



West Sussex Local Access Forum Wednesday 19 July 2017

A meeting of the West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) was held at **10.30am Wednesday 19 July 2017** at **Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, RH12 1XH.**

M i n u t e s

Present

Graham Elvey (GE) – Vice Chairman	Paul Brown (PB)
Helen Baldwin (HB)	Tricia Butcher (TB)
Nicol Beard (NB)	Derek Whittington (DW) -part

In attendance

Jane Noble (JN)	Forum Officer, WSCC
Jo Dixon (JD)	Countryside Services Manager, WSCC
Nigel Bird (NBi)	Access Ranger, WSCC
Amanda Pearce (AP)	Capita, Minute Taker
Andy Ekinsmyth (AE)	Head of Transport and Countryside, WSCC - part

Observers: Ralph Smith, Julie Robinson, Graham Sitton, David Duke 4

		Action
1.	<p>Welcomes and Apologies</p> <p>GE, Vice-chairman, chaired the meeting as Sam Wright, Chairman, had resigned from the Forum. GE welcomed Amanda Pearce, note taker.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Pete Bradbury (PB), Duncan Crow (DC), Geoff Farrell (GF) and Glynn Jones (GJ). PB has been appointed to the Forum to represent WSCC in place of Bill Acraman (BA). WSLAF (GE) to write to Bill to thank him.</p> <p>GE reminded people that Sam had resigned as Chairman, and that Val Rawlings (VR), representing disabled interests on the Forum, had also resigned. WSLAF (GE) to write to both to thank them.</p> <p>GE introduced JD who is covering for Charlotte Weller while she is on maternity leave.</p> <p>GE welcomed the four observers.</p> <p>AE joined the meeting briefly. He explained there have been a number of recent developments in respect of how schemes get delivered. He talked about the Walking and Cycling Strategy (W&CS) and that WSCC is developing the Local Transport Investment Programme (LTIP) to help the Council decide which projects to deliver. LTIP sets out the process for prioritising schemes, including PRow schemes, based on scoring against a number of criteria.</p>	<p>GE</p> <p>GE</p>

	AE answered a few questions from the Forum. He offered to come to the next forum meeting. JN to invite him to next meeting.	JN
2.	To approve the Minutes of the Forum The minutes of the WSLAF meeting held on 24/4/17 were approved as correct.	
3.	Actions and matters arising from previous meeting	
	3-3 Annual Report – TB had suggested some amendments which were incorporated and JN distributed the Report.	
	3-10 S of Downs Project List – JN and GF have arranged to meet on 1 st August 2017.	JN/GF
	3-12 Work Programme - GE had added the Walking and Cycling Strategy to the work programme.	
	4 LAF national conference - WSLAF had not sent a representative and asked members why they had not attended so she could feedback to the organisers. A few members gave reasons. All to provide comments to JN by first week of August for JN to respond.	All/JN
	5 England Coast Path (ECP) - JN had contacted Kent County Council (KCC) regarding management of the ECP. Two sections in Kent have been open since July 2016, mostly on existing PRoW but some short sections of new access. Some new access is along new flood defences (similar to Medmerry). KCC reports mixed reaction from the public – some really pleased to have new access, while others are reporting paths overgrown etc. KCC had to deal with a lot of calls from landowners in the early days. New infrastructure has been provided through Natural England (NE) funding. KCC has some concerns about what will happen when this needs replacing in 10-20 years' time. These sections of the ECP, and associated coastal margin to which the public has access, are not yet shown on OS mapping. KCC has some concerns that the excepted land will show and may lead to some conflict. PB – What are the excepted land categories. JN – This is similar to Open Access Land restrictions and includes MOD land, buildings and gardens. A full list can be seen on the ECP website . Observer – What about higher rights? JN – The ECP is for use on foot, however any PRoW will still be usable by legal users of that classification of PRoW. A legal process would be required to upgrade a PRoW.	
	5 WSSC PROW Capital budget figures 2017/18 – JN reported that schemes to the value of £225k have been approved as part of the 2017/18 capital programme for PROW and £413k of funding approved for schemes in the 2016/17 programme was slipped to 2017/18 to ensure the schemes can be completed.	

	7 South Downs (SD) Green Infrastructure (GI) Framework - TB had circulated an email she had sent to the SD GI Technical Working Group. DW explained there were no minutes to circulate. He brought the Forum's attention to the SDGI Framework document which is available on the SDNPA website.	
	9 Downs Link Crossing at Partridge Green – JD to check if WSCC officers had been contacted regarding the BHS request for early consultation on this scheme.	JD
	11 Centurion Way – JN had circulated the update.	
4.	Any urgent matters / any other business to be considered not on the agenda None	
5.	WSLAF matters a) Chairman and Vice Chairman Chairman - GE ask if anyone would like to be considered for the role of Chairman. As no one volunteered he offered to take on the role of Acting Chairman until the Forum's AGM in January 2018. Proposed DW, second TB – all present agreed. Vice-Chairman – TB offered to support Graham in the role of Acting Chairman until the AGM. All agreed.	
	b) Work Programme GE and TB had updated the Work Programme (circulated). He identified gaps for lead members for Adur and Worthing planning matters. No one volunteered. JN to add work programme to the website.	JN
	c) Website / promotion GE invited members to check the website for accuracy. NB offered to check the links work and the information is all current. TB commented that the web pages are very corporate and bland. She emphasised that WSLAF is independent of WSCC, however it was recognised that WSCC hosting the website is preferable to the forum having to design and maintain themselves. JN / JD to enquire of WSCC web officers if anything can be done to make it more inspiring. Leaflet –TB confirmed she is still happy for the remainder of the current stock to be used although they include her contact details. GE asked all to take a few to drop at appropriate locations such as libraries and information centres.	NB JN/JD All
	d) Recruitment	

	<p>GE highlighted that there is a need to recruit new members to WSLAF. Forum members made suggestions of people to contact. JN to contact as appropriate.</p> <p>GE to contact Val Rawlings to explore the reasons she resigned.</p> <p>JD asked if the number, time and location of meetings were appropriate to attracting new members. Members said this had previously been considered. NB explained she took annual leave to attend. JN to review previous members' questionnaire and consider whether we should do a further one particularly for members who have recently resigned.</p> <p>Observer – Is the Forum interested in being copied into planning objections? TB – recommended responses are made directly to the Planning Authority, as the Forum's remit generally only covers development of a strategic nature.</p>	<p>JN</p> <p>GE</p> <p>JN</p>
6.	<p>Current / future consultations and advice given</p> <p>a) A27 Worthing and Lancing improvements – TB noted that documents are on the Highways England (HE) website from 19 July 2017. TB said she felt Peter Philips, HE, didn't think there were opportunities for non-motorised user (NMU) improvements. Deadline – 12 September 2017. All to send comments to TB for collation by end of August. JN to send response.</p>	<p>All/TB/ JN</p>
	<p>-) A27 Arundel Bypass – TB made the Forum aware of this consultation which will run from 22 August to 16 October 2017. She felt there should be opportunities for NMUs as part of this scheme. Details are on the HE website. All to send TB comments to collate. JN to send response.</p>	<p>All/TB/ JN</p>
	<p>b) Railway crossing associated with Development in Angmering - Planning Application A/44/17/OUT – Arun District Council JN explained that she was aware that a stepped bridge had been proposed to replace the at-grade railway crossing at Rustington, in association with proposed nearby development. With a care home and other residential, business and leisure development proposed between the railway and A259, together with considerable existing residential, industrial and educational provision south of the railway, she asked if the Forum felt the steps would be a limitation to some users. Members agreed there should be as high a standard as possible of crossing, particularly in such a key location and supported a ramped bridge. GE to draft a response, JN to send.</p>	<p>GE/JN</p>
7.	<p>Local Plan update</p> <p>a) Chichester Local Plan Review – Issues and Options consultation - TB explained that Chichester District Council (CDC) is reviewing its Local Plan (adopted July 2015), as required by the Inspector, to ensure sufficient housing is planned to meet the needs of the area. The revised Plan includes proposals for new walking and cycling routes which is to be supported. However, CDC, as planning authority, should have a role to encourage and support the creation of</p>	

	<p>multi-use routes (MUR) through the development process. TB highlighted the need for MUR particularly on the Coastal Plain, and that there are good opportunities for MURs in the development east of the Centurion Way (horse riders are not allowed to use this route). Details of the consultation can be found on the CDC website. Closing date is 3 August. All to send TB comments for her to collate response. JN to send.</p>	All/TB/ JN
	<p>b) Draft Southern Gateway Masterplan– Chichester District Council - GE explained that this consultation for the area around central Chichester is transport and development related and therefore is of no real LAF interest.</p>	
8.	<p>Higher Level Stewardship Access</p> <p>GE gave some background on permissive paths in West Sussex which are provided through the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) grant scheme. Despite subsidies for new permissive access through HLS stopping in 2010, there are still 11 routes in WSLAF's area which will expire in 2019 or 2020. These can be viewed on the Natural England website (search on county West Sussex). GE had been in touch with SDLAF, who are also looking into this, and will to arrange to meet with representatives to find out how and what they are doing.</p> <p>GE proposed a small working group to consider HLS routes to assess their value (site visit and / or desk top study). NB offered to help depending on availability.</p> <p>Mid and West Berkshire LAF – Brexit paper</p> <p>This paper had been circulated to members, who expressed strong support for the idea of financial support for farmers/landowners (post Brexit), to encourage the creation of links in the pro network. GE explained the aim is to find a way to deliver access benefits that would not be prioritised through the main funding streams. There was some discussion on the type of schemes that could be considered. GE proposed a working group to produce a paper for WSLAF approval.</p>	<p>GE</p> <p>GE/NB</p> <p>GE/TB</p>
9.	<p>Coastal Plain Multi-user Routes</p> <p>At WSLAF's April meeting, an observer asked if WSLAF could assist in securing multi-use routes on the coastal plain, in particular by approaching landowners to try and obtain their agreement to the creation of links/new routes.</p> <p>GE, TB, JD, and JN discussed this request and the proposal is that WSLAF gives advice, help and direction on any proposal for a multi-use route brought to the Forum. This could include liaison with WSCC and approaching landowners where appropriate, providing the proposers have investigated the route fully for feasibility on the ground (for which help and advice could be given), and can provide evidence of support from other interested parties.</p> <p>Forum members agreed this was a sensible approach. GE/TB to draft positioning statement for multi-user route proposals.</p>	<p>GE/TB</p>

10.	<p>Improvement Projects – North of the Downs</p> <p>TB provided the following updates:</p> <p>HW3 - Kilwood Vale, Pegasus crossing of A264 - WSCC has said the highway works have been approved, and are waiting for their legal team to sort out the agreement paperwork. It is believed the developer, Crest, has been in dialogue with WSCC Street Works team to book the road space. All are still pushing for a start date.</p> <p>LW10 –Downs Link at Christ’s Hospital - progressing slowly. The technical agreements are still to be signed.</p> <p>HW135 – Bridleway 3727, Greentrees Farm, Balcombe - the diversion application has still not been received by WSCC from NE. If an application is not received WSCC will progress the scheme design (drainage/surfacing) this financial year, to be implemented 2018.</p> <p>LW12 - Downs Link at Partridge Green: WSCC is progressing the design for improvements to the section of the Downs Link where users have to use road. Consultation on design options expected soon.</p> <p>LW34 - A23 Newtimber –signed ‘equestrian route’ (bridleway) alongside A23 - following a site visit with Peter Phillips, HE, in March, TB submitted an evidenced bid for improvement works (safety barrier /fencing) in April to NE. In June, HE announced the project had been given £7,500 for a study, allocated for the 2017-18 financial year.</p>	
11.	<p>West Sussex Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review</p> <p>JN gave a short presentation outlining progress on the Plan and the process for public consultation. She explained that the forum would be invited to a bespoke session to provide feedback on the consultation draft.</p> <p>JN answered some questions from Forum members and observers.</p>	JN
12.	<p>The work of a WSCC Access Ranger</p> <p>Nigel Bird, WSCC Access Ranger (AR), gave a presentation on his work. He covers Area 5 which consists of 13 generally large parishes and 780km of Public Right of Way. The role is very varied and work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine inspection and maintenance - 15 month rolling programme, parish by parish. Parish Council (PC) notified a few weeks prior to inspection. Work with volunteers (Parish Path Inspectors) to complete inspections. • All issues recorded / updated, and prioritised (high, medium, low), in CAMS (IT PRoW management system). • Routine works for which WSCC is responsible are passed on to the routine maintenance contractor to deliver. This includes surface vegetation, signage, plank bridges, steps etc. • Landowners are contacted for high priority issues where they are responsible, e.g. obstructions (including fallen trees), gates and stiles, side / over-hanging vegetation. Work with WSCC Legal Services on 	

	<p>enforcement where landowners refuse to comply.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer tasks - Identifying work for delivery by the WSCC volunteer team. • Summer Clearance - Identify paths that need to be added, or removed, from Summer Clearance programme (surface vegetation only). • Deliver minor works including working with landowners to improve access e.g. gate (or gap) for stiles, providing stone for them to use for surfacing. • Identify larger surfacing and bridge schemes for prioritisation and delivery through the capital works programme. • Problem Reports - Investigating reports from the public and others to timescales published on WSCC's website, and taking action as required. • Posting, checking and removing legal notices as required. • Responding to planning applications including, where opportunity allows, requesting network improvements /developer contributions. • Other - Work with landowners over issues such as Definitive line of PRow and potential improvements. Professional advice and liaison with internal colleagues and external organisations. Consents for gates / structures. Consent for work in designated areas or protected species (e.g. badgers). <p>NBi answered a number of questions following the presentation and there was a general recognition of both the scale and diversity of the AR role and how informative the presentation had been.</p>	
13.	<p>Dates of future meetings and Agenda items for the next meetings of the Forum</p> <p>Future meeting dates, and agenda items for the next meeting, were noted.</p>	
14.	<p>General Report</p> <p>The General Report was noted.</p>	
15.	<p>Any other business (as agreed in Item 4 and time dependant)</p> <p>None</p>	
16.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Forum will be held on Wednesday 18 October 2017 at County Hall, Chichester.</p>	

The meeting closed at 1.40pm.

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Action Summary

	Item	Who	When NM-next meeting 18/10/17
1	Write to BA, SW and VR to thank them for contribution to WSLAF	GE	NM
1	Invite AE to next WSLAF meeting (LTIP)	JN	NM
3-12	Meet to discuss S of Downs Project List	JN/GF	1/8/17
3-4	Provide reasons why didn't attend LAF conference for JN to feed back to NE	All/JN	10/8/17
3-9	Ensure WSCC officers are aware of BHS request to be contacted early regarding the Downs Link Crossing at Partridge Green	JD	NM
5b	Add updated work programme to web	JN	NM
5c	Contact WSCC officers to enquire if WSLAF web pages can be more inspiring	JN/JD	NM
5c	Check WSLAF website links work and all data is current	NB	NM
5c	Distribute WSLAF leaflets at appropriate locations	All	NM
5d	Contact organisations / individuals re WSLAF recruitment	JN	NM
5d	Contact VR to understand reasons why she resigned	GE	NM
5d	Review previous WSLAF members' questionnaire	JN	NM
6a	A27 Worthing and Lancing improvements- Read and send comments to TB. Collate responses Send response	All TB JN	20/8/17 12/9/17
6-	A27 Arundel Bypass - Read and send comments to TB. Collate responses Send response	All TB JN	31/8/17 16/10/17
6b)	Railway crossing associated with development in Angmering - Draft response Send response	GE JN	20/8/17 31/8/17
7a	Chichester Local Plan Review Deadline 3rd August - circulate WSLAF response to previous Chi LP consultation Read and send comments to TB. Collate responses Send response	JN All TB JN	21/7/17 31/7/17 3/8/17
8	HLS access - meet with SDLAF	GE	NM
8	Assess existing HLS in WSLAF area	GE/NB/ Vols needed	NM
8	Produce a paper along lines of Mid and West Berkshire LAF Brexit paper	GE/TB/ Vols needed	NM
9	Draft positioning statement for multi-user route proposals	GE/TB	NM