

NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

THURSDAY 19th August 2010

PROCESSES FOR LAF COMMUNICATION

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 At its' last meeting on 20th May 2010, the Forum resolved to discuss the way in which communications are handled between the Forum and the County Council at this meeting. Discussions have taken place between the Chair and the County Council in order to define the proposals outlined in this report.

2.0 CONTACT POINT FOR EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 2.1 The point of contact for all consultations and correspondence from external organisations shall be the Secretary to the North Yorkshire Local Access Forum, Jane Wilkinson. To try and ensure that this contact point is widely appreciated, a standard letter should be sent to a range of parties asking them to ensure their records are up to date. There may be times when organisations communicate with the chair which is acceptable, although it will not be encouraged.

3.0 CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE LAF

- 3.1 To ensure that the Forum is seen as speaking with one voice, all correspondence from the Local Access Forum should be endorsed and sent in the name of the Chair, or when not available the Vice Chair. Correspondence should always be sent on Local Access Forum headed paper, not from North Yorkshire County Council.

4.0 SECRETARIAT

- 4.1 Jane Wilkinson (NYCC) will act as secretary to the Local Access Forum. The role of Secretary will include:
- First point of contact for all external correspondence
 - Circulating materials received to all LAF members
 - Preparing and circulating agendas for LAF meetings
 - Collating and circulating papers for inclusion on LAF meeting agendas (The Secretary will not draft papers or correspondence but may at times format materials sent by others for inclusion in meeting discussions)
 - Drafting and circulating minutes of LAF meetings.

- Preparing, agreeing (with the Chair) and circulating agendas for LAF meetings

5.0 ROUTINE ADMINISTRATION

- 5.1 In addition to the secretariat support provided there may be times when the Economic & Rural Services Admin team (ERS admin) will provide further routine support.
- 5.2 Such additional admin support needs will either be identified by the secretary (in conjunction with Aidan Rayner, NYCC Public Rights of Way Team Leader) or by request of the chair of the LAF (through the Team Leader). In practice this is most frequently going to be identified, agreed and minuted at LAF meetings. Whilst there may have been a tentative agreement to publicise ERS admin (Kate Gray) as an external point of contact this should not in the future be followed.

6.0 MEETING MINUTES

- 6.1 During LAF meetings the chair, along with the LAF secretariat, will clearly identify action points and ensure they are adequately minuted. These should, as far as of possible, define who will be responsible for delivering the actions and the timescale.

7.0 RESPONSE TO CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 To deal with consultations and to ensure a consistent and joint approach is taken in expressing the LAF's views it is proposed that the protocol set out in Appendix 1 is followed.
- 7.2 Key to this route is for LAF meetings or sub groups to clearly agree which member will draft the response in the light of the meeting's views.
- 7.3 There may be instances when timetables will not allow the matter to be discussed at a meeting (main or sub group). In these circumstances, the consultation should still be sent to all members and one LAF member will need to receive and collate comments into a draft joint response from the LAF. In all cases, the Chair will need to make a decision as to the whether there is sufficient consensus before approving and sending the LAF reply.
- 7.4 No-one should speak for or claim to speak for the LAF other than the Chair (or Vice Chair as appropriate). The protocol suggests a means of gaining views from all members and as far as can be achieved spreading the load of drafting responses or

forming LAF opinions. In this way, external organisations can gain the confidence that opinions expressed by the LAF have been duly considered and a consensus view reached.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that members adopt this approach to LAF communication.

Contact:
John Taylor
Chairman

