



RCCE House, Threshelfords Business Park, Feering, CO5 9SE

MINUTES
of a meeting held in the Diocese of Chelmsford Boardroom at
Tuesday 17th January 2017 at 2pm

Present: Members:

Ray Booty (RB) (Chairman)	Katherine Evans (KE)	Martyn Towns (MT)
Jan Arthur (JA)	Robert Johnstone (RJ)	John Victory (JV)
Bob Drane (BD)	Rick Gray (RG)	Ed Dixon (ED)

Observers: Mr and Mrs Lankester, Marlene Curtis

The following Officers were present in support:

Shirley Anglin (SA)	EH Public Rights of Way and Localism Officer
Kris Radley (KR)	Essex Cycling Strategy Leader
Andy Hilsdon (AH)	EH Inspections Team Leader

Apologies: Louise Fuller (LF); Giles Merritt (Natural England); Adam Scott (AS).

1	Welcome, introductions, appointments and Chairman's report	Action
	<p>Ray Booty welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves.</p> <p>Appointments This is the first meeting without Margaret Shaw, past ELAF Secretary – who came to cover maternity leave and stayed for 2 years. Ray thanked Margaret for her support. ALL seconded.</p> <p>There are still volunteer vacancies on the Committee e.g. for cycling and for a coastal member. Please put forward any suitable candidates.</p> <p>The subgroups for Essex LAF need to get going.</p>	
2	<p>ECC Cycling Strategy</p> <p>Kris Radley – Essex Cycling Strategy Leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kris provided some brief background about himself and the role. He has worked for Rural Community Council Essex as a Transport and Access advisor. He has also worked for Sustrans for 7 years focusing on modal shift (i.e. encouraging a shift to cycling from cars) working to provide sustainable transport. Kris was employed by Jacobs in October 2016 as Cycling Strategy Leader. - The Essex Cycling Strategy (adopted June 2016) links with job growth and housing development, and reducing congestion. The aim is to have District Cycling Action Plans adopted, focused on urban areas, that would be renewed every 5 years. - ECC are working with Public Health to encourage cycling for health and wellbeing 	

- There is a £4 health benefit for every £1 spent on cycling (source: "Get Britain Cycling" – March 2013)
- Cllr Johnson and Cllr Gooding are supporting the Strategy
- The strategy looks to double the number of people cycling by 2025
- Kris is currently focused on developing best practice design, looking to update the Design Guide
- The strategy priorities include the development of coherent routes for cycling. Essex LAF may be able to utilise cycling funding.

Questions

- JV – There seems to be a clash between safety and cycling – using roads is dangerous. How can this be combatted?
- A – *The strategy promotes safe cycling – studies have shown that more cyclists results in less accidents (smaller percentage of accidents) drivers become more aware of sharing space*
- RG raised concerns about implementation of the safety strategy in rural areas
- JA – commends scheme so far but raises concerns regarding the exclusion of other users. Are cycle lanes open for other users or are they restricted spaces e.g. are horse riders excluded? More horse riders get killed on roads than cyclists.
- A - *Kris is meeting Sue Dobson next week to look at the idea of opening up cycling routes to other users*
- JA raised concerns that the strategy is in line with the government focus on traveling to work, but does not include those people that horse ride for their health i.e. Will coherent routes be developed for horse riders and those with mobility issues?
- A – *Public Health are focusing on green exercise and increased activity in all contexts - Kris recommends piggy backing on other programmes.*
- Q from public gallery - mobility scooters are not allowed on byways because they are motored – will this strategy campaign for these to be allowed?
- A – *motorised bicycles can be tied in to sustainable travel to work*
- *Up to a certain speed they are still classed as bikes (would have to look at legislation)*
- *Motorised vehicles are only prohibited on restricted byways*
- Q from public gallery - raised concerns about potholes at the edges of roads, which sometimes fill with water, making it dangerous for cyclists who move further to the middle of roads and paths, this could be dangerous for all road and PROW users.
- A- *Kris is working with Asset Management and ECC on potholes. In cycle training, cyclists are taught to use a primary position on a road which is not always closest to the kerb so potholes in some areas may not be a problem.*
- Cycle routes for neighbourhood developments?
- A – *cycling action plans will influence local plans – these will focus mainly on urban areas – Kris suggested future work with Strategic Planning could be viable*
- *Kris is looking at best practice for cycle routes*
- RJ – what is considered as off-carriage way cycling?
- *Footway conversion, cycle tracks, stepped cycleways = hybrid carriage/cycle ways e.g. slightly raised cycleway on carriageway*
- RJ - raised concerns regarding shared cycleways / footway conversions - he feels that a cyclist's fears of cars is being prioritised over a pedestrian's fears of cycles. Also of public footpaths being converted to shared cycleways without any consultation / without due process e.g. *Myland Footpath 45 north Colchester and the Mersea Home development*

	Contact KR in 6 months to provide an update	SA
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3	Minutes of previous meeting Tuesday 11th October 2016 and matters arising not covered on agenda	
	<p>RB – page 1 should read a reduction of ELAF secretarial support by 33% Changes Proposed by JV, seconded by RJ.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>2. Item 1: RJ will approach Colchester Borough Council for a planner to attend an ELAF meeting – roll over action to next meeting RJ</p> <p>3. ECC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interactive Maps: PRow Defect reporting system now working again. - User group (Action for Essex Highways) – user group meeting should have happened in November (didn't take place) – Simon is looking at dates, looking to schedule in the next 6-8 weeks - Rewritten constitution (still with legal services) – legal made their comments, LAF have confirmed the amendments and Garry sent back to legal – SA to chase - Byways seasonal closure Orders: A cabinet Member Action had been circulated that signed off the TTROs. RB not happy with quality of report and BD agreed. The Trail Riders Fellowship have mounted a legal challenge to the Orders. – SA to feed comments back to Essex Highways - Vegetation hard cutting programme: information is being gathered on routes but budgets are tight. AH does not believe that the vegetation hard cutting scheme will be delivered this financial year, however, it is something that EH would like to incorporate into the general cutting schemes. SA will provide a list of hard cuts (if funding is agreed) - 2017/18 vegetation cutting programme: Andy Hilsdon explained that Essex Highways has reorganised and roles have changed significantly. Andy is pushing for better programming for works. <p>5. Network Rail: No reply has been received to the ELAF section 94 letter sent to NR on 5 August 2016.</p> <p>9. National and Regional LAF: no information on the planned 2017 National Conference.</p> <p>11. Outstanding biographies for the website – Katherine, Martyn</p> <p>12. External funding for PRow maintenance: GW was to discuss with Essex Partnership. Magnox fund was mentioned (from the public gallery). Could look into other sources of funding – EH would have to account for all money received – EH do receive third party funds but must follow processes. SA/ GW to progress.</p>	<p>RJ</p> <p>ST/SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>SA</p> <p>KE MT</p> <p>SA / GW</p>

4	Essex County Council report	
	<p>Garry White's Report was circulated pre-meeting.</p> <p>i. new paths heirachy: SA - the proposed new heirachy required an extra £300,000 of funding which Essex Highways do not have so it has been put on hold.</p> <p>ii. cutting programme: SA the 2017/18 cutting programme has been signed off. 2017 cutting maps will be going up on the essex highways website to replace the 2016 maps. There were almost 4,000 hits on the cutting programme maps.</p> <p>iii. defect reporting: SA - currently Essex Highways have a basic system for reporting but we are looking to make that system more intelligent e.g. providing timescales when things will be fixed etc. KE actively encourages Ramblers to report defects online and not to bother the PRoW Inspectors directly people tend to stop reporting defects when they do not see any work being undertaken to rectify the defects. AH would like to see an online programme of works accessible to all LAF appreciate the self-serve element but would like to see parishes provided with information about the information that is on offer.</p> <p>iv. PRoW Inspectors patches: Andy is looking into the best way for the county to be inspected – redefining the outline of each area and looking at the way the service is delivered.</p> <p>v. Ease of Use Survey: result is 70% pass rate in 2016, previous to 2015 it was in the 60s%. KE was surprised at the rise. SA stated that the survey now only covers Parishes that have been in the Rolling Programme in the last 3 years.</p> <p>vi. Rolling programme – once every 5 years all of a Parish's PRoWs are inspected to pick up defects so that we can be proactive in maintaining paths. Essex Highways are now halfway through the second round. SA will provide information on the rolling programme for the next ELAF meeting in May.</p> <p>vii. Q from the public gallery - suggested that there could be an outreach programme, he would like to see minutes from meetings shared with parishes. RB: The LAF do have a strong link with parish councils and volunteers – it is not appropriate for LAF minutes to go to parishes as we already do have information available on the web-site.</p>	<p>SA</p> <p>SA</p>
5	Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)	
	<p>Garry White's report on achievements since the 2009 ROWIP has been circulated. Report on sub-group was sent to Garry – RB to send to SA</p> <p>RB: RoWIP at top of next agenda; Comment on achievement report next meeting</p>	<p>RB</p>
6	Network Rail (NR)	

	<p>i. See also Garry White's report – ECC are likely to object to about just under half of the 55 crossing closure proposals in the ECC area. SA: ECC have had a meeting with councilors and the AONB and are trying to work with network rail about the concerns. Cllr Johnson wants to negotiate with Network Rail</p> <p>ii. Essex LAF have received a copy of the letter that Thurrock LAF sent to NR – <i>To be circulated with draft minutes</i></p> <p>iii. NR Dec 2016 changes in ECC area closure proposals following consultation NR have published the changes that they have made to the crossing closures as a result of second round consultation. There are 55 crossings in ECC area. NR made minor modifications to 7 crossings – Camps crossings is staying open as a farmer's crossing but closed as a PROW, one of the Puddle Dock crossings is staying open, plus minimal changes to the proposed alternative routes at 5 crossings <i>KE post meeting note: Saddlers crossing is also to stay open.</i> See <u>www.networkrail.co.uk/anglialevelcrossings</u></p> <p>iv: RB: Alan Goffee, Ramblers Essex Area Chairman, email of 13 January requested ELAF support in fighting NRs non-vehicular crossing closures. To be circulated. KE to circulate link to RA national petition</p>	SA KE
7	Natural England (NE) & update on Coastal Path	
	<p>See also Garry White's report Report from Giles Merritt – RB read this aloud. Path will have to go around Foulness. RB to circulate</p> <p>SA: LAF will be asked to comment on access provision but will not be expected to represent the views of the landowners. ELAF members to email RB to let him know if you want hardcopy or electronic copy of the reports to review. RB: all to review individually and then feedback for the next meeting in May.</p> <p>Saltmarsh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q from public gallery - contacted Giles Merritt about access to and from the water – slips / hards (customary access points for recreation) Many landowners accept these access points. Roger would like LAF to embrace these access points on the basis of CROW Act “right of access to to the countryside on foot”. - SA: Unless landowners declare the public footpaths across these saltmarshes these cannot be protected as PROWs - Is coastal access a LAF remit?RB to research this matter & to check remit of LAF and discuss with Giles Merritt 	RB RB / ALL RB
8	<p>Road Building – A120 new route options, A12 widening, Lower Thames Crossing</p> <p>RB & KE have attended the A12 & A120 Environment Forum meetings</p> <p>i. A120 Braintree – Marks Tey new route: 9 possible routes have been published</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - series of public consultation events launched on 17January with 5 route options – essentially 3 with slightly different starting points at Braintree <p>Will narrow down to three routes before further consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 weeks consultation period - the Chelmsford consultation event is on is on 15 February 	

	<p>ii. A12 widening – Boreham to Marks Tey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - website says consultation will be in Spring 2017 (starting 23 January) - 6 weeks consultation period <p>Future A12 improvements – are intended to be between M25 and Boreham or A130 - (will be consulted in the next funding round - 2020 to 2025)</p> <p>iii. Lower Thames crossing: RB may impact outskirts of Thurrock Brentwood BC have given support to option C which has no impact on our area of support. There is no guarantee that the preferred route will not impact the EH area. KE asked about the LTC and its impact on the Horndon garden community. AH responded that the LTC would not affect it.</p>	
9	Correspondence	
	-see under 6. Network Rail	
10	National and regional LAF updates	
	None to report	
11	Huddle	
	<p>Access & Brexit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from Leicestershire LAF – RB to circulate - Complaints that huddle is no longer very user friendly. RB : debating ability has been put back in “sort-of”. 	RB
12	Website, Social Media, Members Interests	
	<p>Social media / facebook: RB Nothing to report</p> <p>RB has access to and can make updates to website</p> <p>Currently don't have access to secretary@ or admin@, Margaret's email addresses – so emails cannot be opened or circulated. Emails about Path Orders, TROs, etc. all stuck in the system. RB attempting to gain access to secretary email</p>	RB
13	Any other business	
	Happy with this location – confirmed – SA to book this room for next time	SA
14	Public question time	
	none	
	<p>Date of next meetings:</p> <p>Tuesday May 9th 2017 at 2pm.</p> <p>Tuesday July 11th 2017 at 2pm.</p> <p>Tuesday Nov 7th 2017 at 2pm.</p>	