

Shropshire Local Access Forum

<u>Committee and Date</u>
Shropshire Local Access Forum
16 October 2014

MINUTES OF THE SHROPSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2014 10.20 AM - 12.18 PM

Responsible Officer: Linda Jeavons
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Present:

Councillor Roger Plowden (Chairman)
Councillors Stephen Bell, Peter Carr, Richard Cotham, Janet Mees-Robinson,
Stuart Morgan, Zia Robins, Dave Tremellen and Mark Weston (Vice Chairman)

Officers:

Mark Blount, Outdoor Partnerships Team Leader - Parks
Shona Butter, Mapping & Enforcement Team Leader
Linda Jeavons, Committee Officer

In Attendance:

Adrian Pickles, Head of Centre, The Field Studies Centre Preston Montford

42 **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Members were reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

43 **Welcome / Introductions / Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman welcomed and introduced everyone.

Officers Present:

Apologies for absence were received from:

Members

Gareph Boxley, Alex Carson-Taylor, Chris Chillingworth, Richard Cotham, David Cowell, Pauline Dee, Margaret Markland, Alison Parker and Les Winwood.

Officers

Claire Fildes, Deb Hughes, Tim King and Dan Wrench.

44 **Minutes and any matters arising**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 1 May 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

Minute No. 35 (paragraph 2) to read: “.....DEFRA as and when permissive access schemes came to an end.....”;

Minute No. 40 (paragraph 1) to read: “The number of wind turbine applications had increased and they responded to relevant applications on an individual basis.....”;

Minute No. 40 (paragraph 2) to read: “....general access and tourism and how it might deter people coming to Shropshire.”; and

Minute No. 41.3(b) to read: “there was a list of listed buildings but no record of important landscape and historic features.”.

45 **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

46 **The Field Studies Centre Preston Montford and its work**

Mr Adrian Pickles, Head of Centre, Field Studies Council, Preston Montford was in attendance and provided an overview of the facility and their current and future project work. A question and answer session followed. Ideas and views were exchanged on how the Centre, this Forum and Shropshire Council could work closer and how the Centre could interact and be involved with the wider community and the following issues/suggestions were raised (see also Minute No. 47):

Suggestions and comments included:

- Creation of nature corridors;
- Make more use of the local history, i.e. important landscape features and Drovers Roads;
- Improved signage on roadside to advertise and make people more aware of the centre;
- Provision of more dog friendly walks/activities;
- Provision of accommodation/afternoon teas for those undertaking the longer routes;
- Camping provision; and
- Increased contact with the farming community.

In response, Adrian Pickles explained that there were many issues and challenges associated with dog walking on the site and these would have to be taken into account before any decision was made. The centre would like to have an increased contact with the farming community in the future. They currently offered land and farm management courses and the aim was to include low intensity farming and hedgelaying in the future.

47 **Update on Shropshire Council's Parks and Countryside Sites**

Mark Blount, Outdoor Partnerships Team Leader – Parks and Green Space, Shropshire council was in attendance and provided an overview of the service following the recent financial cuts and staff restructure. He explained that the vision was to improve people's wellbeing and to support local communities, the local environment and tourism economy, through the management and development of recreational access via the Public Rights of Way network, Countryside Parks and Sites, Green Spaces and Play areas.

A question and answer session followed and a discussion ensued on how the role of volunteering could be encouraged and embraced within the Outdoor Recreation service and how better connections could be made with local charities/bodies doing similar work in the community so that they could all work together.

In response to comments, it was noted that it would be possible to provide appropriate training/equipment for willing volunteers. Following a reduction in staff numbers, other ways of working were currently being reviewed, ie the formation of local community groups who would volunteer their time to help with the management of sites. Discussions with parish councils to take over the running of sites were ongoing.

48 **Feedback from other Forums and items for noting**

48.1 **Items for Noting**

Stuart Morgan reported that following a Public Inquiry the footpath at Spunhill had reopened. The meeting acknowledged the input of all those involved and specifically Alison Parker who had spearheaded a campaign to get the path reopened.

Stuart Morgan also drew the meeting's attention to the potential risks associated with the lack of a local policy to protect against the potential risks of oilseed rape obstruction.

48.2 **Minutes/Papers**

The following minutes/papers, which were circulated with the agenda for information, were noted:

- (i) Shropshire Cycle Forum – 11 February 2014
- (ii) Shropshire Riding and Carriage Driving Forum – 17 February 2014
- (iii) Central Walking Forum – 7 March 2014
- (iv) South Walking Forum – 25 April 2014
- (v) North Walking Forum – 28 April 2014

48.3 **Future Meetings**

- (a) The following agenda items were suggested for consideration at a future meeting:

- (i) To consider the impact of the Site Allocations and Management Development (SAMDev) Plan on countryside access; and
- (b) Future meetings for 2014/15 as follows:

Thursday, 16 October 2014
Thursday, 5 February 2015
Date in May 2015 – TBC

All meetings to commence at 10.00 am at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury unless stated otherwise.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: