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# Minutes

## **Minutes of the Bury Local Access Forum Meeting Held Online via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 1.30pm**

### **1. Present**

#### **LAF Members**

Edgar Ernstbrunner (Chair)  
Irene Pope  
Lesley Tierney  
Christine Taylor  
Fal Binns

#### **Also Present**

David Chadwick (LAF Secretary) - Bury MBC  
Jon O'Connor – Bury MBC  
Paul Robinson – Bury MBC  
Cllr Cummings  
Cllr Mortenson  
Barry Smith

### **2. Apologies**

Val Johnstone  
Debra Batchelor  
John Southworth  
Margaret Stewardson  
Cllr Quinn  
Cllr Black

### **3.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

Accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **4.0 Matters Arising**

No matters arising.

### **5.0 Officer Report – October to December 2020**

5.1 DC provided a list of works carried out since the previous LAF meeting. A copy of the list was provided with the agenda.

5.2 DC confirmed that -

- He continues to work from home.
- The network is being heavily used as one of the few options for recreation within the current restrictions. The extra use has cleared some previously little used paths but also eroded unsurfaced, field paths.

- There are no known deliberate obstructions related to landowners' concerns about Covid.

5.3 DC provided information regarding two requests from landowners for footpath diversions and requested comments from members of the LAF.

EE confirmed that any comments would be attributed to the LAF and would not prevent individual members from providing comments on behalf of their groups if the diversion requests are progressed.

- **Public Footpath Number 19, Ramsbottom**

More detail is required from the landowner with regard to how the difficult topography will be overcome. Maintenance of any new structures should not fall to the Authority. The proposed diversion is not on the line of the current permissive path.

- **Public Footpath Number 6, Ramsbottom**

The proposed diversion would lead to Footpath No.6 being split. An extinguishment and creation would allow renumbering and a change of descriptions that would avoid any confusion in the future.

## **6.0**

### **Walking and Cycling Forum**

DC informed the group that the Authority has set up a Walking and Cycling Forum and that an initial meeting on Teams had taken place, followed by a working group looking at how best to allocate the funds available from TfGM to improve facilities for walking and cycling. DC explained that the group is currently concentrating on urban environments – road crossings, cycle lanes, shared use and safer streets.

EE felt there was common interest between the two groups. Safe road crossings would benefit the public rights of way network. He confirmed that he was unaware of the first meeting but that he has been assured he will be made aware of future events.

DC will provide information regarding the new group with the minutes.

### **Action - DC**

## **7.0 Bridleway Strategy and DMMO Update**

IP informed the group that she is aware that an application is being prepared to claim a bridleway at Hollins Vale. It will be based upon evidence from cyclists.

IP is looking at other options for creating off road routes for horses. This includes issues such as the signs indicating that horses should not use the bridge at Woolfold which is part of the Kirklees Trail. DC clarified that the Kirklees Trail is not recorded as public right of way and is the responsibility of the parks and countryside service. DC will ask for clarification regarding the use of the bridge and respond directly to IP.

JOC and DC explained that the existing DMMO applications have not been progressed due to the workload of the PROW Officer. Work had taken place to progress the recruitment of an assistant PROW Officer, but the demands on the Authority to deal with the Covid pandemic has delayed a decision. It has to be noted that the Authority does have to find significant reductions in spending and the recruitment of an extra

member of staff may be extremely difficult to justify. It may not be possible to progress the matter until the overall budget issues have been resolved.

EE expressed his disappointment at the explanation and acknowledged that it is now difficult to move forward. He asked if the Planning Inspectorate may be able to influence the situation. JOC confirmed that PINS have been contacted and have placed a deadline on the Authority to reach a decision on some of the DMMO applications. The deadline has passed and there has been no further contact from PINS. Clearly, the Authority would point to the effects of the Covid emergency on the ability of the Authority to progress the applications.

EE accepted that the officers in attendance at the meeting had done all they could to make progress.

IP asked if DC had visited the archives to research the evidence submitted in the DMMO applications. DC confirmed that he had not.

### **Action - DC**

### **8.0**

#### **Any Other Business**

DC raised an issue highlighted by FB who is restricted in the amount of input she can have in Teams meetings due to issues with the technology.

DC stated that FB believed the Authority should be looking to allocate more resources to the management of the use of the PROW network given the increase in usage during the Covid restrictions and the opportunities that paths offer for recreation, health and wellbeing. In particular, Holcombe Village has been inundated by large numbers of visitors wanting to explore the surrounding countryside and the Authority should look at managing this demand.

DC added that he agreed with FB's comments and that the assistant director has been made aware of her comments and DC's support. DC awaits a response.

### **9.0**

#### **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 1.30pm. Online via Microsoft Teams.