

# Minutes

## Minutes of the Bury Local Access Forum Meeting Held at Bury Town Hall on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 1.30pm

### 1.0 Present

#### LAF Members

Edgar Ernstbrunner (Chair)  
 Lesley Tierney (Vice Chair)  
 Christine Taylor  
 Falmai Binns  
 Irene Pope  
 Valerie Johnston  
 Debra Batchelor  
 Margaret Stewardson

**Also Present** – David Chadwick (LAF Secretary) - Bury MBC, Jon O’Connor – Bury MBC, Chris Wilkinson – Bury MBC, Moira Owen – Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Major Phillip Ingledew – MOD DTE North

**Apologies** – John Southworth, Cllr Tony Cummings, John Ireland

		Action
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b>  The Minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>  All matters arising were covered under the agenda.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Holcombe Moor – SSSI, Drainage and Moorbottom Road</b>  EE explained the issue with water run off eroding the Moor and in particular the bridleway along Moorbottom Road. This could be mitigated by the introduction of trees and bushes. However, the recent creation of a SSSI at this location could complicate matters. The MOD would need to have some input in any proposals as they are landowners and carry out training exercises around Moorbottom Road.  MO introduced herself. She is still getting to know Holcombe, but it is clear that Natural England and the National Trust will need to be	

involved in any discussions about the site. Holding back flood waters is a priority and re-introducing blanket bogs on the Moor has been proposed in order to achieve this. Trees are a possibility, but they are a long-term solution as they take time to mature and land slips can still occur even with trees in place. The proposals are at an early stage. With particular reference to the bridleway, the anticipated report from consultants appointed by the Authority looking at possible engineering solutions will need to be given consideration by all the relevant parties. It is difficult to take the matter further until this information is provided.

EE asked if the MOD would have a problem with trees and shrubs being planted. PI responded that sight lines across the danger area would have to be considered. It should be noted that trees have been planted in parts of the MOD site but they have not prospered.

MO added that trees and shrubs should not be planted in the peat areas that would form the blanket bogs.

JOC confirmed that the consultants have visited the site and they are aware of the constraints in terms of access, landownership and SSSI status. The cost of any engineering work may be prohibitive as reinstating the bridleway and attempting to protect it from further damage will be a substantial scheme.

FB raised an issue with a new gate that has been erected on Moorbottom Road by the MOD. It was explained that the gate was hinged on the hill side of the route and as a result, horse riders had to dismount to open the gate to avoid the possibility of riding close to the edge of the bridleway and falling down the slope.

PI confirmed that the gate had originally been installed incorrectly as it was always intended that it would be locked in the open position other than when the red flags are flying. Having been made aware of the problem via DC, a post and chain was introduced which means the gate is now as intended and there will be no requirement for horse riders to open the gate when the bridleway is open. It was acknowledged that there is no fencing to either side of the gate and it would be possible to pass around it. PI explained that the gate reinforces the fact that anyone passing beyond that point when the red flags are flying are flouting the regulations. An extra flag pole has been erected to ensure that red flags can be seen along the full length of the path and existing notices are to be repositioned to ensure they are visible to all.

FB asked for the telephone number of the guardroom should there be any issues. DC has provided.

DB asked if the footpath connecting to the bridleway at the gate could be looked at as it is not in a good state of repair.

EE asked who looked after stiles, gates and path surfaces on the MOD land. PI confirmed that the surface is the responsibility of the highway authority and that issues with gates and stiles are discussed with the HA and an agreement reached between the two on who can carry out the necessary works.

PI explained that a sink hole behind the concrete wall at the edge of Holcombe Brook, adjacent to Public Footpath Number 3, Ramsbottom will be filled in with stones and rubble by the MOD. He has also asked Landmark to look at preventing water from running to the rear of the concrete and washing out material.

PI reported that he is attempting to gain the assistance of the Bury Times in publicising the need for the public to adhere to the bylaws in relation to live firing and public access across the site. There is a video on YouTube highlighting the danger of ignoring the red flags.

Link - <https://youtu.be/G9wHDnIYbU4>

Links to the two latest DIO blogs about public safety on the training estate:

<https://insidedio.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/19/how-to-risk-your-life-on-the-military-training-estate/>

<https://insidedio.blog.gov.uk/2018/04/24/six-ridiculous-excuses-for-risking-your-life-on-the-training-estate/>

## **5.0 Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund**

DC introduced the Greater Manchester "Made to Move" document and the associated "Beelines" cycling and walking infrastructure proposal. The document indicates there would be £1.5billion available to turn Greater Manchester into the beacon location for walking and cycling in the country.

CW added that £160 million has been allocated over the next four years for projects to improve walking and cycling facilities across the region. Schemes can be put forward every quarter and it is possible for individuals to put their ideas forward.

EE made reference to existing cycling maps produced for Greater Manchester and wondered if these had been superseded.

LT asked if the aim was for leisure journeys or transport and commuting routes. CW clarified that at its most basic level, this is about travel into town and city centres and targets short journeys that are currently taken in cars that could be made

on foot or bike. It is believed targeting such journeys would have a significant impact on reducing levels of traffic congestion.

EE encouraged the members of the LAF to consider submitting their own thoughts and ideas.

DC provided maps indicating three routes based on the public rights of way network that were submitted to TfGM for consideration in the first round of bids. Whilst they were unsuccessful, it is hoped that feedback on the merits of the bids will help inform future bids which may have more success.

## 6.0 Bridleway Strategy Update

IP asked if there had been any progress with investigating the possibility of introducing a route for horses through Old Kays Park, Tottington. DC confirmed he had met with Graham Schoon on site and that there was one route through which seemed to offer a realistic option of access to and from Holcombe Road. Further discussions will be required.

DC provided members of the LAF with maps showing current "cycleway" works taking place in Radcliffe. The maps had been requested by the LAF to clarify where the works were taking place. The maps emphasised that although there are three separate projects, they do link together, forming an east/west link across Ainsworth Road, Radcliffe.

LT commented that quad bikes were gaining access to the new route at Spen Moor. CW stated that the matter is being monitored and that bollards and barriers that had been illegally removed had been replaced. Notices warning that vehicles can be confiscated are to be erected.

FB informed the LAF that the police had been dealing with motorised vehicles using Holcombe Old Road, but that there had been some confusion as to whether the route is a bridleway or an unadopted street. DC confirmed it is a bridleway and users of the route in a motorised vehicle by those without private rights or invitation from those with private rights are committing a criminal offence.

IP returned to the subject of the bridleway strategy and explained the research of the routes along Pole Lane and Griffe Lane, Whitefield. These are prime candidates for bridleway claims and have been listed on the British Horse Society 2026 website.

LT asked for an update on the claim for a bridleway at Elton

Reservoir. JOC explained that there had been a delay in getting authorisation from senior management to make a decision on the claim. There have been three management structures since the last LAF meeting and four meetings with the Interim Executive Director had been cancelled at his request. JOC added that there was now a new manager in place – Neil Long – and that the matter would be discussed with him at the earliest opportunity.

Both IP and LT stated that they were very unhappy about this situation and would be contacting senior management to insist that there are no further delays.

EE reminded IP and LT of the option of applying to the Secretary of State when the Highway Authority fails to make a decision within 12 months.

## **7.0 Digital Mapping/Bury PROW Survey**

EE reported that the survey was still making steady progress and was approximately two thirds completed. The aim remains to complete it by the end of the year.

EE noted that a number of issues found with the online map had been corrected by JOC.

It is clear that the statements accompanying individual paths on the Definitive Map are sparse and rarely make reference to path furniture. Having seen the online map for Somerset, which ties in descriptions, photographs for stiles and gates and the ability to report problems by clicking on the relevant location on the map, EE wondered whether this could be the ultimate aim for Bury.

EE asked to what extent the Authority is willing to take on the findings of the survey with regard to works required on site and the consolidation of the Definitive Map. DC felt all the information has to be presented so that a full case can be put in terms of the resources that will be required to prioritise and then carry out the work that has been identified. EE asked if a list of known problems could be created and works costed so that issues could be dealt with in a fair progression rather than some schemes appearing to jump the queue. DC responded that the Authority employs one PROW Officer and it is very difficult to have an “every day routine” that functions alongside a long term plan when the workload cannot be allocated throughout a team. JOC agreed that this issue needed to be raised with senior management.

EE added that legislation does exist that allows user groups to take action against under-performing authorities, but that Bury generally does a good job.

FB asked if the Village Link had been added to the online map. JOC replied that it had been added to a test version of the map but that as there are short sections of the link that do not follow routes recorded as public rights of way, JOC was unsure whether the Authority should publish it on the online map, as the intention of that map is to disseminate regulatory information relating to public highway assets.

CW asked if the information could be shown on the "This is Bury" website. JOC responded that this may be a good idea.

## 8.0 Officer Report

DC provided the following information –

- 64 paths cleared of vegetation by a contractor. The works were completed in a shorter time than that which had been agreed and all the inspected paths had been cleared to a very good standard.
- 23 paths have had pinch points cleared – short sections of overgrown vegetation that prevented use along the whole route – and waymarkers erected.
- The Bury Volunteers Ranger Service is now including paths in its monthly programmes on a regular basis. It is hoped this partnership will continue to flourish.
- The newly formed Ramsbottom Countryside Access Volunteers are up and running, having received grant monies for tools and equipment and are carrying out monthly tasks on the public rights of way network in Ramsbottom.
- 11 landowners have been contacted and asked to take action on matters such as damaged stiles, deliberate obstructions and dogs. There have been 5 positive responses and the others need to be revisited.
- Waste Management continue to deal with fly tipping matters on the network.
- Maintenance to the drainage of Holcombe Old Road, Ramsbottom has been carried out.
- DC is working with the Brandlesholme Residents Association in an attempt to secure funding to widen and improve Public Footpath Number 150, Bury, known as the "Brangy Dip".
- A boardwalk has been installed on Public Footpath Number 104, Ramsbottom and surfacing works completed on Public Footpath Number 29, Christchurch, Radcliffe after a hole appeared in the surface of a field path that offers access to Whitehead Lodges.

LT highlighted an issue with some horses being sensitive to nettles and that there have been three cases of injuries to horses caused by nettles across the country. DC stated that any vegetation clearance concentrates on brambles and nettles whilst tall grass was not considered to be an obstruction of the highway. He added that the Authority does not spray vegetation on the public rights of way as they cross private land and this could lead to complaints from

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	landowners if the wrong areas are affected.	
<b>9.0</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>IP stated that parts of Bridleway No.24, Bury remain washed out. CT reported that pitch funding has been received that will allow the West Pennine Way to be waymarked in both directions. CT also reported that the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Radcliffe Running Club run over Bull Hill will not be taking place this year as the MOD had refused permission.</p> <p>FB asked if there could be a policy on dealing with Japanese Knotweed in open areas and land not maintained by the owners</p>	
<b>10.0</b>	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018. 1.30pm in Committee Room A, Town Hall</p>	