if anyone would like to attend.

Action: Jon Clark

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 17 July 2013, 10am. Mezzanine Room 3, County Hall, Aylesbury

Chairman