

ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Note of the Meeting of the Angus Local Access Forum held at Angus House, Orchardbank Business Park, Forfar on Monday 12 June 2017

Present: Gavin Dobson (Chair), James Gray-Cheape, Cathy Stephenson, John Hamilton, Gill Lawrie, Peter Fiabane, Lesley Anderson, Alban Houghton

In attendance: Paul Clark - Countryside Access Officer, Angus Council
Jill Paterson – Environment and Development Plans Manager, Angus Council

Apologies: Fiona Waddell, Patricia Harrow, Barbara Thompson, Antony Gifford

1. Welcome and introductions

GD welcome everyone to the meeting. There were round the table introductions for the benefit of JP.

2. Minute of previous meeting

The minutes of 13 March 2017 were approved as a true record.

3. Matters arising

AH referred to previous discussions on the impasse the Sidlaw Path Network group had with the Pitnappie Cutting project. PC reminded the Forum that he had fed back previous advice to the group, suggesting that the new owner should be given time to settle in before revisiting the matter. From experience elsewhere, such issues can sometimes take time and patience to reach a satisfactory conclusion. It was agreed that the autumn would be the best time for the group to revisit the matter, and that it should remain on the ALAF agenda.

4. Election of new chair

CS offered to stand as Chair, for one year. She was duly elected. It was agreed that a Vice Chair should be appointed at the next meeting. Members were asked to give this consideration in the interim.

5. Membership and recruitment

PC reminded members that Angus Council was not currently formally represented on the Forum as Kirsty Macari had moved to a new post. PC attended meetings in an advisory capacity but was not a Forum member. JP was attending the current meeting as an observer. With on-going staff rationalisation Angus Council had to take a view on future representation. The opinions of the Forum were sought. There was consensus that Council representation was not required at every meeting, but that it should be available if relevant issues were on the agenda. It was noted that members would be required to assist with minute taking. Angus Council would take a view on the matter and provide an update at the next meeting.

One individual had expressed a possible interest in becoming a member at the farmers Market event and had been given an application form.

6. Forfar Farmers Market – feedback

There was consensus that this was worthwhile attending, and that it had been a good opportunity to get access information to a new audience. It was agreed that consideration

should be given to attending Montrose Farmers Market or other events such as Seafest or Angus Show in future.

7. LAF/NAF joint event – feedback

GL gave feedback and highlighted some of the key issues that were raised, particularly in relation to influencing responsible behaviour by dogwalkers. She highlighted the issue of dog fouling problems migrating from towns to the surrounding countryside and the suggestion of a 'zero tolerance' campaign. The fact that dog walkers generally want clear behaviour rules had been highlighted. There was further discussion in which PC highlighted the fact the Scottish Government guidance to access authorities on Part 1 of the Land Reform Act had been updated, and AH asked whether there was any appetite nationally to review SOAC. PC believed there was not.

8. Access issues update

Lintrathen: PC advised that a summary application to determine whether a public right of way existed had now been lodged with the sheriff court by a private individual. Angus Council had previously concluded that a public right of way was unlikely to exist, and had advised its intention to attend as an observer only.

New enquiries received included a 'no horses' sign near Turin, a report of alleged obstructive behaviour at a farm near Forfar, and 'beware of the bull' signs in the Sidlaws. It was noted that the appropriate signage, as recommended by the health and safety executive was 'bull in field'. Angus Council did not propose any further action on the Balmashanner issue at present.

9. A.O.C.B.

GL made members aware of the Arbroath Locality Plan. JP provided an overview of the purpose of locality plans. They identify community priorities, and Local Outcome Improvement Plans will replace community plans. They aim to build capacity, with emphasis on the Council working in conjunction with communities. It was agreed that the link to summaries would be circulated. There was reference to LEADER, around building capacity in communities.

GL advises members of a current Scottish Government consultation on guidance on engaging with communities.

PC made the Forum aware of active travel audits for Forfar, Arbroath and Monifieth, which have been commissioned by TACTRAN, working with Angus Council. These were aimed at identifying improvements to walking and cycling facilities within the towns. The reports could be circulated once finalised.

PC referred to the 'care for the countryside' campaign which was due to be launched by Scottish Land and Estates. This would focus on responsible dog walking and mountain biking.

7. Date of next meeting: Monday 14 September 2017. Angus House, Orchardbank, Forfar.