

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 18 NOVEMBER 2014**

**ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM – MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

**REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING AND PLACE**

**ABSTRACT**

This report advises the Committee of the changes to the membership of the Angus Local Access Forum

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) agrees to the appointment of Gill Lawrie as a Land Manager Representative
- (ii) agrees to the appointment of Ivan Laird as a Land Manager Representative
- (iii) agrees to the appointment of Kirsty Macari as the Council Representative

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Our communities are developed in a sustainable manner
- Our natural and built environment is protected and enjoyed
- Our carbon footprint is reduced.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 required “that each Local Authority shall establish for its area a body known as the Local Access Forum”. The Act further specifies that the function of such a Forum will be to “advise the Local Authority and other person or body consulting the Forum on matters having to do with the exercise of access rights, the existence and delineation of rights of way or the drawing up and adoption of a plan for a system of core paths”.

3.2 The Act did not specify the makeup of the Local Access Forum and the Council agreed to follow the guidance produced at the time by “Paths for All”. This recommended that the Forum comprise four interest groups i.e. Users, Land Managers, Community Interest and Public Agencies. A total of four representatives are sought for each group other than Public Agencies but there is no minimum number required for the Forum to operate successfully; the more important aspect being that the Forum maintains a balance across the groups.

3.3 Members agreed the appointment of representatives to the Angus Local Access Forum in 2005 (report No. 519/05 refers). Consequent changes to the structure of the Forum were duly reported to members to which report 546/13 refers.

**4. CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 The Forum has a rolling programme with regard to replacement of representatives. Two members stood down from the Forum following the public meeting in June 2014. William

Lawrie was a Land Manager Representative and Gordon Cairns was a Land Manager Representative.

4.2 As on previous occasions a total of 450 people whose names are held on a database and who have expressed an interest in access issues, were contacted by letter seeking nominations for the vacancies. Nominations were also sought from those who attended the Access Forum's annual meeting in June 2014.

4.3 Following this exercise three persons put themselves forward for the Land Manager Representatives and a User Representative. Only two of the three applicants were considered viable. A further representation was made for the Land Manager Representative prior to the meeting. Further information regarding the User representative was requested by the Forum for consideration however no additional information has been submitted by the applicant.

## 5. PROPOSALS

5.1 Following consultation with the Representatives on the Forum it was agreed that Gill Lawrie as a Land Manager Representative and Ivan Laird as a Land Manager Representative.

5.2 In accordance with the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, the members of the Local Access Forum are to be appointed by the local authority. It is therefore recommended that the above candidates be appointed as members of the Forum.

5.3 A resume of the details of the candidates recommended is available at Appendix 1.

5.4 Following the retirement of Roy Madden, Natural and Built Environment Manager, the Forum agreed that a Council Representative should still be on the Forum. It is therefore proposed that Kirsty Macari, Senior Planning Officer (Environment and Development Plan) will be appointed.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations contained in this report

## 7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

### Risks

7.1 There are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report. However, the risk to the Council of not agreeing to the proposed changes to the membership of the Forum is that it may be in breach of Section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 which requires the local authority when making appointments to the local access forum to ensure reasonable representation on the forum of various interest groups including landowners and a reasonable balance of these interests.

**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report 519/05, Angus Council, Infrastructure Services Committee, April 2005
- Report 546/13, Angus Council, Infrastructure Services Committee, October 2013

**Vivien Smith, Head of Planning and Place**

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 Statement of Applicants Recommended for Membership of the Forum.

**STATEMENT OF APPLICANTS RECOMMENDED FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE FORUM**

**Gill Lawrie**

Past responsibilities include: Board member of both Trustee Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) UK and Trustee FWAG Scotland; Chairman of both Angus FWAG and Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) Angus Countryside Initiative; and represented Scotland on both the National Council of the Institute of Agricultural Secretaries and Administrators (IAgSA) and the National Council of Women's Food and Farming Union (WFU).

Current Responsibilities include: Board member of RHET and RHET Angus Countryside Initiative; Interim Chairman of Angus Shadow LEADER Local Action Group; Member of Rural Tayside LEADER LAG, and Chairman of Central Scotland Branch of Institute of Agricultural Secretaries & Administrators.

Other interests include: Food Ambassador for Scottish Food and Drink Federation; Member of STEMNET Ambassadors (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths Network); over 25 years of experience bringing children onto farms and into working countryside and, a keen hill walker and skier.

**Ivan Laird**

I have been involved in farming all my life both arable and livestock. I have been a local community councillor for almost 40 years serving latterly as chairman. I have been involved in scouting for 47 years, served 28.5 years as a special constable, 15 years as Prison Visiting Committee and been involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme so have a wide variety of interests.