

**Minutes of the Informal
Meeting of the Dudley Borough Local Access Forum**

Tuesday, 15th July, 2014 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 4
at the Council House, Priory Road, Dudley

Present:

D Bates, T Boothroyd, R J Brooks, R Burgess, P Greenaway and S Yeadon.

Officers:

D Jacobs – Project Engineer, (Traffic and Transportation), D Keeley –
Countryside Manager and K Buckle - Democratic Services Officer.

1. **Opening Remarks**

It was noted that as the meeting was not quorate, recommendations would be made for ratification at the next quorate meeting of the Forum.

T Boothroyd advised the Forum of the resignation of J V Lea and Members thanked her for the advice and work whilst being a Member and wished her every success in her future endeavours.

There followed a discussion in relation to a future recruitment exercise and D Keeley advised that he would target recruitment through Health Walks. the Friends of the Park and would contact the Council's Communications and Public Affairs Department in order to obtain advice on how they may assist with recruitment.

2. **Election of Chair**

Recommended

That T Boothroyd be elected Chair of the Forum for this meeting of the Forum only.

3. **Election of Vice-Chair**

Recommended

That R J Brooks be elected Vice Chair for this meeting of the Forum only.

4. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of A Cutler, Councillor C Elcock, A Nicholls, Councillor G Partridge and N J Williams.

5. **Declarations of Interest**

R Burgess and S Yeadon declared an interest in Agenda Item No 6 – Coombeswood Green Wedge as a Member of Coombeswood Canal Trust and the Chair of Friends of Coombeswood Wedge and as a Member of Friends of Coombeswood respectively.

6. **Minutes**

Recommended

That the Minutes of the Forum held on 29th April, 2014, be approved as a correct record.

7. **Coombeswood Green Wedge**

D Keeley advised that the land on Coombeswood Green Wedge had successfully been transferred to the Council by St Modwen and it was noted that R Burgess and S Yeadon had contacted the Council's Park Warden H Edwards in relation to the site.

R Burgess advised of the agreement of Armstrong Engineering to transfer 100 metres of land extending towards Mucklow Hill, Halsowen to the Coombeswood Canal Trust in order that they could adopt the land and assist with maintenance costs.

It was also noted that the Leasowes Canal towpath and footpath was to be resurfaced shortly with the assistance of Section 106 funding.

Recommended

That the information reported on at the meeting be noted.

8. **Pottery Farm**

There followed a discussion in relation to accessing the right of way at Pottery Farm and the Chair and Vice-Chair advised that they would refer the matter to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan meeting.

D Jacobs confirmed that he would arrange a site visit with R Burgess, A Radford and B Jones, Structural Engineer at Pottery Farm in order to progress the matter.

Recommended

- (1) That the information reported on at the meeting, be noted.
 - (2) D Jacobs be requested to arrange the site visit to Pottery Farm.
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9. **Leasowes**

D Keeley, Countryside Manager advised of the continuing negotiations with the Halesowen Golf Club in relation to the path that encircled the Club and the signage that the Club had erected.

It was recommended that this Agenda Item be carried forward to the next meeting of the Forum for further discussion

Recommended

That the information reported on at the meeting, be noted.

10. **Hasbury Tack Farm**

It was noted that although this issue did not relate to the Council's Countryside Service D Keeley would in this instance arrange a meeting with R Burgess, P Greenaway and S Yeadon in order to investigate the possibilities of a volunteer group together with Park Wardens to clear the site. It was stressed that matters such as Hasbury Tack Farm would be assessed in the future upon a case by case basis given the lack of Council resources to deal with such issues.

Recommended

- (1) That the information reported on at the meeting, be noted.
 - (2) That D Keeley arrange the meeting with R Burgess, P Greenaway and S Yeadon in order to discuss clearing the site at Hasbury Tack Farm with the Council's Wardens.
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11. **Gating Orders**

D Jacobs referred to the new Anti Social Behaviour and Policing Act 2014 and the introduction of Public Protection Orders whereby a similar criteria to that for Gating Orders would apply. He advised that the powers under the new Act would be delegated to a Chief Council Officer and the relevant Cabinet Member, however it was unsure whether the Highway

Authority would remain a major consultee in relation to such Orders.

Following further discussion the Chair undertook to write to the Assistant Director of Environmental Management advising that the Forum wished to remain a Consultee, in relation to the new Public Protection Orders which were to replace Gating Orders.

Following further discussion and the agreement of all members it was

Recommended

That the Chair be requested to write to the Assistant Director for Environmental Management on behalf of the Forum advising of their wish to remain Consultees in relation to the above.

12. **Access/Rights of Way Issues**

It was noted that there were none to be considered.

13. **Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

The Vice Chair advised that a meeting to discuss the Rights of Way Improvement Plan had not taken place since the last meeting of the Forum, and following a request of Members to make suggestions in relation to any issues that they wished to add to the Plan, it was recommended that the styles at Hilly House and Lapal, Halesowen would be referred to a future meeting of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Recommended

That the Vice Chair be requested to inform the Rights of Way Improvement Plan meeting of problematic styles situated at Hilly House and Lapal, Halesowen .

14. **Any Other Business**

Following a request of R Burgess it was agreed by D Jacobs that he would attempt to arrange a site visit with the owners of the B&Q site, Halesowen to pursue the issue of permissive and definitive paths on the site.

D Bates reported that the Council's Planning Department had approved the work that had been requested to be completed to the Woodsetton footpath and a contractor had been appointed. He also advised of the ongoing problems with the Swanbook Valley bridge which was near to collapse and the efforts to obtain funding to repair the bridge

Recommended

That the information reported on at the meeting, be noted.

15. **Dates of Future Meetings**

Noted, that future meetings of the Forum would be held on:-

- Tuesday 23rd September, 2014
- Tuesday 3rd December, 2014
- Tuesday 17th February, 2015
- Tuesday 28th April, 2015
- Tuesday 14th July, 2015

It was noted that all future meetings would be held in Committee Room 4 at 6.00pm.

The meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.

CHAIR