

DUDLEY BOROUGH LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Tuesday, 18th February, 2014 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 4
at the Council House, Priory Road, Dudley

PRESENT:

Ms T Boothroyd (Chair)
Mr R J Brooks (Vice-Chair)
Mr D Bates, Mr R Burgess, Councillor C Elcock, Mr P Greenaway, Mrs J V
Lea, Ms A Nicholls, Mr N J Williams and Ms S Yeadon.

Officers:

Mr D Jacobs – Project Engineer, (Traffic and Transportation), Mr D Keeley –
Countryside Manager and Ms H Edwards – Park Warden, Leasowes Park (All
Directorate of the Urban Environment), Mrs K Buckle Democratic Services
Officer (Directorate of Corporate Resources).

Also in Attendance:-

Mr J Hemingway for Agenda Item No. 4 – Historic Paths on The Leasowes.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Mr A
Cutler and Councillor G Partridge.

45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Mr N Williams declared an interest in Agenda Item No's 4 – Historic Paths
on the Leasowes and 11(a) – Leasowes, as a local resident.

46. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of the Forum held on 3rd December, 2013, be
approved as a correct record.

47. HISTORIC PATHS ON THE LEASOWES

Mr J Hemingway gave a verbal presentation on the historic paths on the
Leasowes making particular reference to the general plan of the area and
the circuit path of William Shenstone referring to that part of the path

which had been lost.

Several plans of the paths surveyed on the Leasowes were circulated to Members including the William Shenstone Routes, the South Brook area of the Leasowes Estate, the Hanging Wood and Virgils Grave paths, with a request that these be reinstated. Mr Hemingway advised that the Priory Walk area of the Leasowes path had been completely lost. .

Following discussions by Members in relation to the possible reinstatement of the paths Mr D Keeley advised of the viable reasons why not all paths could be re-instated and provided re-assurances that work could be undertaken in order to re-instate as many paths as possible.

Mr D Keeley referred to the planned activities which were to be undertaken to celebrate the 300th anniversary of William Shenstone.

Mr D Jacobs referred to the paths which were currently in existence on the Leasowes and the problematic areas for re-instatement of some paths.

The Chair advised that attempts would be made to restore the paths but that this would also depend on the resources available to undertake the work involved. She also confirmed that the Forum would continue to work with the Council in order to assist with any restoration work.

Following a request made by Councillor Elcock, Ms H Edwards confirmed that she would make the necessary arrangements with Councillor Elcock to facilitate a walk on the Leasowes.

AGREED

That the information contained in the presentation and reported on at the meeting be noted.

48. CHANGE IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

Following further discussion it was:-

AGREED

That Agenda Item Number 11(a) – Leasowes , be considered as the next item of business followed by the remaining agenda items.

49. RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN – LEASOWES

Mr D Jacobs provided an update in relation to the path at the rear of the Halesowen Golf Club and that path which encircled the golf club. It was noted that those paths could become permissive with the permission of the Council as land owner and Members agreed that the above paths should be included as permissive paths.

Mr D Keeley reported on signage issues at the Golf Club and advised members of the new wording for the Council signage which was to be erected.

AGREED

- (1) That the information reported on at the meeting, be noted.
- (2) That Mr D Jacobs advise the Cabinet Members for Environment and Culture and Transport that the Forum support the inclusion of the paths at the rear of Halesowen Golf Club and the path encircling the golf club as permissive paths on the Ordnance Survey Plans supplementing the definitive network.

50. LOSS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

A report of the Vice-Chair was submitted on the Loss of Public Open Space.

The Vice-Chair suggested that the Forum become consultees on the sale of public open space by the Council and that two Forum members be appointed to consider the Public Notices in relation to such sales.

Following further discussion it was

AGREED

- (1) That the information contained in the report submitted on the Loss of Public Open Space, be noted.
- (2) That Mr D Keeley be requested to enquire whether a percentage of monies from the sale of public open spaces could be used towards the cost of maintaining public rights of way.

51. COOMBESWOOD GREEN WEDGE

Mr Keeley, Countryside Manager advised that there was no further information in relation to the transfer of land to the Council by St Modwen.

Councillor Elcock undertook to speak to relevant Council Officers in relation to the transfer of land referred to above, following consultation with Members of the Forum regarding the past and current position in relation to the Coombeswood Green Wedge.

The Chair undertook to consult Mr C Walters, Property Surveyor in the Directorate of Corporate Resources in relation to the transfer of land.

AGREED

That the information reported on at the meeting be noted.

52. POTTERY FARM

Mr D Jacobs, Project Engineer, Traffic and Transportation gave a verbal update in relation to Pottery Farm advising that progress was being made and Mr A Radford, Technician Engineer was the Officer who was consulting with the landowners.

Mr D Jacobs advised that further investigations were required in relation to the reinstatement of the path taking into account budgets, resources and future highway maintenance. He also advised that the profile of steps would require further investigation.

AGREED

- (1) That the information reported on be noted.
- (2) That Mr D Jacobs be requested to up-date the Forum at a future meeting in relation to the progress with the re-instatement of the right of way at Pottery Farm.

53. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

It was noted that there were none to be considered.

54. ACCESS/RIGHTS OF WAY ISSUES

Mr D Jacobs advised that the pre-contractual searches in relation to sales would now include searches for public rights of way which would greatly assist with updating the definitive map.

AGREED

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

55. GATING ORDERS

It was noted that there were none to be considered.

56. RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN – HASBURY/TACK FARM

It was suggested that the issue of Hasbury/Tack Farm be deferred to the next meeting of the Forum.

The Vice-Chair reported on the last Rights of Way Improvement Plan meeting and photographs of the works carried out to date were circulated to Members.

Mr D Jacobs advised that investigations in relation to the former Corbett Hospital site footpath remained ongoing.

The Chair advised that she would request the relevant Officer to investigate drainage issues at Mary Steven's Park, Stourbridge.

It was requested that the rights of way from Coney Grove to Birmingham Street, Stourbridge and Pottery Farm/Tack Farm, Halesowen be added to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Mr D Jacobs advised that sustainable transport monies had been obtained to carry out re-surfacing work to Quarry Bank High Street and the protection of a Public Right of Way in Park Lane, Halesowen was being investigated following a site visit with a Member of the Ramblers Association.

AGREED

- (1) That the information reported on at the meeting, be noted.
- (2) That the issue of Hasbury/Tack Farm be considered at the next meeting of the Fourm.
- (3) That the Vice Chair be requested to advise the Rights of Way Improvement Plan meeting of the paths referred to above.

57. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr D Keeley referred to the Local Access Forum Annual Conference which would take place on Friday 7th March, 2014 in Durham and following further discussions it was provisionally agreed that Mr R Burgess would accompany the chair, however this would be dependent upon train times.

58. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

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

- Tuesday 29th April, 2014
- Tuesday 15th July, 2014

All meetings to start at 6.00pm

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

CHAIR