



Minutes of the Local Access Forum

20 September 2011

-: Present :-

Dominic Acland (Chairman), Robert Boyd, Councillor Ian Doggett, Margaret Forbes-Hamilton, Bob Harvey, Wanda Hollingworth, Mick Lear, John Mellor and Carole Ann Williams

(Also in attendance: Valerie Simpson, Teresa Buckley, James Nicholas and Nigel Shilabeer)

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Members and Officers introduced themselves and Nigel Shilabeer, attending for item 7 on the agenda, gave an overview of his work with Sea Torbay.

2. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Elaine Mason (EM), Torbay Care Trust (moving house). Sue Cheriton and Alex Scolefield had hoped to attend for Item 7 on the Agenda but had to send their apologies.

3. Declaration of Interests

None, other than those already notified to the TLAF.

4. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Torbay Local Access Forum held on 30 June 2011 were accepted and agreed as an accurate report of the meeting.

Action:

Teresa Buckley to arrange for agreed Minutes to be shown on the TLAF Webpage.

5. Matters arising not shown on the Agenda

5.1 Forestry Commission - Tree and Woodland Health Update

Bob Harvey referred to draft letter agreed to be written to Richard Benyon, MP, and talked through the draft letter in reply to Mr. Benyon's letter of the 5 April 2011. Members were asked for their thoughts on the content - all **agreed** same.

5.2 Brown Bridge Road

Several outstanding issues were raised on repairs and access for this area – James Nicholas to organise an inspection survey of the whole rights of way network and had brought a document to the meeting where the LAF could log and record any problems – to be further discussed later in the meeting.

5.3 Baywalks

James Nicholas (JN) has arranged to meet with Elaine Mason (EM) to discuss which PROWs were used by Baywalks.

Action:

JN/EM

5.4 Astra Zeneca

Robert Boyd had spoken to Gareth Millard who informed Brixham Council had said that it will offer 10 year lease at a peppercorn rent and this had been accepted. All work should be completed by Christmas 2011. The Forum agreed this item can now be closed and not included on future agendas.

Action:

Agenda item complete

5.5 Berry Head Cattle Grids

JN had spoken to Council's Legal Department who informed the intention was that the Countryside Trust would put in a retrospective application for this. Chair informed that originally Highways thought that the pathway would need to be diverted around cattle grids, but subsequent advice confirmed that a public footpath can be placed there and that cattle grids were not obstructions; but Section 147 Consent needed to be applied for and this will be done.

6. Election of Officers

6.1 Chairperson : Dominic Acland (DA)

Proposed by Bob Harvey, seconded by Mike Lear. DA reminded the meeting of the need for an Environmental Forum within Torbay and it was agreed that he would continue as Chair of the TLAF for the interim but if he became involved in the new Forum, together with his other responsibilities, his role as Chair of the TLAF would need to be reviewed. Also if another member would like to take on the role this would also be considered at future meetings. To be reviewed at each meeting in 2012.

6.2 Vice-Chairperson : John Mellor (JM)

Proposed by Cllr. Doggett, seconded by Mick Lear.

6.3 Regional & National Co-ordinator : Bob Harvey (BH)

The Forum agreed this new role and title; valuing BH's expertise and knowledge at Regional and National level which would ease the workload of the Chair.

7. Annual Report 2011/2012

The Chair tabled the Report; referred to Item 6 and said a grant of £50k from the Forestry Commission to upgrade footpaths and improve access for cyclists had been confirmed. The Forum **agreed** and **accepted** the Report subject to one change being made in Item 9; the first paragraph should read 'The costs have been met from Torbay Council's **Democratic Services** (and not Public Rights of Way) budget.

TB informed that administration cover would continue for TLAF through Democratic Services but this may not be covered in same way as at present.

BH told the meeting that Hilary Winter's role appears to be safe at the present time.

Action:

TB to arrange for amended Report to be shown on the TLAF webpage. Secretary to email copy to Natural England.

8. Discussion on the Proposed Membership and Role of the Torbay Environment and Access Forum

This had been discussed on many occasions at past LAF meetings. TB had looked into the possibility of the LAF extending its remit to cover this but because it is a statutory body, it was not within its legislation to do so. TB had spoken to Sue Cheriton who said she would support the formation of a Torbay Environment Forum and would be prepared to receive advice from it in the same way as the LAF, but the TLAF would not be able to expand its role to include this Forum. Individuals from the new Forum could become members of the LAF, but would have to be appointed as **individuals** and **NOT** as representatives of that, or any other organisations.

There were many groups within Torbay with overlapping remits and it was felt it would be advantageous if a conference could be held, perhaps annually, where these groups could meet so each was made aware of the other's existence and to ensure 'boundaries' and cross-over issues were covered to protect what we care for.

To ensure the TLAF was made aware of the work of the Environment Forum it was suggested a TLAF representative might attend its meetings and report back at LAF meetings; alternatively a newsletter could be produced from each area.

Although the Council would listen to, and take advice from the Environment Forum, no resources would be available from the Council to cover secretariat, administration costs, etc.

Action:

DA agreed to organise a meeting of the relevant representatives of the different groups to decide how the Forum would work best and how to cover its administration; Sue Cheriton to be invited.

9. Improving Public Access Networks in Torbay - Mapping Exercise

JN tabled maps of areas of Torbay which the Forum discussed and raised issues relating to access. Next stage was to check to ensure the accuracy of the plans and then make these available on the Council's website and link to Torbay LAF and Baywalks' WebPages. Area Co-ordinators kept tabled copies of their own areas – JN to look into whether copies could be available for all members but this might be too costly. It was agreed that all access issues should be emailed to JN direct at James.Nicholas@torbay.gov.uk.

Action:

JN/Co-ordinators/All

10. Updates from Area Co-ordinators

Torquay Co-ordinator : Due to personal injury, Margaret Forbes-Hamilton informed she had not been able to walk the area; therefore only issue to report was bolted gates at **Maidencombe**. Chair explained that this was Countryside Trust land and dog walkers had been leaving gates open where cattle are kept, therefore gates had to be locked; this only happened when cattle were in the fields.

Cavanna Park : A member raised the issue that access cannot be gained due to barbed wire fence around land at Cavanna Park.

Paignton Co-ordinator : Wanda Hollingworth – nothing to report.

Brixham Co-ordinators : Rob Boyd and Mick Lear. RB reported on :

Astra Zeneca : Northern arm and possibility that benches might be affected.

Fishcombe Cove : RB spoke to Scott Jones who informed at present this had stalled and might not proceed. RB would like kissing gate modernised to allow access for wheelchairs – JN suggested this could be added to 'Wish List' Items and it was agreed that the Forum would discuss the ROWIP at it next meeting in December and compile a 'Wish List'.

Churston Golf Club : Proposed development would not affect America Way.

Action:

ROWIP agenda item for December

11. TLAF Information Sharing as at September 2011

BH updated the Forum on some of the items listed.

12. Agree Meeting Dates and Venue for 2012 Meetings

Secretary to set dates for formal approval at December meeting.

Action:

Secretary agenda item for December

13. Any Other Business

13.1 New TLAF Logo

It was agreed that the TLAF logo could be re-designed in a more 'professional' and coloured format; coloured reproduction/printing to be reserved for formal representations due to cost. All members were invited to bring ideas for new logo to December meeting for discussion and agreement of Forum.

Action:

All – December agenda

13.2 Village Green Status Applications

MFH highlighted that a number of applications had been made for Village Green Status but with little information available on same. These applications were delegated to, and processed through, the Council's Legal Department. The Forum requested that Stephen Dunn from the Legal Department should be asked for all information available on these applications to be sent to the TLAF.

Action:

Secretary

14. Date/Time/Venue of Next Meetings

Changed from Thursday 8 December to Thursday 1 December from 6.00 p.m. in the Ballroom at Oldway Mansion.

The Chairperson thanked all those that attended and closed the meeting at 7.40 p.m.