



## JLAF 08

### Draft Minutes of meeting of Friday 04NOV05

Date: Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2005

Time: 2:00pm

Venue: The Carter Room, Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham. BRISTOL. BS31 2AU.

Present: David Colbourne, Bill Dawson, Ann Fay, Peter Gould, John Gunnery, Alun Morgan (JLAF Chair), Ray Newbigin (JLAF Vice Chair), Ron Phelps, Ken Scott, Andrew Short, Adam Stratton, Janet Wallis, Margaret Wilson (JLAF members)

Matthew Coles (South Gloucestershire Council), Rennie Dickins (South Gloucestershire Council), Chris Hogg (JLAF Secretary), Will Steel (Bath & North East Somerset Council)

#### Action

		Action
1	<b>Introductions</b>	
2	<b>Apologies</b> Cllr Chris Cray (Bath & North East Somerset Council), Peter Hart, Mark McGuinness, Cllr Christopher Orlik (Bristol City Council), Cllr Peter Tyzack, Robin Winfield (JLAF members)  John Roy (Bristol City Council), Oliver Giles (Kennet & Avon Canal Rural Transport Partnership)	
3	<b>JLAF Membership</b> Paul Wynne has resigned from the JLAF following a change in jobs. The resulting vacancy will be advertised in the spring along with the memberships that expire before the July 2006 meeting.	
4	<b>Declarations of interest</b> There were no declarations of interest raised under this item.	
5	<b>Minutes of the last meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2005</b> The minutes were <i>agreed</i> as an accurate record of the meeting	
6	<b>Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda</b> There were no matters raised from the Minutes of the last meeting. Matters for this or future meetings: <b>South Gloucestershire Council member training information pack:</b> this document, commended by the chair, was available to view at the meeting – members can request their own copy. <b>JLAF membership applications:</b> A discussion on the application process for the JLAF, particularly on the application form (for the next meeting). <b>Single Farm Payments and Cross-compliance:</b> South Gloucestershire Council had received a letter from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) about cross-compliance – where farm payments can be reduced if certain requirements have not been met. The letter draws particular attention to payment deductions for public rights of way 'breaches'. The letter requests that highway authorities send reports to the RPA for <i>any</i> breaches regarding	<b>Members</b> <b>Secretary</b>

	<p>public rights of way, which would include obstructions, for breaches from January 2005. It was initially thought that the issuing of notices would be the trigger for cross-compliance, so this is more stringent than predicted. The possibility of mandatory reporting of these breaches to the RPA is being considered. South Gloucestershire Council is considering offering to farmers a farm visit to provide a check for compliance. There was some discussion about the mechanism of reporting breaches, and a concern expressed if it could be possible for breaches to be reported to the RPA before landowners were aware of a problem and had a chance to remedy it (the example being given of a windblown tree obstructing a public right of way. Single Farm Payments and Cross Compliance is to be added to the agenda of the next meeting, and secretary to include an internet link to the letter in the minutes. [the letter is not available on the internet for these minutes – to be actioned]</p>	<p><b>S Glos. / Secretary</b></p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Defra consultation on diversions of rights of way:</b> (1) for the protection of sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs); and (2) temporary diversions for dangerous works.</p> <p>A drafted response was distributed in additional background papers. The following amendments were made:  At Q1 and Q6, relevant parish and town councils should be added as consultees. In addition at Q1 local highway authorities should be added. At Q9 the suggestion of display of notices at parish and town notice boards should be included. A guarantee that existing statutory user groups would be included in formal consultation for the order to be added. Advice that the administrative costs for SSSI diversions for the improvement of nature conservation should be borne by English Nature should be added to the consultation response. The extension of the notice period for diversions for dangerous works to 30 days was supported. The consultation response, with amendments, was <i>agreed</i> by members for submission to Defra.</p>	<p><b>Chair/ Secretary</b></p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Rights of Way Improvement Plan</b></p> <p><b>a. Joint Local Transport Plan update</b>  There was an update on this: The final Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) is to be published by the end of March 2006. The JLAF's previous contributions to a framework for rights have way have been incorporated into a Strategy Statement on Local Rights of Way. In addition, there will be many references to improvements to rights of way in the main document of the JLTP. In terms of the JLTP this should improve the standing of rights of way and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The JLTP also introduces a premise for the ROWIP that includes 'to increase use of Local Rights of Way'.</p> <p><b>b. JLAF responses and ROWIP update</b>  There was a request at the last meeting for suggestions for the ROWIP. There have been 52 suggestions in responses from JLAF members and there was a request for more submissions from all members to represent all interest groups. These suggestions can be for general principles for the ROWIP and improvements, or specific examples of potential improvements.</p> <p>The meeting was referred to the paper at pages 2-5 of the background papers introducing an approach for the assessment or research part of the ROWIP. This summarises an approach to the assessment looking at sample areas in detail, for example a number of parishes or urban wards. The paper describes how these assessments would be carried out. The JLAF members were asked for their advice on three areas: The area approach itself, additions or amendments to the factors to consider in selecting the sample areas, shown at pages 4-5 of the paper, and the premise of 'increasing use of local rights of way'.  Suggestions at the meeting included the potential for improvements for disabled people [this is included in legislation, specifically for blind and</p>	<p><b>Members</b></p> <p><b>Members</b></p>

	<p>partially sighted people and those with mobility problems]. Once the authorities have set the sample areas, the JLAF will set up a Rights of Way Improvement Plan group to look at this subject, with an open invitation extended to all members. The secretary will facilitate email updates for this group.</p>	<b>Members/ Secretary</b>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Access Land</b> A letter was sent by the Chair to the landowner of the Lansdown Access Land as agreed at the last meeting. There has been no reply as yet.</p> <p>The summary in the background papers, of access land works within Bath &amp; North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire were referred to. Examples of works were shown on mapping at the meeting. Points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of the grant for these works: £13630.50 for South Gloucestershire and £7130.25 for Bath &amp; North East Somerset.</li> <li>• Specific suggestions for works at Breach Hill: secretary to check</li> <li>• A request for updates when works are complete</li> <li>• A request for information on works on access land in coming years</li> </ul>	<b>Secretary Secretary Authorities</b>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Regional meeting of LAFs and National Countryside Access Forum (NCAF)</b> The Chair summarised a regional meeting of LAFs that he had attended with the Vice-Chair and Secretary. He will also be speaking at a meeting of the National Countryside Access Forum (NCAF), a public meeting, on Monday the 14<sup>th</sup> November in Bristol (details in background papers). The regional meeting suggested the following items for the NCAF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single contact and website in government for access issues (including LAFs)</li> <li>• Continued regional LAF meetings every 2 years</li> <li>• LAF representation on the NCAF</li> <li>• A requirement on organisations (including the MOD/ Defence Estates) to consult and involve LAFs</li> <li>• The possible loss of access provision between Countryside Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) schemes (this was thought a possibility if the terms of HLS were more onerous than the terms of Countryside Stewardship, or alternatively if payments under HLS increased compensation due for PROW dedication)</li> </ul> <p>The JLAF suggested additional subjects for the NCAF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The promotion of public rights of way for disabled users</li> <li>• (as a landowner suggestion) the possibility of enabling agreed farm scale diversion plans for public rights of way. It was suggested that an example provided to the JLAF at a future date would be helpful.</li> </ul>	<b>Chair</b>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>National review of LAFs and Defra consultation on Local Access Forum Regulations</b> The national review of LAF reports produced for the Countryside Agency were available to view at the meeting – members can request their own copy. A amended draft response was distributed in additional background papers. The following amendments were made: Proposal 7: to remove: "On balance, we consider that the minimum number should remain at 10" because it was suggested that some forums might not be able to exist with so few members, and it would be better for a small forum to exist than to be disbanded. To add "there should be a maximum of 2 councillors in a forum of a membership below 10 to avoid the dominance of the authorities in an independent forum". View B: To add "contractual rights" after "riparian ownership" and a suggestion that this area might be considered if proposed for government legislation. (the government is considering extending access to the coast. View C: to amend "a maximum of three councillors in a Local Access Forum, or a maximum of one Councillor from each appointing authority in the case of</p>	

	<p>Joint Local Access Forums" to convey its intended meaning ["a maximum of three councillors in a Local Access Forum, and in the case of Joint Local Access Forums one additional Councillor member for a fourth and each subsequent appointing authority."]</p> <p>View D: to change the second sentence so that it is an answer to the question in the consultation.</p> <p>The consultation response, with amendments, was <i>agreed</i> by members for submission to Defra.</p>	<b>Chair/ Secretary</b>
<b>12</b>	<p><b>Updates:</b></p> <p><b>a. Bath Definitive Map Project</b> The progress of the project was complimented.</p> <p><b>b. Cycle Maps for the Avon area</b> These have been published and any amendments can be submitted to the secretary.</p> <p><b>c. Bath &amp; North East Somerset Strategy for Horse Riders</b> The 12 month trial of routes for access to equestrians will commence shortly. A risk assessment of the routes has been carried out and some recommended works are to be carried out. The risk assessment was complimented by the chair.</p> <p><b>d. Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill</b> An verbal update of the current situation was given, though will be outdated within a week of the meeting as the bill is due to have a third reading in the House of Lords. The use of historical evidence of 'horse and cart' evidence to record Byways Open to All Traffic and the consequences for modification order applications already submitted to highway authorities is being considered by parliament. Also, the bill if passed, will enable the creation of the new executive agency of Defra: Natural England. The secretary will update members on the progression of this legislation.</p> <p><b>e. Liaison Groups</b> The agendas of these meetings were distributed in additional background papers. Any queries can be directed at the secretary.</p>	<b>Members</b>
<b>13</b>	<p><b>The next meeting JLAF09 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2006</b></p> <p>Proposed agenda items: The JLAF application process Single Farm Payments and Cross-compliance Review of JLAF members' ROWIP suggestions (carried from last minutes)</p> <p>Following Meeting Dates: The dates for the next year of main meetings are on the Background Papers for the meeting. The chair checked with those present that the present location for meetings, Fry Club in Keynsham, was convenient for all present, and proposed that it continue to be used for JLAF meetings. Any members not present to advise. Following meeting dates are in the background papers.</p>	<b>Members</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Close</b>	