

## North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 17 October 2018, commencing at 10 am

### **Present**

Roma Haigh (Chair), Michael Bartholomew, Rachel Connolly, Edward Dennison, County Councillor Robert Heseltine, County Councillor David Jeffels, Barrie Mouny, Sue Raper, Paul Sherwood and Richard Smith

Officers: Ian Kelly, Countryside Access Manager (Business and Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council), Neil Leighton (Senior Technical Officer, Highways & Transportation), and Melanie Carr (Legal & Democratic Services - Secretary to the Local Access Forum)

### **251 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from George Bateman & Doug Cartwright.

### **252 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2018**

#### **Resolved -**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2018 be agreed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

### **253 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

With regard to Minute 242, County Councillor David Jeffels confirmed he had a verbal update to give regarding the GOAT Scheme, which would be given as part of Agenda item 7.

### **254 Public Questions or Statements**

There were no public questions or statements.

### **255 Attendance of Executive Member for Access**

County Councillor Don Mackenzie, Executive Member for Access provided a verbal report updating the Forum on his areas of responsibility i.e. Highways, Passenger Transport, Public Rights of Way and Broadband.

In regard to highways, he confirmed:

- The County Council was responsible for 6K miles of Highways across North Yorkshire, not including the A64 and parts of the A66 and A19.
- NYCC prioritised maintenance of highways, but expenditure on highways was always under pressure
- Since 2015 the maintenance work had been focussed on rural roads with 16-17% still needing repair.
- 2-4% of principal roads across the region required repair.
- NYCC invested £1.5m annually in bus subsidies for rural areas

- NYCC contributed £8m a year to the national concessionary fare scheme
- Investment in York to Harrogate rail line to provide an additional train per hour
- There had been problems with Transpennine Express (TPE) timetables since the changes instigated in May 2018
- Improvements were planned in TPE rolling stock

In regard to Public Rights of Way, Cllr Mackenzie outlined the new prioritisation system for repairs to over 4,000 miles of public footpaths across the region. He also detailed improvements in the virtual highway (Broadband) and mobile telephony:

- 90% of all properties across the region were now superfast enabled, increasing to 95% as a result of Phase 3
- Funding was now in place to increase superfast coverage up to 97-98% by 2020
- 4 main mobile phone operators across the region
- 1m funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership to improve mobile coverage, with 5-6 new masts to be erected across the county.

Forum Members thanked the Executive Member for his presentation and raised a number of issues:

- An increase in the use of mobile scooters on roads, particularly in the Easingwold area was a growing concern. As was on road parking.
- There were insufficient cycle racks and parking provision being included in new developments, which was having an adverse effect on villages and towns across the region - It was suggested that the standards set by NYCC that Planning Authorities across North Yorkshire are currently following, should be reconsidered.
- The cost of hosting cycle tours e.g. Tour de Yorkshire, Grand DePart & the forthcoming UCI World Championship due to be hosted by Harrogate in 2019, and their negative impact on local businesses in those villages not on the route.
- The problem with overgrown vegetation alongside footpaths between villages, thereby limiting their use.
- The need for better liaison between bus and train companies in order to improve the alignment of their timetables.
- The principle of having no public access to areas where the public has a right to roam

The Executive Member noted Forum members concerns and confirmed:

- Sustainable transport measures were the responsibility of the Planning Authority i.e. the District Councils.
- Interim minimum standards were in place and would be reviewed in due course.
- Occupants of town/village centre developments were discouraged from owning vehicles and therefore parking places were limited.
- Newer developments were expected to provide a more generous provision of cycle facilities.
- The Executive were appreciative of the costs and challenges associated with hosting a cycle tour and agreed there needed to be more transparency around that going forward. However he drew the Forum's attention to the benefits of hosting cycle tours, citing the £98m earned across the region from Tour de Yorkshire in 2018 and the lasting legacy through encouraging tourism. He highlighted the recorded £1 billion increase in tourism across the region in the last year, and also confirmed that whilst cycle tours did generate the need for highways repairs in preparation, they were usually resolved through the re-scheduling of planned repairs rather than adding additional repairs to the schedule of works.
- Each area officer had some funding for highways and footpath repairs and each county Councillor has a £10K annual budget for addressing local issues. In both cases the funding could be used to address the issues preventing use of local footpaths.

The Executive Member also confirmed he was not aware of any examples where there was no access to areas where the public had a right to roam, and asked for further information so that the issue could be examined.

**Resolved -**

That:

- i. The Executive Member's annual update be noted
- ii. Forum members provide examples of where there was no public access to areas where the public had a right to roam

**256 Countryside Access Services Review Update**

Considered -

The report of NYCC's Countryside Access Manager providing an update on progress with a comprehensive review of the Public Rights of Way Service.

Ian Kelly, the Countryside Access Manager drew Forum members' attention to the progress made to date, as detailed in the report. In particular he highlighted the possibility of increasing IT functionality in the future, the revisions to working processes to include the work of volunteers, and the planned introduction of a customer portal early in the next financial year following a trialling of the software by a group of volunteers.

Forum members welcomed the planned improvements to IT functionality within CAMS as some had experienced problems with tracking the issues they had previously reported. It was also agreed that the workshop on the customer journey mapping had been an excellent initiative.

**Resolved -**

That the Forum noted the progress and thanked Ian Kelly for the update.

**257 Zonal TRO on Blubberhouses Moor**

Considered -

The report of Michael Bartholomew, which presented a draft proposal for recommending that the zonal TRO on the network of UURs on Blubberhouses Moor to re-imposed and made permanent.

Forum members considered the draft proposal, and Neil Leighton (Senior Technical Officer, Highways & Transportation) provided an overview of the process for initiating a TRO and the procedures and processes associated with a judicial review. He also confirmed that from the time of a TRO being advertised, the Highways Authority has 2 years to impose it on the network on UURs.

**Resolved -**

That:

- i. Michael Bartholomew be thanked for his work on the draft proposal.
- ii. The Recommendation as worded, be submitted to NYCC

## 258 District Council & LAF Project Updates

Considered -

The report of the Secretary giving LAF members the opportunity to update the Forum on District Council liaison and other LAF representative project activity since the last meeting.

County Councillor David Jeffels provided a verbal update on his recent successful meeting with Ian Kelly (NYCC Countryside Access Manager) to discuss the GOAT Scheme (Going Out & About), which resulted in an agreement that the Scheme would be taken forward and may be extended to include other elements of the national curriculum. County Councillor David Jeffels agreed to provide a written report to a later meeting.

Rachel Connolly again raised the issue of the under provision of cycling facilities and gave Northallerton Prison as an example where the knock on effect was causing issues in the streets in the vicinity of the prison.

Richard Smith provided feedback on his previously submitted consultation response on Harrogate's draft Local Plan. It was noted that approximately 30% of the recommendations he had made had been taken account of and reflected in revisions to the Plan, prior to its submission.

David Barraclough introduced his consultation response to Richmondshire's draft Local Plan review, shown at Appendix 1 of the report, and gave an overview of the work he had undertaken.

Paul Sherwood introduced his update on the Highways England A66 Northern Trans-Pennine route Stakeholder Reference Group Stage 1 meeting that he recently attended, shown at Appendix 2 of the report, and confirmed he would be attending future meetings.

Roma Haigh confirmed that her work on the NYLAF webpage had been progressed and that she would circulate a draft by email for Forum members' consideration. In regard to the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2019-2024 it was agreed that Roma Haigh and Rachel Connolly would work together to produce a consultation response by consultation deadline. In addition, Roma sought support for attending future meetings of the Yorkshire Wold Way and Cleveland Way Partnership.

Finally, Rachel Connolly raised concerns about the lack of a safe route for Non-Motorised Users (NMU) as part of the Bedale and Lemming Bypass (BALB). Apparently it had previously been agreed between NYCC Highways, the LAF and the British Horse Society that if the LAF and BHS did not object to the Bypass proposals and force a Public Inquiry at the time of the planning application, that a bridleway link from Ham Hall to Roughley Corner would be provided along the newly constructed Private Means of Access track.

Rachel reported that the route was very much needed by NMU and at the moment local horse riders were only allowed to use the route by restricted permission of the land owner. The BHS received confirmation from NYCC Highways that the legal creation of the route had been delegated to NYCC RoW. However RoW confirmed that NYCC were not taking on any more routes or liability, so it was now very unlikely the public nature of the route would ever be confirmed.

**Resolved -**

That:

- i. The updates on the various projects be noted

- ii. Paul Sherwood to support the work on the Yorkshire Wold Way and Cleveland Way Partnership

- iii. Roma Haigh circulate the draft NYLAF webpage.
- iv. The draft consultation response to Richmondshire's draft Local Plan Review be approved, and submitted by the Secretary before 29 October 2018
- v. Rachel Connolly pursue the issue of the NMU link from Ham Hall to Roughley Corner on behalf of the LAF.

## 259 Secretary's Update Report

Considered -

The report of the Secretary which updated on developments since the last meeting.

Forum members noted the Minutes from the meeting of the Regional Access Forum held on 26 September 2018, shown at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Secretary drew attention to the draft Annual Report at Appendix 2 of the report and the Chair agreed to provide her contribution to the report ahead of its submission.

In consideration of the LAF Principles and Advice Sheet at Appendix 3 of the report, Forum members questioned whether the Principles properly reflected the purpose of a LAF. After much discussion it was agreed that three members of the Forum would work together to re-draft the Principles, taking account of good practice and Terms of Reference in place elsewhere nationally.

The Secretary confirmed that the process for recruiting new Forum members was underway, the voluntary position of Forum member had been advertised. Members were reminded to submit their applications by the deadline of 29 October 2018 and it was noted that interviews would be held on 12 November 2018. Members expressed their view that Forum membership should be renewed by thirds, on an annual basis so as always to retain a degree of experience within the membership. Officers confirmed this approach would be considered.

### Resolved -

That:

- i. The update report be noted.
- ii. Michael Bartholomew, Rachel Connolly & Paul Sherwood work together to revise the LAF principles for consideration by the LAF at a future meeting.
- iii. The Secretary circulate a copy of the LAF Principles and LAF Advice documents for review ahead of the next LAF meeting in October 2018.

## 261 Forward Plan

Considered -

The Secretary invited members to consider items of business for future meetings and confirmed that a Highways England representative would be in attendance at the next meeting in January 2016.

**Resolved -**

That:

- i. The following items be added to the agenda for the forthcoming January 2019 meeting:
  - An update on the Review of the LAF Principles
  - A written update on the GOAT scheme
  
- ii. The following items be added to the work programme for scheduling to a future meeting:
  - Attendance of North Yorkshire Police
  - An update on work to identify where there is no public access to areas where the public has a right to roam

The meeting concluded at 12:37pm  
MC