

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 25 MAY 2021**

**ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM – MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**

**REPORT BY INTERIM DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES**

**ABSTRACT**

This report advises the Committee of the changes to the membership of the Angus Local Access Forum and seeks approval for appointment of new representatives to the Forum.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) agrees to the appointment of Jonathan Dymock as a land manager representative
- (ii) agrees to the appointment of Andrew Matthews as a community representative

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN/COPORATE PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome:

- Improved physical, mental and emotional health and well-being
- Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities
- A reduced carbon footprint
- An enhanced, protected and enjoyed natural and built environment

**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 is 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 were advised previously of the Council’s duty under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 to establish a Local Access Forum (report No. 1406/04 refers). The Committee agreed that, although members of the Forum are appointed by the Local Authority, prospective members representative of land managers, user groups and community interests should be identified through peer selection. This initially involved selections meeting for each of the three user groups. The smaller numbers of applicant in recent years has not warranted individual peer selection meetings for each interest group. Applicants have therefore been invited to attend a meeting of the Forum, after which the Forum has made its recommendations to the Council.

3.4 Members agreed the appointment of representatives to the Angus Local Access Forum in 2005 (report No. 519/05 refers). Subsequent changes to the membership of the Forum were duly reported to members.

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 The Forum currently has four User representatives, three Community representatives and two Land Manager representatives, following the resignation of land manager representatives Antony Gifford and James Gray-Cheape in December 2020. Appendix 1 contains a list of the current members.

4.2 Applications for membership were sought in November 2020 and January 2021. The request for applications was publicised through Council social media channels, sent to individuals who had signed up the Local Access Forum mailing list, and sent to community organisations via the Council's local Communities teams. Applications were received from two individuals, who were asked to attend subsequent Forum meetings. A third application was subsequently withdrawn.

#### **5. PROPOSALS**

5.1 Following consultation with the existing Forum membership it is recommended that Jonathan Dymock is appointed as a land manager representative and Andrew Matthews is appointed as a community representative. Jonathan Dymock is a land agent with experience of upland and lowland estates, and currently resident agent at Southesk Estate. Andrew Matthews has an interest in access matters as an access taker and small scale landowner, and is currently Vice-Chair of the Lunan Bay Communities Partnership Steering Group.

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.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

#### **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An equality impact assessment is attached.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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**DATE:** May 2021

## **Appendix 1 – List of current Forum Members**

### **Community**

- Barbara Thompson – involved in a range of organisations from Community Councils to hill walking and sea kayaking groups to wildlife groups
- Meg Mearns – has wide-ranging experience of rural life including as a small landowner, education, and various community organisations
- Mairi Simms – has experience of disability access and introducing people to the outdoors.

### **Users**

- John Hamilton – a long time member of Scotways with responsibility for the Angus area
- Fiona Waddell - has a particular interest in horse riding
- Nick Hamilton - has a particular interest in walking and hillwalking
- Irene McGugan - member of Ramblers and actively involved in various walking groups

### **Land Managers**

- Euan Walker-Munro - landowner and farmer, NFUS branch chair and community council member
- John Rymer - farmer and horse livery owner

### **Agencies**

- Alan Hunter – development standards manager, Angus Council
- Mike Strachan - Scottish Forestry representative
- Scottish Natural Heritage – offer advice upon request



## Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

### Step 1

**Name of Proposal** (includes e. g. budget savings, committee reports, strategies, policies, procedures, service reviews, functions): Angus Local Access Forum – Membership Update

### Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment ~~Yes~~/No

**(A)** If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

(i) It does not impact on people ~~Yes~~/No

(ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics ~~Yes~~/No

(iii) It is for information only ~~Yes~~/No

(iv) It is reflective e.g. of budget spend over a financial year ~~Yes~~/No

(v) It is technical ~~Yes~~/No

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

**(B)** If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment Yes/~~No~~

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment ~~Yes~~/No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.

If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

### Step 3

(i)Lead Directorate/Service:

Communities/Planning and Communities

(ii)Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

Duty under land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 to set up a local access forum and to appoint persons to that forum

(iii)What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

To appoint replacement members to the local access forum

(iv)Is it a new proposal? ~~Yes~~/No Please indicate OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function? Yes/~~No~~ Please indicate

### Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees ~~Yes~~/No

Job Applicants ~~Yes~~/No

Service users Yes/~~No~~

Members of the public Yes/~~No~~

**Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:**

**Internal data** (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

N/A

**Internal consultation** (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

N/A

**External data** (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

N/A

**External consultation** (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

Recommendations obtained from the existing membership of Angus Local Access Forum

**Other** (general information as appropriate).

Good practice guidance on establishment of Local Access Forums, as published at the time the legislation was introduced.

### **Step 6: Evidence Gaps.**

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold? Yes/No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

**Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups?** Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected. Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

**Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.**

Age

**Impact** Neutral impact.

Disability

**Impact** Neutral impact.

Gender reassignment

**Impact** Neutral impact

Marriage and Civil Partnership

**Impact** Neutral impact

Pregnancy/Maternity

**Impact** Neutral impact

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

**Impact** Neutral impact

Religion or Belief

**Impact** Neutral impact

Sex

**Impact** Neutral impact

Sexual orientation

**Impact** Neutral impact

### **Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected**

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

No specific protected character groups were consulted.

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

No negative impacts have been identified

### **Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?**

No negative impacts have been identified

### **Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.**

n/A

**Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to:** eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?

No contribution

**Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?**

N/A

**Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

Links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance.

**Step 13(A) What evidence do you have about any socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome in relation to this strategic issue?**

**Step 13(B) Please state if there are any gaps in socio-economic evidence for this strategy and how you will take measures to gather the evidence you need.**

**Step 13(C) Are there any potential impacts this strategy may have specifically on the undernoted groupings?** Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

**Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each grouping.**

**Low and/or No Wealth** (e.g. those with enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.

**Impact**

**Material Deprivation** (i.e. those unable to access basic goods and services e.g. repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies).



**Impact**

**Area Deprivation** (i.e. where people live (e.g. rural areas), or where they work (e.g. accessibility of transport)).

**Impact**

**Socio-economic Background** i.e. social class including parents' education, people's employment and income.

**Impact**

**Other** – please indicate

**Step 13(D) Please state below if there are measures which could be taken to reduce socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome.**

**Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?**

**Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?**

**Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation.** Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Paul Clark

Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips

Approved by: Kate Cowey

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