

**Minutes of an inquorate meeting of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum
held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday 11 December 2007.**

Present:

Mr. Roy Denney, Mr. T. Kirby, Mr. M. Parr, Ms. V. Allen,
Mrs. L. Foreman, Mr. S. Warren, Ms. H. Brown, Mr. J.
Hefford.

ACTION BY

In attendance:

Mr. Peter Williams, Mr. Bill Carter, Mr. Edwin McWilliam and
Mr. Sam Weston.

1. Quorum

It was reported that the meeting was inquorate. It was agreed that the meeting should continue, although no formal decisions could be made, and subsequently, no Chairman could be elected for the forthcoming year.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Mr. P. Lancaster, Mr. B. Sutton, Mrs. A. Pyper and Mr. P. Tame.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2007 were noted, subject to the following amendment:

That Minute150 read as follows:

“Mr. Kirby informed the Forum of East Midlands tourism actively promoting some schemes over others. Ms. Broughton informed the Forum that Mr. Williams would be in touch with Sustrans in due course regarding this issue.”

4. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

5. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6. ‘Access to Nature’

Jane Beech had informed Mr McWilliam that that she or a colleague from Natural England would give the presentation at a future Forum meeting.

E. McW.

7. Urgent items

The Chairman asked members to raise any urgent items to be added to the agenda at his discretion.

There were no urgent items.

8. The Draft Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

The Forum received a report of the Director of Community Services regarding the draft Strategy. A copy of the report marked 'B' is filed with these minutes.

SUGGESTED:

That the following comments on the SCS be forwarded to Leicestershire Together, subject to any amendments of other Forum members absent from the meeting:

E.McW.

“That the Leicestershire Local Access Forum:

- (i) Welcomes the recognition of the importance of Green Infrastructure and the intended outcome of increased resident satisfaction with the built environment and improved green infrastructure;
- (ii) Suggests that greater recognition be placed on the contribution that Rights of Way and Greenspaces can play in providing an element of an integrated approach to improving wellbeing for the people of Leicestershire; and
- (iii) Proposes that programmes of improved Green Infrastructure standards be included within the Leicestershire Together Board's programmes of implementation for the Sustainable Community Strategy.”

9. Correspondence

East Midlands Regional LAF Conference

Mr. McWilliam informed members that the Conference would be taking place on Thursday 6 March 2008 at 10am (expected finish at 4pm) at Derby Conference Centre. The Conference was open to all LAF members and would provide members with an opportunity to discuss good practise with other LAF members in the East Midlands.

NOTED:

That the relevant details of the Conference be circulated to members with the minutes of this meeting.

S.W.

Tamsin Phipps, Rivers Access Campaign

Mr. McWilliam reported that Ms. Phipps had emailed him apologising that she had been unable to attend the previous

meeting due to a car breakdown.

NOTED:

That Ms. Phipps be invited to a future Forum meeting.

E. McW.

LAF email address

Mr. McWilliam reported that the Forum had a new email address – accessforum@leics.gov.uk.

NOTED:

That the email address be added to the website and all relevant LAF documentation.

E. McW.

10. Subgroups and working parties

Mr. McWilliam reported that membership details for each of the subgroups were still being received.

The Forum agreed that it would be beneficial to establish a Subgroup on the Voluntary Sector to discuss ways in which volunteers could assist with ROW issues.

Mr. Williams commented that the new format for the Local Area Agreement would include a section on volunteering and that ideas developed by the Subgroup could feed into this process.

NOTED:

That a Subgroup be set up on 'Volunteering Opportunities'.

E. McW.

11. LAF proposed seminar

The Forum received a report of the Director of Community Services regarding the LAF proposed seminar to be held in 2008. A copy of the report marked 'C' is filed with these minutes.

Members discussed the proposed arrangements for the seminar and those bodies that were to be invited to the event.

NOTED:

That the following bodies be added to the list of those to be invited to the seminar:

**E. McW.
A. P.**

- Parish councils;
- The Sports Partnership; and
- Activ8 Groups.

12. LAF leaflet

The Forum received a report of the Director of Community Services regarding the draft LAF leaflet. A copy of the report marked 'D' is filed with these minutes.

Some members of the Forum were concerned that the pictures included in the leaflet were not representative of the County at large. In particular, members felt that the pictures in the leaflet should depict disabled people and ethnic minorities.

13. Update on Walking Festival 2008 and other walking festivals

The Forum received a report of the Director of Community Services regarding the plans for the Walking Festival 2008. A copy of the report marked 'E' is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Carter informed members that the Walking Festival 2008 would be taking place at Snibston Discovery Park on 5 July.

The Forum was further informed of the National Forest Walking Festival, which would be taking place between 17 and 26 May 2008. Representatives from the County Council were now on the Steering Group for the Festival and it was hoped that this might lead to some promotion opportunities for the LAF.

A festival of walks organised by Loughborough University would be taking place in Loughborough in 2008. It was hoped that the LAF banner and leaflets would be finalised in time to be displayed at this festival.

14. Golf Course, Long Whatton

Ms. Allen informed members that public consultation was currently taking place for a planning proposal for a large golf course and hotel at Long Whatton.

Ms. Allen hoped that the authorities would ensure that proposals would include the construction of bridleways.

NOTED:

That the relevant planning proposals be brought to the Forum when available.

15. Dates for future meetings

The following programme of meetings for 2008 was NOTED:

Wednesday 6 February
Thursday 10 April
Thursday 12 June

Tuesday 12 August
Thursday 2 October
Tuesday 25 November

16. Growth Points

Mr. Williams briefly updated members on the New Growth Points Initiative for Leicestershire which would equate to an additional 25,000 homes in the County.

The Initiative included a programme of Green Infrastructure investment.

17. Charnwood Forest

Mr. Williams reported on the Charnwood Forest Conference which had taken place earlier in the day. Access issues in the Forest were discussed, as well as improvement plans.

It was suggested that members of the Forum would be able to sit on Subgroups for specific Charnwood Forest projects.

Some members of the Forum expressed concern at the inclusion of Sustrans' plans for 'highly engineered' and expensive routes through the Forest. Mr. Carter informed members that the overall cost of 'engineered' routes was cheaper than other routes and were more heavily used.

Those members who had attended the Conference had been invited to draw their own boundary on a map of the Forest in an effort to establish where they thought the boundary of the Forest should be.

18. Country Parks

Mr. Williams reported on changes to the budget of the Country Parks section of the Community Services Department.

The Country Parks section would see a £130,000 net reduction in the budget in 2008/09 and a further £40,000 the following year. Much of the savings would be met from the reduction in the size of the Country Parks estate.

The Chairman hoped that ROW would not suffer during this process.

19. Open Forum

Connect2 Vote

Mr. Williams informed members that voting for the Connect2 Project, which was one of 'The People's £50 Million Lottery Giveaway' schemes, would end on Monday 17 December 2007. The winner was to be announced on ITV News at

2pm the same day.

11.12.07
6.10pm – 8.10pm

CHAIRMAN