

Herefordshire Local Access Forum Meeting

26 January 2024 11.00am at Plough Lane

ATTENDANCE		
LAF members: Arthur Lee (Chair) Joannah Weightman Vivien Burdon Sue Enfield Duncan Green Angela Martin Peter Newman Cllr Justine Peberdy Hugh Vernon Members of the public: Andy Parr David Irwin Chris Fowler Malcolm Louch John Thompson Chris Marsden	Herefordshire Council: Ed Bradford - Head of Highways and Traffic Bruce Evans- Engineering Manager Callum Bush- Traffic Management & PROW Team Leader Stephen Organ- Volunteer Development Officer Jill Addis- PROW Officer Ceri Belli –PROW Inspector (South) Crispin Abel- PROW Inspector (North) Joseph Grice- Traffic Management Officer Cllr Philip Price (via Teams)	
APOLOGIES		
Ian Carr		
AGENDA SUMMARY		
1.0	Welcome and apologies for absence	
2.0	Minutes of LAF meeting on 27 October 2023	
3.0	Matters arising	
4.0	Meeting Principles	
5.0	Volunteer Working	
6.0	IT & Data Management	
7.0	Enforcement Policy	
8.0	Rights of Way Report	
9.0	Questions from members of the public	
10.0	Any other business	
11.0	Proposed dates of 2024 meetings	
DISTRIBUTION		
LAF Members, Ed Bradford, Bruce Evans, Callum Bush, Herefordshire Council website		
MINUTES AND CHECK LIST		
		ACTION
1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies were noted as above. Everyone introduced themselves. Stephen Organ was warmly welcomed as the newly appointed Volunteer Coordinator. He would be taking over from Jill Addis in supporting and mintuing the LAF. LAF members offered their full support to him in his new role and thanked Jill for all her hard work and support of the LAF to date.	

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2	MINUTES OF 27 OCTOBER 2023
	<p>It was noted that the revised style and layout reflected the preferred style of LAF members. There was some disagreement about some of the wording criticising the Council that had been altered. It was suggested that it was better to capture the essence of what had been said, rather than quote verbatim. Sue Enfield proposed that the minutes were accepted. Viv Bardon seconded. The final amended minutes were accepted.</p>
3	MEETING PRINCIPLES
e .	<p>The proposed meeting principles (below) were run through and agreed with additional amendments in red added on reflection after the meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LAF Meeting Principles 2024 onwards</p> <p>It is suggested that we should agree to the following principles to ensure we have a more efficient and effective meeting:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Proposed Principles:</p> <p>Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating prepared in advance with 2 designated seating areas- one for LAF members and PROW Managers, where the Chair and Minute Secretary can sit close to each other (with eye contact). The other designated area for observing/listening by members of the public and other guests • Basic refreshments/water supplied for attendees to be available 30 minutes before start of meeting. • Chair and LAF support officer to meet 30 minutes prior to the meeting to address and clarify any important issues re upcoming meeting.. <p>Meeting Agendas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda and HC Reports issued one week minimum before the meeting. • One main/ spotlight item per meeting, to enable more meaningful problem analysis with relevant papers submitted before the meeting. But not to exclude timely discussion of other important agenda items. • Chair asks new members/officers in attendance to Introduce themselves • Under Matters Arising go through the actions in the previous minutes checking they happened. • And at every Agenda item, ensure reports and presentations are circulated in advance of the meeting to enable discussion and focus on establishing actions where relevant. <p>Conduct of meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all speak through the Chair with permission. • Chair Sums up each Agenda item, as needed. To be recorded in the Minute.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If no clear consensus on a critical issue record views / put to a vote by LAF members. . <p>Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes generally to record issue, LAF advice and agreed action, not he said/she said. • Draft minutes circulated no later than 3 weeks after the meeting. <p>DG asked if minutes for the meeting could be issued in days rather than weeks, it was discussed and agreed that minutes should be issued ASAP</p> <p>It was noted Members of the Public were not able to sit separately at this meeting, consequently as an exception, some participated in the meeting, with the Chair's permission.</p> <p>Simple name boards would be helpful too and no distractions from mobile phones.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">4 MATTERS ARISING</p>	
<p>Actions from the previous meeting were displayed on the screen and run through at some length by Council Officers. Unfortunately, the Council's corporate presentation package made the presentation impossible to read so it would be circulated after the meeting as a black and white printable handout.</p> <p>The volunteer document needs some input from SO before it can be shared. Andy Parr added that he had previously shared volunteer protocols from Somerset PROW team with HC and felt that it had not been picked up on. SO will look into this.</p> <p>The staff organisation chart was displayed and would be sent to members as a handout.</p> <p>In the context of Ed Bradford's update on IT procurement, JW asked if there was someone in the team who took the lead on ensuring that IT supplied for PROW work was designed and regularly adapted to deliver what was required to assist their work. No individual is responsible.</p> <p>It was noted in response to a question from a member that PROW practice no longer conformed to the established policy to promote the replacement of stiles with self-closing gates and make bridges, etc, as accessible as possible. The LAF were concerned that accessibility was not good enough. AM and EB agreed to speak about this after the meeting.</p> <p>There was a discussion about Confirm. 'Quick win' improvements are being sought in the short term. Discussions are being held about the future, tying in with the Future Operating Model.</p> <p>Member briefings have been held and they have requested more visibility of defect progress within the system. DG shared with the group an example of a map produced by himself showing defects etc. Cllr PP explained that we had to work within HC systems and there are issue surrounding using open source software.</p> <p>Cllr Price announced that Parliament had released additional revenue funding for 2024/25 for Councils and Herefordshire was getting £250k to be spent on maintaining public footpaths which would be used for carrying out work to reopen closed rights of way. A further £250k would be ring-fenced for drainage. He added that this would be spent at parish level.</p> <p>Sue Enfield noted that LA members would like to help in establishing prioritisation criteria for allocating funding to enable the most vital routes to be maintained.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AM/EB</p>

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	<p>Bridges and the capital programme were discussed. The prioritisation list is to be shared. CB is to meet HV after the meeting to discuss bridges in more detail.</p> <p>It was suggested that tourism and alternative funding streams be put on the agenda in the future.</p> <p>A new Officer Decision has been raised to increase mileage allowance from April, but it needs to be signed off.</p> <p>LAF members noted they strongly supported the PROW team and wanted them to succeed in their work, to this end they offered all the help and advice they could..</p>	<p>CB/HV</p> <p>ALL</p>
5	VOLUNTEER WORKING	
	<p>SO gave his presentation showing the areas he would be focusing on. This will be sent out with the minutes.</p> <p>AP asked if there was a list of the current PFO's, BE explained that requests to all Parish Councils had been made and we are still awaiting some responses. SO informed the meeting that as of the start of the week we had received information back from 41 of the Parish Councils with 46 PFO's responding, with about 15 PFO's known to the team but have had no paperwork returned as yet. Support was offered from the LAF to approach Parish Councils.</p> <p>It was reiterated that in the past the PROW team manager (Sue White) had established closer working arrangements with PFOs and it would be useful to redevelop and learn from this.</p> <p>As well as developing Volunteer Footpath Inspection and Maintenance Teams to support PFOs, more LAF volunteers would need to be recruited when time allowed.</p>	
6	IT & DATA MANAGEMENT	
	<p>EB gave a presentation showing relationship between Granicus (HC) and Confirm (Brightly/BBLP). A decision on the Future Operating Model (which would decide which systems were pursued) would be made in March.</p> <p>A discussion followed regarding displaying defects and updates on the online map. Work needs to be done to improve this.</p> <p>DG agreed to discuss with EB after meeting</p>	
7	ENFORCEMENT POLICY	
	<p>A subgroup is to be set up to look at the enforcement policy. Anyone who is interested should send their name to EB.</p>	ALL
8	RIGHTS OF WAY REPORT	
	<p>CB ran through the PROW report (attached). The low activity was due to staff vacancies AF members to feed back what they would like to see in future reports.</p>	ALL
9.	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	

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	Chris Marsden submitted the question, "Does the LAF condone the HC policy to flout the law in HA1980 s130A subsection (6)?" prior to the meeting. BE is to report back to him.	BE
10.	AOB	
	None	
11.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<p>It was proposed and agreed that meetings should be the last Friday of the month (quarterly) from 11.00 to 13.00 in another more suitable room at Plough Lane.</p> <p>Dates for the forthcoming meetings are as follows:</p> <p>Friday 19th April 2024 Conference Room 1</p> <p>Friday 26th July 2024 Conference Room 1</p> <p>Friday 25th October 2024 Conference Room 1</p> <p>Refreshment will be available from 10.30am and meeting commences 11.00am</p> <p>Meeting closed at 13.15</p>	

Chairman: _____

Date: _____