

Draft Minutes

Minutes of the Bury Local Access Forum Meeting Held Online via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 29th June 2022 at 1.30pm

1. Present

LAF Members

Edgar Ernstbrunner (Chair)
Irene Pope
Lesley Tierney
John Southworth
Margaret Stewardson
Debra Batchelor

Also Present

David Chadwick (LAF Secretary) - Bury MBC
Jon O'Connor – Bury MBC
Graham Schoon – Bury MBC

2. Apologies

Christine Taylor
Cllr Morris
Cllr Peel
Cllr Quinn
Chris Wilkinson – Bury MBC

Fal Binns has resigned from the Forum

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3.0	Minutes of the Last Meeting Accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.	
4.0	Matters Arising No matters arising.	
5.0	Chair's Report to the North West Local Access Forum Edgar raised the issue of 23 Definitive Map Modification Orders listed on the Authority's register that require decisions. David pointed out that two DMMOs were moving forward as there is a public inquiry scheduled for August regarding a bridleway at Elton	

Reservoir and that a landowner has agreed to upgrade 1.3km of footpaths to bridleway status dependent on a diversion at Unsworth/Simister on a route that forms part of another DMMO application.

Edgar raised the more general issue of a lack of resources to process a back log of applications and a Section 14 direction from the Planning Inspectorate not being dealt with. How is the Authority going to deal with this?

Irene asked if there had been any movement on the direction?

Jon explained that there was little for him to report. The Authority does have a new Head of Engineering and these issues have been raised with her.

Edgar suggested that it appears a Judicial Review will be the only way to move forward. That would not look good for the Authority. If it wants to get out of this situation with any credit, it needs to provide more resources. The Authority could simply take the decisions to make the Orders to make progress, and then take a neutral position at subsequent public inquiries. The existing situation is unsustainable.

Jon responded that making orders without thorough investigation of the evidence and taking a neutral stance has been raised as an option but had not received a positive response as the legislation suggests the Authority should take an active role in the process.

David pointed out that making DMMOs will start a process running that will lead to public inquiries and that will raise issues for resources in the future.

Edgar stated that public inquiries will be inevitable whatever policy the Authority adopts.

Jon acknowledged Edgar's comments and committed to taking a note to management based on what had been discussed.

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Irene stated she was looking for anything that can move the issue forward.

Edgar then raised the matter of Temporary Road Closure Orders and asked if it would be possible to set up a register showing new closures and extensions to existing closures. He is currently notified of public rights of way that are closed on a temporary basis, but not extensions.

Jon replied that this has been taken to colleagues in Traffic Management as they deal with temporary orders. The new Head of Engineering has a grasp of the situation and will be reviewing the

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<p>process with a commitment to look at creating an online register.</p> <p>Edgar also asked that permanent Traffic Regulation Orders be put on the register to avoid confusion when surveys are carried out.</p>	
<p>f6.0 Officer Report – Review of the Last 18 Months</p> <p>David provided a brief review of significant issues and projects that have been dealt with since the last LAF meeting in December 2020.</p> <p>Edgar asked if the LAF could be given a list of works carried out on the PROW network on a regular basis.</p> <p>David responded that regular updates would be possible as the contractor currently provides monthly updates.</p> <p>Edgar asked if there were any significant network issues that remained unresolved or had been dealt with.</p> <p>David mentioned that Gigg Mills bridge is due to be replaced, allowing the bridleway from Gigg to Pilsworth to be reopened on a slightly different line. It is also planned that Milltown Street bridge will be replaced as part of a new development. A section of Moorbottom Road, below Holcombe Moor has slipped again forcing the Authority to erect notices to inform users of the bridleway that they should dismount. A contractor has been recruited and they have suggested a design for repair and avoiding future issues. Funds for the work need to be secured along with permission to work in a SSSI.</p> <p>Debra asked about the maintenance of Moor Road, Holcombe. David provided information outside the meeting.</p> <p>Irene asked if there could be a priority to ensure that surfaced access roads that serve as bridleways provide a non-slip surface for horses.</p> <p>Edgar stated that the Authority has control in such situations, particularly if planning permission is required.</p>	
<p>7.0 PROW Network Survey and Definitive Map and Statement Consolidation</p> <p>Edgar asked if the PROW network is inspected on a regular basis.</p> <p>David confirmed that it is not. The level of resources available to deal with PROW issues does not allow time for inspections, other than when visiting sites for known issues.</p> <p>Edgar asked if there were any priorities for dealing with issues. It was confirmed by David that the only priority is to resolve any</p>	

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	<p>issues that might affect the safety of the public.</p> <p>Edgar asked if creating a PROW user group to assist with priorities, funding and organisation of work would improve the situation. There can only be benefit from doing this.</p> <p>Jon referred to a response from Neil Long suggesting that committing to work with user groups, whilst bringing forward assistance would inevitably be another demand on the time of the PROW Officer which cannot currently be accommodated.</p> <p>Jon reminded everyone that there are no barriers to making suggestions through the usual channels.</p> <p>Edgar and Jon discussed the issue and Jon acknowledged that help with prioritising and funding would be a positive move but emphasised that the organisation of the extra work that would be created was too much for one PROW Officer to absorb into the existing workload.</p> <p>Margaret asked if there was a possibility of someone from the LAF taking the lead and Edgar agreed that any group would do the organisation of any projects before contacting the Authority. He believes it is short-sighted of the Authority not to take this on.</p>	
8.0	<p>Future Local Access Forum Meetings</p> <p>David asked if LAF members wish to continue with 'Teams' or return to face to face meetings. Also, whether Wednesday afternoons was still acceptable and the issue of meeting the regulations for ensuring the position of the Chair of the LAF is regularly considered.</p> <p>The group confirmed that they wish to continue on 'Teams' on Wednesday afternoons. Edgar confirmed he recognised the need to consider who fulfils the role of Chair at the next meeting and that meetings should be held every six months.</p>	
9.0	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None.</p>	
10.0	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 7th December 2022 at 1.30pm on 'Teams'</p>	