

North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 17 July 2019, commencing at 10 am

Present: Paul Sherwood (Chair), Michael Bartholomew, Doug Cartwright, Rachel Connolly, County Councillor David Jeffels, Barrie Mouny, Paul Sheard and Helen Soutar.

Apologies: County Councillor Robert Heseltine, Richard Smith, Judith Turner, Roma Haigh (Vice Chair) and Carol Murray

Officers: Kerry Green – Interim Countryside Access Manager (Business and Environmental Services, North Yorkshire County Council) and Melanie Carr (Legal & Democratic Services - Secretary to the Local Access Forum)

281 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Robert Heseltine, Richard Smith Judith Turner, Roma Haigh (Vice Chair) and Carol Murray.

282. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2019

In regard to Minute 278, Members noted the absence of a final report on the GOAT Scheme on the agenda, and questioned when they could expect to receive it. County Councillor David Jeffels confirmed it would be provided for the next meeting.

Resolved -

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

283. Public Questions or Statements

There were no public questions or statements.

284. UUR & Verge Cutting on Local Access Routes

Considered –

A Briefing Note on grass cutting on the A1(M) Local Access Road from NYCC Highways & Transportation.

In the absence of an appropriate officer from NYCC Highways & Transportation, Rachel Connolly provided an overview of the background to the concerns about NMU safety along local access roads and the handling of the request from the British Horse Society that where possible verges be mowed away from the traffic near the hedges to provide safer travel for NMU journeys.

Having considered the briefing note, Members of the Forum questioned what recommendations were actually made by the Inspector in regard to cutting the grass verges and Rachel Connolly confirmed there was an obligation to maintain the verges so that could be used in their entirety, and that the BHS had subsequently offered a compromise that a 2m strip along the hedges would be acceptable.

In regard to the issue of maps provided by the British Horse Society and Highways England, Rachel suggested it would be helpful if the Forum could have sight of those in order to establish where they differed and to assess how they have been aligned by the Local Area Team.

Rachel Connolly also queried who the most appropriate officer at NYCC was, to liaise with in regard to future NMU travel safety issues.

Resolved - That:

- i. The officer Briefing Note be noted
- ii. The copies of the maps referred to in the briefing note be requested and circulated to Forum members
- iii. A named officer be identified for future liaison on NMU travel safety

285. Green Lanes – Discussion Papers

Considered -

The report of the Secretary providing two discussion papers on Green Lanes / UURs for the Forum's consideration.

Michael Bartholomew introduced the item confirming there were approximately 800km of green lanes in North Yorkshire, most creating no problem for users. However he highlighted that in some individual cases their fabric was being ruined and wildlife was being disturbed. When this became apparent, he suggested the question should be asked 'Is the use of this Green Lane by non-essential motor vehicles essential for the public's interest. If the answer is no, then closure should be sought.

Members discussed their opposing views on the use of UURs and Doug Cartwright suggested a compromise needed to be identified for any contentious UURs, in order that they could remain accessible to all.

Members noted that National Parks had historically worked well to identify a suitable compromise for contentious UURs, but Michael Bartholomew gave an example of where after 30 years of compromise a Green Lane had finally been closed to motor vehicles after the relevant Authority had accepted that the many compromises made had not worked.

Carol Murray proposed that in each instance, whatever right of access existed, that level of access should be maintained, and attention was drawn to her suggestion in the papers that an initial 'double check' be added, that 'Repair and Reopen' was the correct way forward, before doing so. It was also noted that any consideration of closure would need to include an holistic view of its effect on any adjoining routes.

Michael Bartholomew sought clarity on what was meant by a double check and Members discussed going on site visits to familiarise themselves with those green lanes whose use and condition had become contentious.

Finally, Members noted there had been an offer from the Chairman of Redcar & Cleveland LAF to attend a future NYLAF meeting to give a presentation on the various ways that highway authorities have handled UCR's in the old North Riding over the years, and it was agreed that the NYCC PROW Officer should be invited to the same meeting.

Resolved - That:

- i. The update be noted.
- ii. The attendance of the Chairman of Redcar & Cleveland LAF be added to the work programme for the next scheduled meeting on 20 November 2020

286. Secretary's Update Report

Considered -

The report of the Secretary which updated on developments since the last meeting.

In regard to the A66 Trans Pennine Project Public Consultation, Rachel Connolly queried why her views had not been included in the response issued by NYLAF. It was confirmed that the all views had been considered but that the Chair had decided that until a route had been chosen there was little point in commenting on the possible routes. Instead he had chosen only to state NYLAF's general support for the scheme at this first stage.

In regard to the Malton – Pickering Cycleway Design Consultation, Forum members noted the draft letter to the consultants (WSP). The Chair proposed one minor amendment to the 4th bullet point – that the words 'cheap/low quality' be removed and replaced by 'sub-standard'

Forum members agreed the amendment and it was suggested that in addition to sending the consultation response to WSP, it also be sent to both the Chair and cycling representative of North York Moors LAF, and to Ryedale District Council.

County Councillor David Jeffels confirmed he was unable to attend the September meeting of the regional LAF and the Chair agreed to attend instead.

Paul Sheard expressed disappointment that NYCC did not have a Cycling Strategy in place. He welcomed the plans to introduce an Active Travel Strategy that would encompass both walking and cycling strategy but was disappointed to note that the work to develop it had slipped. He stressed the need to progress it quickly as it would help inform future direction. He therefore suggested that an update on the production of the planned Active Travel Strategy be provided for the next NYLAF meeting.

Resolved -

That:

- i. The update report be noted.
- ii. Subject to the agreed amendment, the Secretary send the draft letter attached at Annex B to all those identified above

287. Forward Plan

Considered -

The Secretary drew members' attention to the draft Forward Plan provided at Appendix 1 to the report, and invited members to identify any additional items of business to be added outside of those already identified earlier in the meeting.

Rachel Connolly referred to her previous suggestion that North Yorkshire Police be invited to attend a future meeting. She confirmed her previous conversation with an NYP representative and stressed their keenness to attend. Members agreed to circulate their thoughts on possible questions for NYP to the NYLAF Secretary.

Resolved -

That:

- i. The following be added to NYLAF's work programme for the November 2019 meeting:
 - Goat Scheme Final Report
 - Attendance of North Yorkshire Police Representative
 - Update on production of NYCC Active Travel Strategy
 - Attendance of the Chairman of Redcar & Cleveland LAF & NYCC PROW Officer

288. District Council & LAF Project Updates

Considered -

The report of the Secretary giving LAF members the opportunity to update the Forum on District Council liaison and other LAF representative project activity since the last meeting.

Rachel Connolly confirmed she had received notification of a planning application with a ROW running through it in the Richmond area, and that she was currently drafting a response which she would circulate to members. She requested that if members had any objections to her draft response that they provide feedback as soon as possible in order that the response could be submitted by the deadline. It was noted that often members did not respond to email requests for feedback making it difficult for the Secretary to know whether it was ok to submit a formal response drafted by an individual member.

In regard to the issue at Bullamoor Park in Northallerton, and the planned consultation to be undertaken by Northallerton Town Council, it was agreed that the Forum needed to be involved in the consultation process.

Rachel Connolly also suggested it would be helpful if the Forum could agree a position statement for circulation to District Councils that addressed the issue of public rights of way on new developments/estate roads, and Members discussed whether to instead add some appropriate wording to the Forum's Advice & Guidance to District Councils.

Resolved - That:

- i. The updates on the various project updates be noted.
- ii. That further thought be given to amending the Advice & Guidance for District Councils to address the issue of public rights of way on new developments/estate roads

The meeting concluded at 12:40
MLC