



Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire

Approved Minutes of meeting, Thursday, 6th July 2023

Date: Thursday, 6th July 2023

Time: 2:00pm

Venue: Community Space, Market Walk, Keynsham, BS29 1FS

Present: JLAF Members: Kathy Thomas (Chair of the JLAF) (KT), Donald MacIntyre (Vice-Chair of the JLAF) (DM), Rennie Dickins (RD), Jeff Rowland (JR), Peter Bird (PB), Ken Mill (KM), Chris Bloor (CB), Andrew Gough (AG), Charlie Moore (CM).

Also in attendance: Bill Davies (BD), Francis Bovis (FB), Michael Bell (MB), Duncan Venison - Bristol City Council (DV), Graeme Stark – Bath & North East Somerset Council and Secretary to the JLAF (GS).

Action

		Action
A	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	
A1	Introductions KT welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced JR who has just joined the JLAF. BD from WECA and FB were also welcomed.	
A2	Apologies John Darvill (JD), Tess Fitzjohn (TF), Lindsay Saunders – South Gloucestershire Council (LS).	
A3	Declarations of interest None.	
A4	Minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd March 2023 The draft minutes from the March 2023 meeting have been circulated to all JLAF members. The minutes were approved unanimously as a true and correct record.	
B	<u>MAIN BUSINESS</u>	
B1	WECA's Strategic Transport Policy Bill Davies provided an update on WECA's current work relating to transportation. The West of England is growing fast and transport delivery in England is relatively centralised with Council's competing against each other for funding. WECA was established in 2017 with a £30m annual budget (not index linked). WECA's responsibilities include bus information, supported bus services and the Diamond Travel Card. The Local Transport Plan was adopted in March 2020 and looks at current and future challenges. The growth of the north fringe of Bristol has become an increasing challenge; CB highlighted the problem of car-dependent housing. Schemes can bid for	

	<p>Active Travel Funding to promote walking and cycling. There is an aspiration to reduce road fatalities to zero. MB highlighted that some people, especially with mobility issues, feel left out. The UK doesn't fund public transport like in other countries; for example, Nantes spend 13 times for per head than Bristol. The Portishead Railway is expected to open in 2026. All five West of England authorities are committed to carbon-neutral transport networks by 2030. The LTP will be updated in 2024 and the guidance is expected to focus on driving economic growth and 'levelling-up'. Investment is needed to reduce car dependency.</p> <p>BD will be the project manager for the updated LTP and this process will involve both stakeholder engagement and a public consultation. RD queried if there is a disconnect between policy and implementation; BD felt that there was to a certain extent because the process is quite drawn out and new legislation would be required to create a single delivery body. It was confirmed that WECA regard electric bicycles to be part of the solution to the transportation challenges which the West of England faces. KT thanked BD for attending and the informative update.</p>	
B2	<p>JLAF's key aims and objectives</p> <p>Prior to the meeting, TF asked for a summary of JLAFs key aims and objectives and where those have been drawn from. JR highlighted DEFRA's guidance for Local Access Forums which states that LAFs should advise decision making organisations (such as local authorities) about making improvements to public access for outdoor recreation and sustainable travel.</p>	
B3	<p>ELMS Letter</p> <p>KT thanked DM for drafting the letter. DM explained that ELMS is the latest support for landowners to encourage environmental management and the JLAF's primary interest lies in permissive access. ELMS predecessors provided permissive access and that was very popular and successful. Permissive access provisions were removed from the last version and ELMS has no provision either. The current government isn't committed to improving access except along the English Coast Path. It is understood that there is support within National England for paid access to land under ELMS, so this is an opportunity to add the JLAF's voice. DM has drafted a letter that's contained in the Background Papers. CB proposed and CM seconded that the JLAF sends the letter to Natural England and local MPs; the letter was approved unanimously. DM was thanked for drafting the letter.</p>	
C	<p><u>ITEMS TO REPORT / FOR INFORMATION</u></p>	
C1	<p>News from the PROW Teams</p> <p>There were no questions for DV regarding BCC's report.</p> <p>GS highlighted that Sheila Petherbridge is retiring; the JLAF resolved to thank Sheila for her hard work and support over the years and the significant improvements she's made to the PROW network. GS provided an update on the Bath DM&S; 466 paths have been recorded, totalling approximately 64.6km. 22 paths are currently being researched in Lyncombe & a small part of Oldfield Park and 65 paths still to be researched</p>	GS

	<p>with an approximate length of 11.6km in Odd Down and Combe Down wards.</p> <p>CB wanted to thank LS for swift resolution of a problem he highlighted. The SGC Liaison Group hasn't met recently but a meeting is expected later in the year.</p>	
D	<u>OTHER BUSINESS</u>	
D1	<p>AOB</p> <p>KT and DM's current terms as Chair and Vice-Chair of the JLAF have come to an end. Both agreed to be considered for a further 12 month term; no other JLAF member expressed an interest in standing. RD nominated KT as Chair; this was seconded by KM and she was elected unanimously. CB nominated DM as Vice-Chair; this was seconded by RD and he was elected unanimously.</p>	
E	<u>FUTURE JLAF MEETING</u>	
	The next JLAF meeting is scheduled for 2pm on 2 nd November 2023. The Woodland Trust are expected to give a presentation at the November meeting.	
	Close 16.00	