

WREXHAM LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
DRAFT MINUTES

**Fortieth meeting of the Forum held at the Guildhall, Wrexham
Friday 4th February 2011.**

01/11 ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

Attendance:

SECRETARY (Cover):

Katie Holland

VICE CHAIR:

Sue Gittins (SG)

MEMBERS:

Martin Howorth (MH)

Gerald Moss (GM)

Tim Stratton (TS)

D Gwynfor Jones (DGJ)

John Cooper-Poole (JCP)

NON-MEMBERS:

Sean Hanratty (SH) WCBC

Sion Roberts (SR) WCBC

Alison Whitley (AW) WCBC

Caroline Selby (CS) Observer

Aleck Coulson (AC) Observer 'Tread Lightly'

Apologies:

Mabyn Pickering (MP)

Shelagh Roberts

Janet Williams

Mike Crawshaw

John Evans

Edward Wardle

Mary Roberts (tendered resignation)

Guy Springett (tendered resignation)

02/11 MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD ON 12TH NOVEMBER 2010:

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

SG suggested sending a card of thanks to Carla Hughes as the out-going WLAF Secretary.

ACTION: Chairman to send card of thanks to Carla Hughes.

- **Forum membership**

Forum membership was queried, if the number of members was low what numbers would ensure voting could take place on items. Secretary to check what the number of members are required to make the LAF quorate with CCW? This will be reported back at the next meeting.

MH also stated he would be looking to replace the members of the forum who had recently resigned. MH stressed that the forum should be balanced, and represent a variety of views. MH suggested interested parties should email him at: martin.howorth@wrexham.gov.uk, he will then go through the applications and begin interviewing. MH said he would also contact the Equalities Manager and AVOW.

ACTION: Secretary to check with CCW. MH to look into replacement membership.

- **WLAF Members Contact Details**

SG advised that KH was circulating a WLAF contact list. WLAF members to check details & amend if necessary.

- **Narrow Stiles**

Nothing to report currently.

ACTION: SR to investigate.

- **Draft Annual Report**

SG advised that MP had been working on the Annual Report. MH added he would need the information as soon as possible.

SG suggested the draft could potentially go out with the next set of Minutes.

ACTION: All comments for Annual Report to MP urgently. SG to speak to MP about progress, and see if sending out the draft is possible.

- **Distribution of Minutes**

Issues had been resolved.

- **Local Development Plan**

TS stated he had looked at the LDF, but only from a bridleways perspective, and suggested the LAF should comment as a whole rather than individually.

JCP added he was unsure where footpaths or access fit into the LDP, and asserted there was not much to be said unless development threatened a ROW.

On planning and the role of the LAF it was stated that MP had written to the senior planner to arrange a meeting to discuss the issues on which the LAF should be consulted.

MH added that although LAF has a strategic role, a key function is the protection of open air recreation in the County Borough to ensure the needs of open access are met.

ACTION: Any comments on the LDP to TS asap. MP also to follow up application for a meeting with Senior Planner.

- **4x4s in Countryside**

The response from John Walsh (Streetscene) was discussed. DGJ stated that originally the query had been from MC that the poor state of the Wayfarers Way was leading 4x4s to cause erosion and also that farmers were having issues accessing their livestock. DGJ therefore questioned whether the issue had become 'lost in translation' at some point.

DGJ also stated he thought that the farmers had agreed to do repairs if given the materials, along with some 4x4 enthusiasts. SG then introduced Aleck Coulson (AC) from the 'Responsible 4x4' group Tread Lightly.

AC said that Tread Lightly was committed to working with Councils across Wales, and sometimes offered volunteers to help with practical work.

AC stated that he knew the Wayfarers Way, but was unsure where responsibility lay for it. He believed that there was a 'road closed' sign at the Llanarmon end, but possibly nothing on the Denbighshire side.

MH suggested LAF contact Chris Bentley, Area Coordinator Streetscene to ascertain if the TRO is temporary, and if the issue is just on Wrexham land, in order to move the issue along. DGJ suggested the LAF should push for problems to be resolved and the Wayfarers to be re-opened.

ACTION:

MC needs to report if the Wayfarers is still in use and reiterate his initial issue.

Chair to contact Chris Bentley about time schedule on TRO and where notices are displayed

• **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty:**

SG suggested the AONB proposal seemed to be supported. There was concern that Denbighshire and Conwy LAF were to merge. It was thought a closer cooperation with Flintshire and Wrexham would be more appropriate if the AONB was extended.

MH indicated there had been some suggestion for extending the AONB in the Ceiriog valley at the Wrexham County Borough Executive Board, but added the matter depends on CCW.

ACTION: Renew request to meet with Flintshire and Denbighshire LAFs on cross border issues.

• **Glastir Scheme:**

No further news was reported. DGJ suggested an incentive for take up of the scheme was needed.

03/11 CHAIRS REPORT:

Most issues from the Chairs Report were raised under Matters Arising.

SG suggested joint discussions with Flintshire LAF, particularly regarding AONB status.

TS and GM registered his interest in this. MH suggested one or two joint gatherings per year.

ACTION:

SG to discuss potential dates for joint meetings with MP.

04/11 SECRETARYS REPORT:

All issues had been addressed during 'Matters Arising'.

05/11 ACCESS RANGERS:

SR reported on a new footpath project from Chirk up into the Ceiriog Valley.

SG suggested SR speak to Northern Marches Cymru regarding World Heritage Site funding.

06/11 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT:

Discussed during Matters Arising.

07/11 PLANNING UPDATE:

Discussed during Matters Arising.

08/11 BROUGHTON COMMUNITY PATH PROJECT:

AW presented an excellent presentation on the Broughton Community Path Project which was carried out in conjunction with Groundwork Wrexham & Flintshire.

AW showed many access improvements which were carried out as part of the project including the installation of safety rails, steps, kissing gates, vegetation management and new path surfacing.

AW also talked about the 'Adopt a Path' scheme, and said the ROW section would welcome further volunteers for this initiative.

TS requested an official WCBC response to the general suitability of kissing gates.

Visitors from Hightown Communities First also introduced their path improvement project. AW said she would schedule a meeting for outside of the LAF meeting to meet with the Hightown project.

ACTION: AW to report back in Rangers Report on meeting with Hightown Communities First.

09/11 COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES:

It was noted that a CCW representative was still not attending the Wrexham LAF meetings since Alun Price left.

It was suggested that potentially the LAF could write to the Chief Executive of CCW about this.

MH commented that he had received a letter from CCW advising of a 22% cut in funding this year, and warned he believed this funding cut would continue in future years. SG said she was enquire at the LAF Chairs meeting, and see if other LAF's are having the same issue with CCW's non-attendance.

ACTION:

In the first instance, the Chair will write to the Chief Executive of CCW to enquire why a CCW representative was still not attending the Wrexham LAF meetings. A request for the regular newsletter from CCW could also be made.

10/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

SG reported that the agenda items for the LAF Chairs meeting included Glastir, coastal paths, financial cuts and dog fouling.

TS stated that ROW notices (modification or diversion) orders are taking too long to get to him.

ACTION:

SH agreed to send a mass email to all LAF members, asking for individuals to register their interest in specific notices so that getting information out can be more responsive.

GM asked if anything had been received regarding forestry sales in Wales.

SG suggested that all LAF members should continue to monitor the situation closely.

11/11 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Regarding ideas for further meetings, SG reported that MP was interested in going back to Minera Quarry. MH advised the situation there was extremely delicate, it was suggested that the Chair could contact Minera Quarry Trust and the Community Council to ascertain views on a visit by the LAF to consider recreation and access problems in the area. If views were favourable a site meeting could be held.

Another suggestion was to look at the ROW improvements in Chirk and look at the World Heritage site at Trevor, before holding the meeting.

SG suggested maybe a meeting in the proposed AONB.

GM suggested 'Illegal Off-roading' as a topic toward Autumn/Winter.

ACTION:

SG to speak to MP about the meeting topic option options and decide which would be the best option for the next meeting.

MH to deliver update on ROWIP targets at next meeting.

Date for next meeting: 27th May 2011.

Venue: To be confirmed.