

SOMERSET LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING HELD

ON

**7th OCTOBER
2015**

AT

RUISHTON VILLAGE HALL

SLAF Members present:

Virginia Jones, Suzy Dymond-White, Bill Knight, Alan Carr, David Lovejoy, Anthony Gray, David Perris and Cllr David Fothergill,

SCC Officers present:

Pete Hobley – Rights of Way Service Manager, Rachel Pearce – Rights of Way Warden (Bridges), Emma Parsons and Karen Tunnock – Joint Secretary to SLAF

Welcome, Apologies and Notes of absence:

Pete Hobley welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made around the table.

Apologies were received from Roger Conway, Ann Fin, James Bateman, Trish Coombes and Julia Gadd.

It was noted that due to personal reasons Clare Poole and Barry Twist have resigned.

Pete Hobley advised that we need a minimum of 10 members and he will take this away to have a look at this.

Minutes & Matters arising from previous meeting held on the 17th June 2015

Item no: 14.1.5 – Greg to compile a formal response on behalf of SLAF regarding their concern about the lack of resource to deal with the backlog in modification orders, and send to Cllr Harvey Siggs. Deadline start of July for response to be discussed at next SLAF meeting in October. Awaiting a response to Greg to chase

up. Emma Parsons believes Lisa Portman did the response. Emma Parsons to check. **Done.**

Item no: 14.1.8b – Lisa and Emma to send details of the Brean Cross sluice project to SLAF members. Emma to clarify if this action has been completed. **Done.**

Item no: 14.2.1 – Greg to compile response to Robert Harris at Forestry Commission re the closure of the section of the Neroche Path. P Hobley advised that the Forestry Commission have done a report and found failings. A meeting is to be set-up with the Crown Agents in the next couple of weeks and Pete Hobley will provide feedback. **This will be discussed within this meeting as an Agenda item.**

Item no: 15.1.1 – Pete Hobley to look at Roger Conway's report concerning footbridges, particularly Bradford-On-Tone. **Done.**

Herepath Update

Pete Hobley advised that a three way meeting had taken place with the Forestry Commission and the Crown Agents with reference to the tyre bales. There will be a financial impact of around £200k relating to the disposal of the tyre bales. Due to the costs involved the Crown Agents are not interested. A possible option is to pursue the original Contractor and SCC takes on libel to get the trail open again. The original partnership terms were with Neroche, Forestry Commission and the Crown Agents and the Forestry Commission appointed the Contractor. Pete Hobley will be providing a Briefing Paper to consider the best course of action to take.

A comment was raised that there had been complaints with reference to the lack of the circular route. Virginia Jones commented that Pegasus Crossing is not marked for riders and also the old bridle way at Obridge isn't marked either.

Bridge Inspection Policy

Rachel Pearce handed out around the table a paper relating to the Rights of Way Bridge Inspection Procedure – Review and gave a presentation on the Rights of Way Bridges & Structures Inspection Procedure Review 2015.

Pete Hobley commented that this Inspection Procedure Review is work in progress at present and he will come back to the Forum when he has a Final Draft for consultation.

Rachel Pearce to forward to Cllr Fothergill a list of the missing bridges.

Ramblers Pathwatch/Adopt-a-Path

Ramblers Pathwatch

The Big Pathwatch is a Ramblers led initiative. PH commented that five reports had been received and within the reports there are 1200 faults. Some of the faults are already on the system. 287 of those are immediate priorities and being added to the system. All valid faults will be put on to the system eventually. The Big Pathwatch will close at the end of the year.

Adopt-a-Path

This scheme is similar to Pathwatch and has received a good level of interest, looking to do a further push in the Spring next year which will hopefully draw more interest. The more volunteers we have will help with SCC revenue costs.

Cllr Fothergill suggested perhaps the Footpath Liaison Officers push for the Parish Councils to remind them about their role. Pete Hobley commented that the Parish Path Liaison Officers carry out an annual survey of the whole network and that 90% of the Parishes are on board.

SLAF Terms of Reference

Pete Hobley advised that this was an item that Roger Conway had asked to be put on the Agenda. Roger has gone through the Terms of Reference and made notes however we do not know what Roger is proposing therefore this Agenda item will be deferred to the next meeting. Pete will discuss with Roger when he is well enough to ask if Pete can circulate via email what he is proposing.

Any Other Business

Anthony Gray commented that there is a persistent problem with a farmer who does not clear maize and this has been raised as a fault on the system. Les Braunton may know about this and Pete Hobley will take this up.

Anthony Gray advised that three footpaths on his patch exit out onto busy roads and therefore are unusable at one end. Pete Hobley advised that he will put to his Highways colleagues, upon which cases will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Pete also suggested that another option would be a public footpath diversion. Anthony Gray will speak to Les Braunton.

Virginia Jones advised on behalf of Ann Fin that Bridleway Rights should be shown on the signage re Pegasus.

Virginia Jones commented with reference to Anthony's comment re farmers who do

not clear maize that it was the farmers duty to clear hedgerows and we should be going straight to notice as this would save money.

David Lovejoy commented that there is an Environmental Stewardship Scheme (online) which lists 95% of landowners in the UK.

David Lovejoy also commented that with reference to Anthony's comment re maize clearance that this could be dealt with within the Parish as the Parish probably will know the landowner, this seems to work well with reference to hedges and gateways.

David Lovejoy commented that it is a Duty of Care to survey trees along routes adjoining rights of way on a 3 year basis and does SCC have updated reports on this? PH commented that we do not proactively look at defects on the network apart from bridges and other issues will be reactive. PH will speak to the Tree Officer within the Council, David will email Pete with the details.

Alan Carr asked what the penalty is for crops blocking footpaths. PH advised that a Notice would be issued to undertake the clearance and if they did not do this we would go in with a Contractor and recharge the costs.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place the second week of May 2016 in the evening. Emma will email suggested dates.

Should any members have a topic they would like on the Agenda or to invite a speaker to let Emma or Roger know.

Peter Hobley commented that he is still waiting to be notified of the appointment of the Mendip District Councillor.

Summary of Actions Arising

Item No:	Details	Update/Outcome
7.10.15 a	Pete Hobley advised that we need a minimum of 10 members and he will take this away to have a look at this.	
7.10.15b	Rachel Pearce to forward to Cllr Fothergill a list of the missing bridges.	Done
7.10.15.c	Pete Hobley advised that this was	

	<p>an item that Roger Conway had asked to be put on the Agenda. Roger has gone through the Terms of Reference and made notes however we do not know what Roger is proposing therefore this Agenda item will be deferred to the next meeting. Pete will discuss with Roger when he is well enough to ask if Pete can circulate via email what he is proposing.</p>	
7.10.15.d	<p>Anthony Gray commented that there is a persistent problem with a farmer who does not clear maize and this has been raised as a fault on the system. Les Braunton may know about this and Pete Hobley will take this up.</p>	<p>Done - issue forwarded to Area Warden, Les Braunton for attention next year.</p>
7.10.15.e	<p>Anthony Gray advised that three footpaths on his patch exit out onto busy roads and therefore are unusable at one end. Pete Hobley advised that he will put to his Highways colleagues upon which cases will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Pete also suggested that another option would be a public footpath diversion. Anthony Gray will speak to Les Braunton.</p>	<p>Done – issue forwarded to Highways but lack of verge will make any improvement very difficult.</p>
7.10.15.f	<p>David Lovejoy commented that it is a Duty of Care to survey trees along routes adjoining rights of way on a 3 year basis and does SCC have updated reports on this? PH commented that we do not proactively look at defects on the network apart from bridges and other issues will be reactive. PH will speak to the Tree Officer within</p>	

	the Council, David will email Pete with the details.	
7.10.15.g	<p>The next meeting will take place the second week of May 2016 in the evening. Emma will email suggested dates.</p> <p>Should any members have a topic they would like on the Agenda or to invite a speaker to let Emma or Roger know.</p>	

