

Notes

of the Informal Virtual Meeting of the

North Somerset Local Access Forum

Tuesday 25 October 2022

Held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Commenced: 18.00

Meeting Concluded: 19.22

Councillors:

A Mike Bird

P Robert Payne

P Ann Harley

Independent Members:

Rights of Way and Access Land Users

P Marianne McAleer

P Sheila Dixon

P Nikki Barton

Jonathan Brownett

P Julie Main (Chair)

P Tina Hamilton

Landowning Interests

Vacancy

P John Harris

Robert Parsons

Bernard Gray

A Richard Jones

Vacancy

Other Interests

Gillian Hopkins

Vacancy

Vacancy

P James Tonkin

Vacancy

P Rhiannon Robinson (Vice
Chair)

Officers

P Elaine Bowman
(Place)

P Michèle Chesterman
(Corporate Services)

P Andy Carroll
(Place)

P Harriet Isherwood
(Corporate Services)

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

LAF 10 Welcome and apologies for absence (Agenda Item 1)

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and the apologies were noted.

LAF 11 Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 July 2022 (Agenda Item 2)

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

LAF 12 Public Participation (Agenda Item 3)

Mr Glendell spoke in relation to the lack of bridleways in North Somerset, which he hoped could be resolved through express dedication of common law process to avoid long legal processes. Mr Glendell raised a specific request for this to be used for the land in Highdale Road, Thackery Road and Riverside Road in Clevedon as there were no current restricted bridleways in Clevedon. Panel members noted that a similar proposition for a separate route had been made previously but it had been unable to progress the issue due to a number of complaints and limited backing. Members agreed a site visit would be necessary before progressing further.

LAF 13 Declarations of Interest by Members (Agenda Item 4)

None

LAF 14 Secretary's Report (oral report) (Agenda Item 5)

Parish Footpaths Officers invite to future meetings

All agreed to extend invites to Officers again.

Buddy System

Members were informed that amendments would be made to previous lists, which would then be sent to all those involved to make further alterations where appropriate.

Rights of Way Improvement

The Secretary informed the panel that the Council had received around 170 submissions which were now being processed, results would be made available towards the end of November 2022.

DMMO Review

Members were made aware of a lack of communications with the organisations involved and that the recommendation to the next sub-committee would be that the files were closed.

Membership

The Secretary noted that one new member to represent Cyclist perspective was expected to attend the next meeting of LAF.

Resolved:

That the Secretary resend the Buddy System list out to LAF Members for their consideration and further discussion at the next meeting.

**LAF
15**

Access Officer's Report (oral report) (Agenda Item 6)

The Access Officer provided updates on:

England Coastal Path

The Officer reported that the section of the England Coastal Path between the River Avon boundary in Bristol and Portishead Marina (Chapter 4) was nearly complete and due to finish this week. A claim would be submitted to reimburse some of the funding. The Officer also shared photographs of work to bridleways in the area and noted that pressure tests would be carried out soon to enable mobility access.

Chapter 5 - During 2021 there had been a landslip which had caused structural damage to another bridge. Rot had weakened the structure beyond a point of safety so the Officer has corresponded with the Structures team to partake in a procurement exercise resulting in two new structures being built. Chapter 5 would remain closed until February 2023.

The Access Officer reported that a draft Annual Report had been produced which was circulated amongst members. Once approved, a formatted version was to be published on the website with integrated mapping.

Resolved: that a final, formatted Annual Report would be published if no objections were received within a week.

Clearance Work Statistics

The Access Officer had worked with two contractors to cut 18.8 miles of vegetation throughout North Somerset with hedging machines across Summer 2022, with several bridleways still to be cut back. There were public calls for improved accessibility in Old Lane, but the officers responded that after many site visits there was nothing financially viable that could be done due to bedrock on the Ridge.

**LAF
16**

Chair's report (oral report) (Agenda Item 7)

The Chair provided updates on:

Correspondence with Natural England

The Chair had received responses from several LAFs which all felt similarly underfunded and unrecognised. A representative from Somerset LAF had attended the Access and Engagement with Nature Stakeholder Forum, where Natural England shared that they had access to an element of funding to feed back into LAFs, and to create a SharePoint for all LAF members to communicate.

LAF Sub-committee Reports (Agenda Item 8)

17 The Chair proposed a series of small sub-committees of interest groups such as Farmer's Union, Cycling, Pharma, etc to share highlights and interesting topics that should be given awareness to.

LAF Notification of Items of business – to be considered at the next meeting
18 (Agenda Item 9)

LAF Date of Next Meetings during the 2022/23 Municipal Year (Agenda item
19 11)

Concluded: that the Forum would meet on the following dates:

- Tuesday 31 January 2023 at 6.00 pm
- Tuesday 25 April 2023 at 6.00 pm

Chairman
