



Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire

JLAF 22

Draft Minutes of meeting, Friday 5th November 2010

Date: Friday, 5th November 2010
 Time: 2:00pm
 Venue: The Carter Room, Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham. BRISTOL. BS31 2AU

Present: JLAF Members:
 Chris Bloor, Cllr Trevor Blythe (Bristol City Council), Cllr Malcolm Bridge (South Gloucestershire Council), Jill Britten, Bill Dawson, Peter Gould, Ann Fay, Roger Fowler, John Gunnery, Robert Killen, Bernadette Macey, Ray Newbigin (JLAF Chairman), Ron Phelps (JLAF Deputy Chairman), Margaret Wilson, , Robin Winfield (JLAF Vice Chairman),

Also in attendance:
 David Bruce, Rennie Dickins (South Gloucestershire Council), Chris Hogg (JLAF Secretary), Graeme Stark (Bath & North East Somerset Council), Richard Thomas (Natural England), Duncan Venison (Bristol City Council).

Action

A	INTRODUCTIONS	
A1	<p>Welcome to new members and introductions The Chairman welcomed all present.</p> <p>Duncan Venison was introduced as the new manager of the Bristol PROW team and Graeme Stark was introduced as the representative for B&NES Council.</p> <p>There was no invited speaker on the Agenda to allow plenty of time for a discussion of the JROWIP and OutdoorsWest.</p>	
A2	<p>Apologies JLAF Members: Cllr Chris Cray (Bath & North East Somerset Council), Colette Linehan, David Waterstone</p> <p>James Blockley (Cotswold Way National Trail), Andy Short.</p> <p>Members Not Present: Adam Stratton</p> <p>Resignations: None.</p>	
A3	<p>Declarations of interest No declarations were made.</p>	
A4	<p>Minutes of the last meeting on 2nd July 2010. The minutes were <u>agreed</u> as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	

A5	<p>Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda</p> <p>Bill Dawson raised the issue of Haycombe Lane and queried what progress had been made removing the obstructions. Graeme Stark stated that the issues at Haycombe Lane unfortunately remain unresolved partly due to the officer dealing with the case being made redundant. The Council will work to readdress these problems and will keep Bill Dawson updated as requested.</p>	
B	<p>MAIN BUSINESS</p>	
B1	<p>Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Implementation</p> <p>OutdoorsWest</p> <p>Chris Hogg (JLAF Secretary) gave a presentation on the OutdoorsWest website. It was explained that the website has been devised in response to research carried out as part of the JROWIP which identified the need for better information for the public. It is hoped that the website will increase use of the PROW network and be the link between the public and the outdoors and activities. The website structure, proposed features and timescales were explained. Chris concluded by thanking members of the JLAF OutdoorsWest Working Group for their contributions and asked for members' feedback.</p> <p>Suggestions for inclusion in the website included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse links from Traveline • Information on electric fences and pacemakers • Information on what crops and livestock are likely to be present during different seasons • Information on acceptable height of overhead vegetation • Reporting issues • Location of green infrastructure on maps • A calendar of events <p>It was also suggested that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website is publicised with leaflets on buses • Information is taken to schools to encourage them to use PROWs to get to school <p>Strong support was expressed for the website and the work which has been completed to date. A copy of the presentation will be posted on the JLAF website with the draft minutes of this meeting.</p> <p>Joint Local Transport Plan ("JLTP3") and the ROWIP</p> <p>Two meetings, regarding the JLTP3 and the ROWIP, have been attended and these were worthwhile as the basic communication involving PROWs in their different forms would otherwise be overlooked in transport matters. Focus tends to be on public transport without thought as to how to make the most of it by providing the basic connection of paths to the bus stops and the railway stations.</p> <p>Walking and Cycling Major Funding</p> <p>Ray Newbiggin emailed the Councillors who sit on the Joint Transport Executive Committee of the West of England Partnership and Cllr Charles Gerrish (the Chair of the Joint Transport Executive Committee and Bath & North East Somerset Council's Executive Member for Customer Services) regarding Walking and Cycling Major Funding and received a very positive response. In the engagement draft of the Joint Local Transport Plan 3 (JLTP3) was reference to a 'Cycling Major Transport Scheme'. The JLAF have been pressing to rename this as 'Walking and Cycling Major Transport Scheme, to keep it in the Final JLTP3 document, and for the Councils to progress work on it.</p> <p>The email addressed the issue of major schemes and highlighted the benefits in terms of health promotion and the fact that Cycling City is on time and on budget. Chris Bloor highlighted the issue of health equalities, as detailed in the Marmot Review, and said that he'd email around a copy of the report.</p> <p><i>[Chris Bloor's Note on Walking, Running and Health is placed on the JLAF website.]</i></p>	<p>Chris Bloor</p>

B2	<p>Gating Orders</p> <p>It was reiterated that the JLAF should be informed of any proposed Gating Orders and that they have not been made aware of any new applications.</p> <p>In South Gloucestershire there are gates in place but the finger post is still present at Kipling Road. The gates have been paid for by Safer South Gloucestershire; the alternative route needs to be signed.</p> <p>There have been no new applications for Gating Orders in Bristol.</p> <p>B&NES Council is preparing a Gating Order Policy.</p>	
B3	<p>JLAF Project Progress</p> <p>i. Chew Valley Lake</p> <p>Robin Winfield stated that B&NES Council have withdrawn the offer of funding and Bristol Water have made cuts resulting in redundancies. Margaret Wilson has met with the local parish councils to discuss the scheme.</p> <p>It was agreed that Bath & North East Somerset Planning Committee should be requested to accept the planning application and that additional time is allowed for the completion of the development. It was noted that Chew Valley Lake has great potential to be well used by disabled people.</p> <p>ii. River Avon Riverside Routes</p> <p>Christine Pouncett has briefed Ron Phelps about the River Avon Riverside Routes and it was agreed that things are moving in the right direction. The creation order at Marks and Spencer's land at Avonmead is being progressed and a licence is being considered from Network Rail.</p> <p>iii. Bridleway link at Frampton Cotterell</p> <p>There is a proposed change in status from footpath to bridleway and the path is currently first considered as a diversion behind a hedge. The new route has to cross the road twice but it is considered that this is preferable to running along the road.</p> <p>iv. Lansdown Access Land</p> <p>The Lansdown Access Land case is now complete and is fully open and available for use by the public. It was considered that this is a good news story and should be publicised as such. It was unfortunate that the Bath Chronicle did not take up the press release. The new route could form part of a promoted route but only once other issues on adjoining paths have been resolved. The Town and Country Harriers voted the new footpath to be the best of their 52 runs in the last year.</p>	Chris Hogg
C	<u>ITEMS FOR RATIFICATION</u>	
C1	<p>JLAF Response to "South Gloucestershire Council Core Strategy"</p> <p>The JLAF draft response to "South Gloucestershire Council Core Strategy", contained in the Background Papers, was considered and ratified.</p>	
C2	<p>JLAF Response to "Natural environment; an invitation to shape the nature of England"</p> <p>The JLAF draft response to "Natural environment; an invitation to shape the nature of England", contained in the Background Papers, was considered and ratified.</p>	

D	<u>ITEMS TO REPORT/ FOR INFORMATION</u>	
D1	<p>JLAF activities</p> <p>Cotswold Access Conference (6th July) Conference attended by local authorities, LAFs, user groups and Simon Smith from the Cotswold AONB Board. A 'My Countryside' bid has been made by the Cotswold AONB Board for £700k. At the conference, an estimated was quoted that for every £20k invested on Exmoor, tourism brings in £80k. It was highlighted that tourism relies on agriculture for things such as the natural beauty which attracts people. Wincombe in the Cotswolds has been designated a walking town and has its own website. Doug Holger from Natural England talked about ROWIPs, and recommended that ROWIP working groups provide a clear vision.</p> <p>Bristol Walking Strategy (23rd July) This strategy is being prepared by Transport Policy in Bristol City Council. There have been public consultation meetings, including in September. The strategy is important, and was described as a valuable process in 'recording the obvious'.</p> <p>South Gloucestershire Core Strategy (30th July) There was strong support from the attendees at the conference for Public Rights of Way, and a general concern that Public Rights of Way might not be sufficiently considered in the Core Strategies. This was made clear at the conference.</p> <p>LAF SW England Regional Conference (20th October) SW Regional Conference was held at the offices of the Dartmoor National Park Authority. It highlighted how seriously the Forestry Commission currently takes access and leisure, though acknowledged that there are major changes proposed. Peter Ashcroft who works for the NHS across South West England, who spoke at the conference, will speak to the JLAF in March next year.</p>	
D2	<p>News from the PROW teams</p> <p>South Gloucestershire Council The team are likely to lose one of their six and a half (full time equivalent) members of staff and although 2009/10 was the best year for funding their capital budget has been reduced in 2010/11 by 30% and their revenue budget has been reduced by 10%.</p> <p>Bristol City Council. There has been a change in management at Bristol City Council but the PROW team will be staying the same. Work is due to start at Conham River Path in the next two months carrying out soft engineering works. The first repairs will be at critical points of erosion and the contractors will then move onto the next problem area, as far as available funds will allow. The National Trust is in agreement with regards to the proposals for the Severn Way near the Portway. Fencing has been erected at the Horseshoe Bend. 77 new signs, some of which include destination and distance, have been erected as a result of the condition survey. Work is ongoing on the Festival Way, as part of Cycle City, and a new footbridge is being installed on Muller Way.</p> <p>Work is underway to consolidate the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) and to republish. The last DMS was published in 1966 and there has since been lots of development, making the base maps difficult to interpret. The Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee has asked the PROW team for a plan for this works and the plan will be referred back to Committee once complete.</p> <p>Bath & North East Somerset Council. Bath & North East Somerset Council has made the Rights of Way Team Manager post and the Definitive Map Officer redundant. Sheila Petherbridge has been covering Stuart Ballard's post while he is away in sick leave. Jenny King has now completed the work to record AQ78 (now BC62/1) as a public footpath. Jenny is currently working</p>	

	<p>with Alison Sherwin to get a bridleway dedication and to carry out the necessary works on site to open the path to walkers, horse riders and cyclists. There have been three Town or Village Green Registration Applications on the line of the Bath Rapid Transit Scheme which are likely to result in three public inquiries in the New Year costing the Authority in the region of £45k in total; Bernadette Macey recalls walking the footpaths which cross these pieces of land.</p>	
D3	<p>Public Rights of Way Liaison Groups</p> <p>Bristol City Council. The members reviewed the agendas in the background papers.</p> <p>South Gloucestershire Council The members reviewed the agendas in the background papers.</p> <p>Bath & North East Somerset Council. B&NES Council's PROW Liaison Group has been suspended following the two officers who serviced the group being made redundant earlier this year. Ray Newbiggin asked that this decision is looked at again and that the meetings are cut by a third rather than being cut altogether. Graeme Stark agreed to consider this option and to report back to the JLAF once a decision had been made.</p> <p><i>[Report from Graeme Stark: As the JLAF will be aware we have regrettably had to stop holding the PROW Liaison Group meetings following a restructure within the Council and the loss of the officers who serviced the meetings. However David Waterstone (the local Ramblers' Association representative) has kindly offered to organise and run a similar replacement Liaison Group where interested parties can discuss the practical issues relating to the management of the PROW network in B&NES; it is hoped that this new meeting will resolve the JLAF's concerns.]</i></p>	Graeme Stark
E	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Trevor Blythe raised the issue of the proposed sell off of Forestry Commission land and stated that he thought that the JLAF should object: "The government has committed to spending £100m to save other nations' forests, which is appropriate, but are also looking to make £5bn by selling of UK forests". General concerns for raised regarding access to forests and the protection of them. The Secretary stated that the government are due to carry out a consultation on this matter in January when the JLAF should respond.</p> <p><i>[A briefing on the Forestry proposals was subsequently placed on the JLAF website.]</i></p> <p>Natural England, Defra and the Forestry Commission commissioned a new survey called Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) to provide baseline and trend data on how people use the natural environment in England. Rennie Dickens has agreed to write ½ page of A4 about MENE.</p> <p><i>[A briefing on MENE is placed on the JLAF website.]</i></p> <p>Roger Fowler has just returned from holidays in the US and Spain and highlighted that they spend £6,000 for one weekend trail riding in Spain and that this money could have been spend in the UK economy if the Brecon Beacons, Exmoor etc. had suitable trail riding routes.</p> <p>The issue of the Batheaston Riverside Path was raised and it was confirmed by Graeme Stark that the Council is seeking the necessary budget to complete the works in the 2010/11 financial year.</p>	Rennie Dickens
F	<p>The next meeting JLAF23 at 2pm on the 4th March 2011 at Fry Club, Somerdale, Keynsham. BRISTOL. BS31 2AU</p> <p>Subsequent meetings are scheduled for 1st July 2011 and 4th November 2011.</p>	
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