

**Herefordshire Local Access Forum Meeting**

Location: Online

Date: 13 April 2021

Time: 12.30 pm

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<b>ATTENDANCE</b>		
<p><b>Name:</b> Mike Everitt Cllr Harrington Cllr Hewitt David Howerski Arthur Lee Ian Stead</p>	<p><b>Name:</b> Hugh Vernon Joannah Weighman Anthony Agate (Balfour Beatty) Rachel Rice (Balfour Beatty) Jill Addis (Balfour Beatty)</p>	
<b>APOLOGIES</b>		
<p>Viv Burdon, Ian Carr, Myra Chilman, Mike Darley, Sue Enfield, Duncan Green, Peter Newman, Roger Smith David Willis, Spencer Grogan <b>Notes Prepared By:</b> Jill Addis</p>		
<b>AGENDA SUMMARY</b>		
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Forum Business</b>	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Rights of Way Service Provider’s Report</b>	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Working Group Reports</b>	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Questions from members of the public</b>	
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	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	
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Proposed dates of 2021 meetings</b>	
	TBC	
<b>DISTRIBUTION</b>		
HLAF Members, Spencer Grogan, Herefordshire Council website		
<b>MINUTES AND CHECK LIST</b>		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>571.</b>	<b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
	Apologies were noted as above.	
<b>572.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>	
	The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.	
<b>573.</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>	
	ME commented on 566 asking if the problem with the accuracy of statistics had been solved. AA proposed a focus session to go through the issues. This would highlight what the LAF wanted to see so that a future report could be worked on. All agreed. ME said he didn’t know how the contract could be monitored if the statistics were incorrect.	

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<p>JW said that she had had a meeting with Spencer Grogan and he had agreed to help resolve the issue. She said she didn't think the past problems would be fully resolved and the focus now needed to be on the future.</p> <p>AA said that the data may come through in different streams and the figures were only a snapshot of that point in time. If something was recorded incorrectly and later amended, this would affect the way the numbers looked.</p> <p>IS agreed that the focus needed to be on the future.</p> <p>ME asked for a target date for the meeting.</p> <p>AA said if people wanted to stay online after the meeting, something could be arranged.</p> <p>Cllr Harrington said it should be within a month, or 6 weeks at the most.</p> <p>AL asked if there were any other issues. DH replied that it was unhelpful to come into the meeting without having received the report.</p> <p>ME said the Sue White was supposed to have sent out the PFO newsletter. This had not happened. AA to send out.</p>	
<p><b>574. FORUM BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p>Cllr Harrington said that the council had been talking about bringing certain services back in-house. They have made Laura Lloyd and team aware. One of these services is PROW. They are having a meeting this Friday to discuss it in more detail. Cllr Harrington felt that PROW would be better placed within Herefordshire Council. Talks include how it would be managed. For example, with the county split north and south; and how it would be monitored.</p> <p>AL asked if there were any further comments.</p> <p>JW said she was delighted to hear that Cllr Harrington was thinking of moving PROW back in-house. She felt the work sat more naturally within the council.</p> <p>Cllr Harrington added that this was not an anti-Balfour Beatty decision – they are a good company. He felt that if PROW was in-house better use could be made of volunteers.</p>	
<p><b>575. RIGHTS OF WAY SERVICE PROVIDER'S REPORT</b></p>	
<p>AA presented the report which will be sent out with the minutes.</p> <p>JW asked that a whole year's activity could be presented rather than just a few months</p> <p>Following a look at the DMMO stats, JW asked how many staff worked on DMMOs. AA said that there were two full time staff, and one part time, but that Michael Mable had just retired. His post is out for recruitment. JW asked if Sue White also did DMMOs. AA said she did. JW asked if the council got money back. AA said there would be an underspend.</p> <p>Cllr Harrington is to meet with Jesse Norman to discuss issues surrounding the backlog of DMMOs, and what this means for the council. He suggested that some LAF members should also attend the meeting.</p> <p>HV asked what would cause defects to be moved to the capital programme. AA said it could be for a number of reasons, but for example; if the gang went to repair a bridge and found that the foundations were undermined, it became a much bigger job and would have to be moved to the capital programme.</p>	

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<p>JW asked if the report showed all the enquiries and defects that were reported. AA said he would like to go through this in the separate session to ensure everything was covered.</p> <p>DH said there was a confusion between defects and enquiries, and who was responsible. Cllr Harrington said there had been a discussion about Riparian Duties and a new protocol was about to be released. He felt a similar protocol was required for PROW.</p> <p>AA said that BBLP act in accordance with the Highways Maintenance Plan. Cllr Harrington added that BBLP do what has been agreed, but the council must ensure this is actually what they want.</p> <p>ME said the defects outstanding in the previous report are inconsistent with the results of a FOI request and the defects stated in today's report.</p> <p>Cllr Harrington requested that resolutions be added to the enforcement actions taken.</p> <p>DH said that the pre-emptive ploughing and cropping letters had really worked.</p> <p>HV asked if landowner were charged for gates and stiles. AA said no. Landowners received materials on a like for like basis.</p> <p>AA continued with the report talking about the extra funding for bridges. JW said that she was very glad to see this.</p> <p>AA asked if members would be interested in seeing before and after photographs of work completed. JW felt that would be positive and there should be some publicity regarding the extra funding. She asked how long bridges could be expected to last now. AA said that it would depend on each bridge and the work done. The bridge at Bodenham would hopefully last 50 years because of the work done to the foundations.</p> <p>DH asked about the £114,000 for opening new routes; whether it was specifically for where routes had been closed. AA replied that it was for improving routes in and around the market towns with a higher footfall.</p> <p>HV asked whether the Choices Foundation could make and install bridges as a way of reducing costs. AA said that he had made contact and they were going to choose a test site, but Covid had stopped the process. He would get back in touch.</p> <p>HV asked if other local groups or contractors could be used. AA replied that he had concerns about liability and insurance. Assurances would be need with regards to materials. For example, materials supplied to BBLP by Pontrilas Timber comes with a 10 year guarantee.</p> <p>It was agreed that AA, AL, JW, DH and ME would stay on after the meeting to discuss statistics for future reports.</p>	
<p><b>576. WORKING GROUP REPORTS</b></p>	
<p>AL said that he and Duncan Green had a meeting with Jesse Norman where he agreed that it would cost Herefordshire approximately £40m to resolve all the 2026 issues. JN said he would attempt to arrange a meeting with the Defra Minister but there hasn't been a response as yet. AL to write to JN to say the LAF is disappointed not to have had a response.</p> <p>JW reported that the Funding Group had had three meetings since the last LAF meeting. The group was focused on the way in which current arrangements work or</p>	

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<p>don't work. In particular, they looked at capital funding and where there might be more value for money. They didn't feel it was the role of the LAF to raise funding. They advised that there should be capacity within the staff and those managing the contract to pull in extra funding, and also to find creative ways of solving problems using the local community.</p> <p>JW said they had had some helpful input from Spencer Grogan and in particular Cllr Harrington. She was happy with the direction Cllr Harrington was possibly taking PROW and wondered if any other members would be interested in joining an executive group.</p>	
<p><b>577. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b></p>	
<p>None</p>	
<p><b>578. AOB</b></p>	
<p>None</p>	
<p><b>579. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p>	
<p>List of potential dates to be sent out. Meeting closed at 13.53.</p>	

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_