

## **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.

L Sales  
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall  
Preston