

## Notes

of the Informal Virtual Meeting of the

## North Somerset Local Access Forum

### Tuesday 26 October 2021

held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Commenced: 18.00      Meeting Concluded: 19.00

#### **Councillors:**

Mike Bird, Robert Payne

Absent: Ann Harley

#### **Independent Members**

#### **Rights of Way and Access Land Users:**

Sheila Dixon, Tina Hamilton, Julie Main (Chair), Marianne McAleer

Absent: Nikki Barton, Jonathan Brownnett

#### **Landowning Interests:**

Apologies: Richard Jones, Robert Parsons

Absent: Bernard Gray, John Harris

#### **Other Interests:**

Peter McAleer, Rhiannon Robinson (Vice-Chair)

Absent: Gillian Hopkins, Bob Rischmiller

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Elaine Bowman (Secretary), Andrew Carroll and David Holtby (Place Directorate)

Roz Hime (Clerk, Corporate Services Directorate)

#### **Also in attendance**

Tim Lewis (Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum)

#### **LAF      Welcome and apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**

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The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, including Tim Lewis of the Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum attending as an observer, and the apologies were noted.

The Chair advised the Forum that Paul Rowland and Philip Bruss had both left their roles at the National Trust; a new National Trust representative was being sought.

John Knight, who had stepped down from the Forum, was thanked for his contribution over many years.

**LAF 12      Declarations of Interest by Members (Agenda item 2)**

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None.

**LAF 13      Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 July 2021 (Agenda item 3)**

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Andrew Carroll referred to item 'LAF7 Express Dedication for Public Rights of Way' of the Minutes and advised the footpath in Nailsea was a permissive bridleway; he asked for this clarification to be put on record; an updated map would be circulated at the next meeting of the Forum.

**Recommended:** that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record (to be ratified at the next formal Forum meeting).

**LAF 14      Secretary's Report (oral report) (Agenda Item 4)**

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Elaine Bowman (the Secretary and Principal Access Officer), provided verbal updates on:

**Express Dedication for Public Rights of Way**

In principle, Express Dedication could be used to designate routes on North Somerset Council (NSC) land as Public Rights of Way. However, there were often complications and each route would need to be looked at individually. The member of the public interested in making a route in the Strawberry Hill Fir Wood, Clevedon, the subject of a Definitive Map Modification Order would need to submit a request to the Principal Access Officer.

**Felton Common**

The Principal Access Officer would liaise with the Chair to arrange a visit to Felton Common to see the stones placed on the bridleways (and entrances to bridleways), to consider the impact on horse riders and whether an alternative approach to preventing inappropriate parking, such as using signs, could be taken.

**Membership of North Somerset Local Access Forum**

Work was progressing on renewing memberships of the Forum, and the 'Buddy System' – linking Forum Members to Town and Parish Councils – was being updated.

**Update on matters to be considered at future meetings**

The 'Abbots Leigh Parish Council's Lost Ways Project' and the 'North Somerset Cycle Forum' would be considered at the next meeting of the Forum.

**Introduction to David Holtby, Rights of Way Improvement (RoWI) Officer**

David Holtby joined NSC in August 2021 and had been walking through the District meeting landowners and looking at RoWI issues. Work in Abbots Leigh and Kingston Seymour had been well received by landowners.

### **Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)**

There had been 200 responses to the consultation with Town and Parish Councils; a draft RoWIP was expected to be viewable by the beginning of November 2021. Julie Main, Rhiannon Robinson and Tina Hamilton agreed to join a LAF Working Party to review the draft RoWIP. Elaine would send an invitation to all Forum Members to ask for additional volunteers.

**Concluded:** that the report be noted.

**LAF  
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### **Access Officer's Report (oral report) (Agenda Item 5)**

Andrew Carroll, the Access Officer, provided verbal updates on:

#### **England Coast Path**

Four of the six sections in North Somerset had been completed. Where landowners had had issues, site visits had been made with Natural England. Signage was to be installed and the Coast Path should open in Spring 2022. Photographs were shown of added walkways and repaired bridges (contained in Appendix 1). Rhiannon Robinson was thanked for her input on making sections accessible.

#### **MetroWest Phase 1**

An update was awaited from Roger Willmot of NSC regarding the temporary crossing on Portbury Dock Road, which was still meeting resistance from The Bristol Port Company. It was hoped a permanent Pegasus crossing (a type of signalised pedestrian crossing with special consideration for horse riders) would be installed in due course.

**Concluded:** that the report be noted.

**LAF  
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### **Chair's report (oral report) (Agenda item 6)**

#### **Control of Dogs on Public Rights of Way**

The Chair advised of a growing issue for farmers and horse riders of dogs not being properly controlled; dog ownership had increased during the pandemic, but many owners did not know how to control their animals, nor accept the requirement to do so. Members shared their experiences and possible solutions were discussed, including strongly worded signage on the consequences of sheep worrying, an article in North Somerset Life on the 'Dos and Don'ts of Dog Walking', provision of guidance on reporting uncontrolled dogs to the police or NSC, and the role of NSC's Safer Communities Service and Community Response Officers in patrolling and educating at identified locations.

**Concluded:**

(1) that the report be noted;

(2) that Forum Members would identify and inform the Chair of locations particularly vulnerable to uncontrolled dogs to be passed to NSC's Safer Communities Service;

(3) that the Chair would ask Richard Jones and John Harris for information from the National Farmers' Union on controlling dogs.

**LAF 17 Sub-Committee Reports (Agenda item 8)**

**Banwell Bypass Environmental Working Group**

Andrew Carroll, the Access Officer, provided a verbal update; his slides are contained in Appendix 2. Environmental reports were awaited to enable the choice of Options 1, 2 or 3 to be made from an Access perspective. Andrew would report to the Working Group that the Bypass should be suitable for multiples users, that the footways should be bridleways, Pegasus crossings should be included, and the Forum should be invited to comment on the planning application in the Spring/Summer of 2022.

**Concluded:** that the report be noted.

**LAF 18 Dates of future meetings during the 2021-22 Municipal Year (Agenda item 11)**

**Concluded:** the Forum would meet on the following dates during the remainder of the 2021-22 Municipal Year

- Tuesday 25 January 2022 at 6.00pm
- Tuesday 19 April 2022 at 6.00pm

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Chairman

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