

ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Note of the Meeting of the Angus Local Access Forum held online on Monday 14 September 2020.

Present: Antony Gifford (retiring Chair), Nick Hamilton, Irene McGugan, John Hamilton, James Gray-Cheape

In attendance: Paul Clark, Countryside Access Officer, Angus Council

Apologies: Alan Hunter, John Rymer, Barbara Thompson, Fiona Waddell, Euan Walker-Munro.

1. Welcome and introductions

Antony Gifford welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute of Previous Meeting

The minute of 9 March 2020 was approved as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

Pinappie Cutting – PC advised that the owners at Millhole has created a pedestrian route that took people from the old railway line to the roadside at the southern extend of their properties. He had circulated photographs of the route, which had been posted online by the Sidlaw Path Network group. He understood that the group were of the view that this was an appropriate solution for the location. On that basis, and considering the poor condition of the railway line to the south, Angus Council was no longer pursuing provision of a stile on the line of the railway. The Council had however received funding for a feasibility study into a walking/cycling connection between Newtyle and the Auchterhouse area. The feasibility study, which had not yet been commissioned, may consider the suitability of the former railway alongside other options.

Edzell river path – The suggestion of a meeting involving all interested parties had not been taken forward due to lockdown restrictions. Local Councillor, Bob Myles, had however discussed the matter further with the adjacent landowner, and there was a possibility that they may carry out repairs to the existing alignment of the path in leu of a financial planning obligation relating to a recent development. This had not yet taken place.

4. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

At this point NH took over as Chair, as previously agreed. There were no nominations for Vice Chair.

5. Membership and recruitment

There had been no attempt at recruitment to date due to Covid-19 restrictions. NH asked whether those who intended to step down would re-consider, until such a time as recruitment could take place. IMcG suggested that recruitment should be conducted online, as restrictions were likely to be in place for some time to come. This was agreed. PC would seek nominations for membership via a mailing list and Council social media

channels, and asked members to make this known amongst their interest groups. AG and JG-C agreed to stay on until the December meeting, when it was hoped that new members could be recruited. PC reminded those present that BT and FW had also expressed a preference to step down.

6. Correspondence

An e-mail had been received from the owner of Kinpurnie House outlining problems experienced with people taking access on her property. AG had previously responded privately and expressed sympathy with the situation. PC had also spoken to her, and had offered to meet to look at the locations once he was able to do so. Issues included unauthorised motorbikes, and vandalism of gates, which were not necessarily linked with people exercising access rights. There was agreement that these were primarily matters for the police, but that limitations on police resources were an issue.

PC was now able to offer to meet in site. AG offered to attend as a land managing forum member, as did JG-C. IMcG suggested that it would be helpful if a community police officer could also attend. PC would follow this up.

7. Access issue, Denmill, Kirriemuir

PC had circulated a paper detailing the issue, which related to ploughing and obstruction of a core path. The path was currently accessible, following harvesting, but it was not clear whether this would remain the case.

The Council was seeking the Forum's opinion on two issues:

- Whether the path is of sufficient importance to justify further action to ensure that it remains unobstructed and/or that the surface is reinstated timeously.
- Whether the Council should proceed with signposting the path, as previously proposed.

Members were in agreement that because of the Core Path status of the route both issues should be pursued by the Council.

AG suggested that it would be appropriate for the forum to offer mediation. There was agreement that this should be done. NH would circulate a draft letter for approval by those present, after which PC would send it to the landowner.

8. Access issues update

Former Kinpurnie Estate - PC advised that there were continued discussions with three landowners in the area around Long Loch. One owner was working with the Council and local horse riders to provide mutually agreeable access points and routes. Correspondence with solicitors representing the other two owners was ongoing.

South Lodge, Fotheringham Estate – No change. NH reported that access round the locked gate was still possible by climbing over a broken fence.

Core Path 004, Glen Esk – PC advised that the landowner had now installed a gate alongside the new cattle grid. There was another location on the same landholding where a cattle grid made it necessary for horse riders to detour from the path to a nearby gate. PC had agreed to look at this location after a review of availability of gates on the overall route, and to discuss further with the landowner in due course.

White Hill, Glen Clova – PC reported that the landowner has now installed stiles at three locations, two of which were in the national park. JH advised that he had visited the stile at location 1, which was outside the national park.

Benscravie – JH reported that the landowner had provided two stiles as requested, but one was in the wrong location. He hoped that one would be installed at the correct location soon.

114 Ferry Road, Monifieth – PC advised that the council had received a large number of complaints about a blocked track. He circulated maps and photographs. The privately owned track linked Ferry Road with Council owned playing fields to the north. The council believed that access rights applied, and was seeking removal of obstructions. The owner had not accepted the Council's position, and correspondence was on-going. NH advised that the path was very well-used by school children from Monifieth High, and that local residents used it as a route to a nearby shop.

Mill of Murroes – The Council had received enquiries about an obstructed track. This had still to be investigated.

Red Castle – A core path had been diverted by the owner. The Council had yet to investigate whether it was satisfactory.

There were no updates on issues at Inverkeillor, Brighty Woods or Airlie.

9. AOCB

There was no other business.

10. Date of next meeting : Monday 14 December 2020