

## **Lancashire Local Access Forum**

**Tuesday, 26th January, 2021 at 10.30 am in Zoom Virtual Meeting**

**Please note the meeting will commence once the meeting of the Public Rights of Way Access Forum has come to a close. (The meeting of the PROWAF is at 10:00am)**

### **Agenda**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>
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|-----------|--|---------------|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>   |               |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2020</b><br>(Attached)        | (Pages 1 - 4) |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Matters Arising</b>   |               |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Notes of the Special Meeting held on 24 November 2020</b><br>(Attached) | (Pages 5 - 8) |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Coastal Access Update</b>   |               |
| <b>6.</b> | <b>Countryside Code</b>  |               |
| <b>7.</b> | <b>Rights of Way in Lancashire</b>   |               |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>Any Other Business</b>  |               |
| <b>9.</b> | <b>Date of Next Meeting</b><br>To be confirmed.                            |               |

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Director of Corporate Services

County Hall  
Preston



## **Lancashire Local Access Forum**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 4th February, 2020 at 10.30 am in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

### **Present:**

#### **Chair**

Richard Toon, Independent

#### **Committee Members**

County Councillor Ian Brown  
County Councillor Cosima Towneley  
Arthur Baldwin, Access Rossendale  
Peter Edge, Lancashire Association of Local Councils  
David Kelly, Ramblers Association  
Steve Kirby  
Chris Kynch, Lancashire Association of Local Councils  
Mike Prescott, Cycling UK

#### **Officers**

David Goode, Lancashire County Council  
Lorraine Mellodey, Blackburn with Darwen Council  
Andrew Hewitson, Lancashire County Council

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received Paul McKeown and Paul Withington.

#### **2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 July 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

There were no Matters Arising.

#### **4. Coastal Access Update**

The Chair welcomed Danny Moores and Gerry Rusbridge from Natural England, to the meeting.

The forum was informed that the Coastal Access Plan was now out for consultation. The forum enquired about funding and if the money was secured. Members were informed that the government was committed to funding the English Coastal Path and that there was an ongoing substantial contribution to the maintenance of the path.

Work first started on the two stretches of the Lancashire coast in 2016 and that it had taken longer than expected to publish the proposals. There had been very few changes since Natural England last attended the Lancashire Local Access Forum.

The proposals had been published on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and people had 8 weeks from this date to put forward comments and objections. The closing date for this was the 4<sup>th</sup> March. The comments would then be reviewed and the Planning Inspectorate would pick up on the objections. So far there had not been a great number of objections. The route from Silecroft to Silverdale had received 6 comments and no objections and the route from Silverdale to Cleveleys had received no comments and no objections.

In early 2021 Natural England would work with Lancashire County Council on the coastal path. Natural England had changed some chapters on each of the individual reports. Once these reports were approved by the Secretary of State work on the coastal path could commence.

In some areas there were nature conservation concerns. Natural England was encountering more and more issues around nature conservation and was taking into account different levels of access around the country. Nature conservation was the highest priority and took precedence over everything else. Natural England was doing a parallel nature conservation assessment on all proposals. Regarding the Morecambe Bay area, there were restrictions on people for huge proportion of the year, seven months to be exact. This meant that the impact of people on the birds was relatively restricted. In the Marine and Coastal Access Act restrictions were new with the proposals. There was guidance on restrictions in the Coastal Access Scheme. What Natural England was trying to implement must not cause additional harm. People must take responsibility for new rights of access. The forum was informed that the coastal path was about access rights for people on foot only.

The Chair, Richard Toon, would make a written representation on behalf of the Lancashire Local Access Forum to Natural England.

## **5. Local Transport Plan 4**

The Chair welcomed Andrew Hewitson, Policy Officer, Lancashire County Council, to the meeting. Andrew updated the forum on the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and the connections and mobility within Lancashire's towns and cities.

There were many issues with Lancashire's towns and cities. Congestion was a major problem for the majority of town centres in Lancashire. Much of the infrastructure had been designed decades ago. The infrastructure had been designed to transport what then seemed like large numbers of motor traffic at the time. Much of the infrastructure implemented had little regard for the impact of people on foot or on bikes. Whilst there was significant issues with congestion the question was asked if many of these journeys were necessary. The forum was informed that in Manchester 30% of all journeys were 1km or lower.

Another issue was to do with cycling and walking. It was important to make these a natural alternative. Progress had been made since the LTP3, with successful Local Sustainable Transport Fund bids and Access fund bids, as well as significant infrastructure

improvements, the most significant being the East Lancashire Cycle Network. Improvements were coming via the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Regarding public transport, there had been some progress made, but it was a difficult time in terms of funding. Lancashire County Council did not have total control of public transport. Public transport had to be more affordable and more integrated.

HGV access was vital. Lancashire County Council had to look at freight strategies and more innovative solutions, possibly warehousing at strategic locations.

The parking policy needed a review. Lancashire County Council needed to think why and where people accessed town centres. There were changing habits in relation to retail. For districts parking was a really good revenue scheme.

The forum was informed that carbon was rising up the political agenda. Lancaster had declared a climate change emergency. The UK was looking to be carbon neutral by 2050. This was a challenge for LTP4. Lancashire County council was looking at clean air zones and low emission zones. In the UK air pollution was the highest environmental risk to human health, with road transport being the biggest contributor. The UK's Clean Air Strategy aimed to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions, the majority of which came from transport, by 73% by 2030. New technology was going to change our mobility and the county council had to prepare LTP4 to accommodate these trends. Air quality was very high on the health agenda.

Four main considerations for LTP4:

- The dominance of traffic in the city centre to the detriment of people
- Car parking
- Sustainable travel as the preferred option for short journeys
- Healthy towns and cities fit for the future.

Regarding the measurement of air quality, the forum was informed that each district council had an environmental officer for this who could be contacted.

It was stated that new developments in rural areas needed proper footways. There was a big increase in pedestrians and cyclists in rural area and Lancashire did not have enough greenways and quiet lanes.

The forum was informed that there would be a full consultation on the Local Transport Plan 4 in late spring or early summer 2020.

## **6. Any Other Business**

There was no Any Other Business.

## **7. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 10:30am, Meeting Room 'A', Old Town Hall, Blackburn.

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## **Lancashire Local Access Forum**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Tuesday, 24th November, 2020 at 10.00 am in Zoom Virtual Meeting - Zoom**

**Members of the Public Rights of Way Access Forum were invited to attend**

**Present:**

**Chair**

Richard Toon, Independent

**Attendees**

David Kelly, Ramblers Association  
Steve Kirby  
Chris Kynch, Lancashire Association of Local Councils  
County Councillor Stephen Clarke  
Alison Boden, Wyre Borough Council  
Neil Herbert, Lancaster Ramblers Association

**Officers**

Julie Paton, Public Rights of Way LCC

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from County Councillor Ian Brown, County Councillor Cosima Towneley, County Councillor Jimmy Eaton, Jenny Allen, Arthur Baldwin, Adam Briggs, Peter Edge, Rosemary Hogarth, Ms Chris Peat, Michael Prescott, Paul Withington and Councillor Phil Riley.

### **2. Introduction**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair pointed out that the LLAF first made representations in March 2020 on the northern part of the coastal path from the Cumbrian Border down to Cleveleys. The LLAF had concentrated on the bigger issue of the Pilling embankment. The reason for this was that the forum hoped to enhance the speed at which the process was carrying on. The forum wanted the footpath put in quickly.

It was pointed out that during Covid there was a flurry of illegal signs put up to stop people using rights of way. The LLAF had asked the Public Rights of Way Team to take urgent action on this which they had done.

It was noted that the Regional Access Forum had still continued which the Chairs of the Local Access Forums attended. It was important for these meetings to continue. The Chair pointed out that the last Regional Access Forum Zoom meeting was cancelled as there was no funding for it.

### **3. Notification of publication of Coastal Access Reports - Cleveleys to Pier Head, Liverpool**

The Chair wished to thank all the staff and Natural England and all the local authorities involved with the coastal path.

Julie Paton, LCC Public Rights of Way Officer, stated that it was Lancashire County Council's responsibility to implement the line of the trail once it had been agreed by the Secretary of State.

One issue with the path was at the River Douglas. The biggest concern here was that the path stopped as there was a lack of a crossing. The forum was informed that LCC would not be making any representations on this section as it felt there were no areas it could make a difference to on the proposals. It was pointed out that Hesketh with Becconsall Parish Council was looking to do some of its own work which was considering the option of using the redundant pipe bridge to become a pedestrian bridge. LCC was looking at where the path could cross the River Douglas and where the correct place would be. It would be costly as the river was tidal and very large. The Ramblers Association stated that it was regrettable there was not a crossing over the River Douglas and that funding should be provided for one. LCC had ruled out where it could not put a bridge due to various circumstances but had not ruled in where it could. It was also noted that there was no financial support to put a bridge in due to the cost.

Regarding maps CPH 3e and 3f, another place of controversy was around Hutton Marsh and the embankments near the Dolphin Pub. It was thought that a route along either embankment would provide better views. There were exclusions to existing public rights of way here due to the protection of nesting birds. Where the path had been ruled out was due the Lancashire County Council and Natural England being aware of existing nesting birds and would be managed as a bird nesting site. It was pointed out that nature conservation had to be balanced with access rights. It was stated that LCC was not making any representations on this area. LCC was not the landowner. The legislation looked at access and whether it was appropriate access and took into account nature conservation concerns.

The forum was informed that the whole of the English Coastal Path allowed access for pedestrians and their dogs. There were some sections where the dogs must be on leads and some sections here they did not. The only reason where access would be denied would be for nature conservation. The Ramblers Association's response would be to the different standards of rules around the country. The Association felt there was no uniformity in decision making across the country.

Regarding Map CPH 3g and the section of the path near the old Longton tip which was now grassed over, the Ramblers Association felt the path could go further to the west than what was being proposed. They felt the path should continue running south along the side of Little Hoole Marsh. It was noted that existing rights of way were being used on this section.



On Map CPH 2a, Brades Lane, Freckleton to Toll House Bridge, there were concerns over where the path ran alongside the dual carriageway. This was due to a combination of nesting birds and access. Nature conservation was the reason the path ran alongside the dual carriageway. There had been discussions with the landowners around here and several route options had been proposed and Natural England believed the path alongside the dual carriageway was the best option. It pointed out that one of the issues for Natural England was that these were statutory protected sites for birds. A majority of the area was a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The Ramblers Association was in discussions internally regarding its response. The LLAF felt there needed to be a realistic alternative proposed that fitted in with all the criteria.

Regarding Map CPH 2e, Preston Go-Kart Track to Wallend Road, Riversway, Preston, it was noted that the path was on the north side of the race track going east. The Ramblers Association felt a short part of the path could go east and then south between the two tracks towards the river and the run along the river bank. The reason the path ran along the north side of the track was to do with land use. Even though it was open access land there was motocross taking place on it. There was concern for people's safety if they walked between the tracks. The Ramblers Association had agreed an alternative route to send to Natural England.

Regarding Map CPH 4a, Tarleton Lock to Douglas Avenue, Tarleton, there was concern over the path between Sutton Avenue and Ashland Gardens. Hesketh with Beconsall Parish Council was looking at preparing their own footpath which deviated slightly from the Natural England path. At high tide the proposed route from Natural England could be submerged. LCC stated that if the parish council had a better line for the path it should raise this with Natural England.

It was pointed out to the forum that objections to the path that would be sent to Planning Inspectorate could only come from landowners. Representations from LCC might not be picked up by the Planning Inspectorate.

The Chair, Richard Toon, would be doing a submission on behalf of the Lancashire Local Access Forum to Natural England.

#### **4. Any Other Business**

There was no Any Other Business.

#### **5. Date of Next Meeting**

To be confirmed.

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