

Herefordshire Local Access Forum Meeting

Date: 5 February 2020

Location: Thorn Training Room

Time: 5pm

Page: 1 of 5

ATTENDANCE		
Name: Vivien Burdon Sue Enfield Mike Everitt Duncan Green David Howerski Arthur Lee Peter Newman Josie Pearson	Name: Ian Stead Hugh Vernon Joannah Weightman David Willis John Withers-Lewis Susan White (Balfour Beatty) Rachel Rice (Balfour Beatty) Jill Addis (Balfour Beatty)	
APOLOGIES		
Ian Carr, Myra Chilman, Mike Darley, Richard Gething, Spencer Grogan Absent – no apologies received: Cllr Harrington, Roger Smith Notes Prepared By: Jill Addis		
AGENDA SUMMARY		
1.0	Welcome and apologies for absence	
2.0	Election of Chair	
3.0	Minutes	
4.0	Matters arising	
5.0	Forum Business	
6.0	Rights of Way Service Provider's Report	
7.0	Working Group Reports	
8.0	Frequency of meetings	
9.0	Questions from members of the public	
10.0	Any other business	
	Any business submitted to the Chair prior to/or at the beginning of the meeting. To be discussed time permitting at the discretion of the Chair	
11.0	Proposed dates of 2020 meetings	
	TBC	
DISTRIBUTION		
HLAF Members, Susan White, Spencer Grogan, Herefordshire Council website		
MINUTES AND CHECK LIST		ACTION
550.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	New members were welcomed and apologies were noted as above.	
551.	ELECTION OF CHAIR	
	No members put themselves forward. PN proposed AL which was unanimously agreed. DG said that he would be happy to be Vice Chair. He was proposed by AL and was voted in unanimously.	

Herefordshire Local Access Forum Meeting

Date: 5 February 2020

Location: Thorn Training Room

Time: 5pm

Page: 2 of 5

MINUTES AND CHECK LIST	ACTION
552. MINUTES	
<p>The minutes were signed as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>Concerns were raised that there were only two meeting per year.</p>	
553. MATTERS ARISING	
<p>545 The letter to Defra asking that the 2026 deadline be deferred had not been sent due to the election. This will now be sent by the Chair.</p> <p>ME asked about the map showing BOATs. This is on the online map on the Herefordshire Council website.</p> <p>DG asked that the Agriculture Bill be added to the agenda.</p>	AL
554. FORUM BUSINESS	
<p>AL said that the Transport Plan is being reviewed. He added that Cllr H said they will be looking at cycling and walking if funding is available. AL believes that this should have a higher profile and the LAF should respond to the consultation which can be found on the council website. Link to be circulated.</p> <p>AL said that there should be a collective response from the LAF, but the individuals should also respond. DG added that members should be careful to put their response in their own words.</p> <p>JW suggested that the working groups could provide a response. DG said that the Chairs of these groups should liaise with the LAF Chair to provide a response.</p>	JA ALL ALL CHAIRS
556. RIGHTS OF WAY SERVICE PROVIDER'S REPORT	
<p>SW gave a Powerpoint presentation which will be circulated with the minutes.</p> <p>JW asked if missing bridges can be recorded as closures. Their absence blocks a PROW. SW noted that they were recorded as defects but not as closures. To add them to this data would be time consuming. The reporting system is not set up to produce this data.</p> <p>ME asked what percentage of temporary closure were due to development, and whether these requests could be turned down. SW replied that it would be possible but is not usual. Someone asked if an alternative route had to be provided. SW said that developers could not be forced to create an alternative route, but it was always requested if possible.</p> <p>ME asked if the figures could be presented graphically.</p> <p>IS said that the LAF should support extra resource for a DMMO Officer. JW added the proviso that this was only if it wasn't to the detriment of other aspects of rights of way. All agreed.</p> <p>ME asked for an explanation of what the 2026 cut-off meant. An explanation is included with these minutes.</p> <p>DH asked if the resource issue was on the Risk Register. SW replied that an Early Warning had been raised.</p> <p>JP asked if the planned new bridges were accessible. SW said that she had asked Design & Build to ensure they were. She will provide more feedback when the designs are produced.</p>	SW AL SW

Herefordshire Local Access Forum Meeting

Location: Thorn Training Room

Date: 5 February 2020

Time: 5pm

Page: 3 of 5

MINUTES AND CHECK LIST	ACTION
<p>DG asked if the LAF could request sight of the drawings for comment. SW said she would send them through.</p> <p>ME asked who determined the budget. RR replied that it was part of the Public Realm and BBLP make proposals on how the budget should be spent. This is based on an Asset Management Approach which includes safety priorities among other things. BBLP have influence over the budget but the Council have final say and it is signed off by the Cabinet Member. Budgets are shown in the Annual Plan.</p> <p>PN asked if the 8m bridge would be in wood or steel. SW said that the framework would be steel.</p> <p>JW asked if BBLP could use long lasting metal bridges, as more economical in the long run. SW said that the bridges used were the result of a lengthy investigation into types and costs, ensuring that they meet necessary standards etc. A metal modular design base was used for longer bridges but these are expensive. To use steel for smaller length bridges costs more and would be too heavy for the two man gang. Further she couldn't find a suitable metal bridge kit for short bridges since the collapse of ABC. She had investigated polyester bridges but they are ten times the cost of a wooden one but would not last 10 times longer. LAF members thought it must be possible to source metal bridges, which they favoured, and queried whether BBLP were restricted in their use of suppliers.</p> <p>JP suggested it was something the Materials Subgroup could look at. She added that the Accessibility Subgroup could identify schemes which would encompass sustainability and improvement which would be eligible for external funding.</p> <p>SE asked if other councils used metal bridges. SW replied that she didn't know. SE said that as a member of the BHS she would ask them if they had any further information.</p> <p>JW asked if the charge for carrying out a diversion order covered the cost. SW said that a review was currently taking place which may lead to an increase in the charge. JW asked if the LAF could see the income for the year. SW to check.</p> <p>JWL suggested that the LAF should advise the council that developers must put a diversion route in place for temporary closures relating to development. DG replied that this was not always possible, for example with the link road where a lot of footpaths had been affected.</p> <p>JW suggested that as Chair of the Funding Group she could raise the issue with Cllr H. DH said the group should investigate what principles are already there.</p>	<p>SW</p>
<p>557. WORKING GROUP REPORTS</p>	
<p>JW went through the Funding Group report which had been circulated before the meeting. She explained how the Funding Group wanted to ensure best value from PROW expenditure and also bring in more resources. Helpful expenditure details had been supplied by SW and DH had collated longitudinal performance data using BBLP's records posted on the Herefordshire Council website. The 4th graph confirmed a picture of ongoing deterioration.</p> <p>DH commented on the large backlog of DMOs. He also noted that there appeared to be a decrease in defects reported at the time the P3 Scheme was introduced, corresponding with an increase in defects reported as the P3 Grant was phased out. DH noted that the data suggested a capability to clear around 416 defects per year, if true, then the restoration of the P3 Grant system would enable clearance of</p>	

MINUTES AND CHECK LIST	ACTION
<p>outstanding PROW defects within 1 to 2 Years.</p> <p>SW explained this did not really reflect the true situation, because of the vagaries of the BBLP reporting system. Although the P3 grant has ended there are as many parishes involved with the scheme, still ordering and paying for materials directly – so the ending of the grant cannot possibly correlate with the increase in defects.</p> <p>ME said he found one of the graphs contradictory given that it showed a decrease in outstanding defects. SW noted that work was ongoing to improve their published PROW performance reports. They were not an accurate source of data for such comparisons and were not used in the contracting process</p> <p>DG said that he had a meeting with Cllr H who had said there may be money to reintroduce the P3 and lengthsman grants. Both schemes meant that work could be carried out cheaper than through BBLP.</p> <p>SW said that although the P3 scheme was a good idea, parishes tended to favour improvement rather than dealing with defects. For example, a stile in good condition would be replaced by a gate, rather than dealing with problems that needed solving.</p> <p>DG said that a condition could be imposed whereby the grant could only be used for clearing defects.</p> <p>RR added that she was sorry to see the scheme go, but if it was reinstated the money would come out of the existing Public Realm budget meaning there would be a reduction in services elsewhere. SW said that even without the grant the number of parishes in the scheme was the same. RR added that there were 72 P3 parishes.</p> <p>JW asked if Section 106 money was spent on rights of way. SW said that the money went to the council and although it may be spent on improvement schemes rights of way had not directly received any of that money. Yvonne Coleman is the S106 Officer for the council.</p> <p>JP went through the Accessibility Group Report which had also been circulated prior to the meeting.</p> <p>SW asked if the group had any links to other groups as that would be more likely to attract funding. JP said that she wanted to send a letter to all parishes asking for suggestions and would be looking into contacting other groups.</p> <p>AL went through the DDMO Group report which will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.</p>	
<p>558. FREQUENCY OF LAF MEETINGS</p>	
<p>JW noted that, in drawing up the ToR for their group, it was proposed that the working groups could act autonomously if in accordance with the PROW Improvement Plan, without requesting approval from the full LAF. It was agreed to consider this and further points regarding alignment and coordination at the next HLAF meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed that the LAF should hold 4 meetings per year. The majority voted in favour.</p> <p>SW agreed that BBLP would arrange rooms for these meetings but would only be able to attend two meetings a year. IS suggested that the meetings without a BBLP presence could be used to co-ordinate issues raised by the working groups.</p> <p>Members requested a meeting in early July with BBLP so HLAF's recommendations with respect to the 2021/22 budget and plan for proposed changes are fully informed</p>	

Herefordshire Local Access Forum Meeting

Date: 5 February 2020

Location: Thorn Training Room

Time: 5pm

Page: 5 of 5

MINUTES AND CHECK LIST	ACTION
with the latest reports and information available from BBLP before they are agreed by HLAf members and taken forward with the relevant parties. JW queried why a Council Officer was not present at the meeting.	
559. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	
None	
560. AOB	
DG suggested the LAF look at the proposed Agriculture Bill as current cross compliance rules for EU funding require farmers to cut hedges and keep rights of way open. The group agreed that a letter should be sent in support of this continuing. DG is to draft a letter.	DG
561. DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
April – without attendance from BBLP July – with attendance from BBLP October – without attendance from BBLP JA to book the Thorn meeting room and confirm exact dates. Meeting closed at 5.10pm.	JA

Chairman: _____

Date: _____