

NLAF Meeting 15th July 2016

Meeting Minutes

19:00 – 20:45hrs

Attended:

John Shenfield	Lesley Elkington - NCC
Robert Martin	Hollie Darby – Northants Highways
Lisa Fell	
Chris Glasspool	

- Minutes from last meeting were accepted as true.

- JS – Discussion of report

JS – In 2015 a letter was drafted to the Chairs of Parish Councils (attached) regarding maintenance of the ROW network, however County Councillors wouldn't send it out. **Is there a possibility for it to be sent out by another means and have it circulated to all parishes?**

Another letter was drafted by the Police Commissioner from a previous meeting – what has happened to this?

- LF - Street Doctor

Not enough people know about Street Doctor and LF believes it should be used as a key maintenance planning and costing tool. Enquiries into how is it used to achieve planned maintenance and how are the report calls tracked? Is it used to save money by the Council and do they use the calls logged to note repetitive problem areas/landowners? LF believes that the responses should be automated and chasing them should be a simpler process. Could a feature be added where the member of public can add photos to the report? JS has noticed a serious growth in such things as traffic lights and signs obscured by vegetation. Can these be reported on Street Doctor? Various calls have been logged by LF to Nick Wedgebrow, but to no resolution and with few updates on later logged items. This will be chased by HD via the Highways Inbox.

- Enforcement item 7.4 of Extension of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Some farmers repeatedly cause problems with ROW – path widths, overgrown foliage, pathways not reinstated and edge of field paths ploughed when they should not be disturbed, yet do not get penalised and LF finds this undermines the current legislation and most likely costing Highways more time and money.

- Improving Access – 7.2 of Extension of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan

LF asks for gates to replace stiles. Stiles have many drawbacks including prohibiting an easy escape route from such things as cows and limit/prevent access for less abled people.

- Borough Hill Bridleway

Requests for the bridleway to be cleared over the last 2-3 years and it is totally overgrown. Can ROW help with this? Walkers, cyclists and horse riders have asked via Street Doctor for it to be cleared as it is a good link for Daventry to Dodford. Unclear about what is designated Highway and what is added verge when it comes to boundaries being cleared of vegetation.

- New signage on Council owned public access

LF has noticed a Public Notice sign from Daventry District Council stating the public have permission to use this land for harmless recreation but this permission can be withdrawn at any time. **It cites that details are available from DDC – can we find this out please?** These notices are currently on Borough Hill and Cracks Hill at Crick, there may be other areas too.

- 7.6 - Safer Cleaner Greener

LF has found an alternative to Glyphosate (attached) and would like to put it to the Council for use across the county. It uses flame or steam – flame is proven to be as effective as glyphosate when correctly applied. Pesticide sprays being used can cause issues with some dogs becoming sick and/or causing diarrhoea. Request for copy of glyphosate alternative to be send to Leon Jolly. LE noted that the County Council, Borough Council and District Council all have separate regulations on what they use so even if one did start to use it, it wouldn't necessarily be used by the others and the Council would have no overriding say on this. LF to write to her local MP.

- Lesley - Update from NCC

NCC would like to undertake a governance review in regards to the NLAf meetings and operations, in line with statutory guidance, to ensure that the group is getting the support it needs and that NCC has tangible outcomes from the work of the LAF. NCC to pay travel expenses as of 1st April 2016. Having a representative from the following would benefit the meeting and its outcomes: Farmer/NFU, Cyclist, CLA, small walking group, Canal and River Trust, Disability group, ROW and a Secretary. Once this has been agreed upon it will be taken to the Cabinet to be set out clearly. Public money must have an auditable trail. JS states the Secretary doesn't have to be someone *in* the NCC, but happy for NCC to pay. **Request for policy guidelines to be sent to the group.**

- Any other business

RM – Highways England have neglected paths alongside highway verges. **Who has the responsibility for the ROW section on the A6 bypass (Desborough) verge?** Byway UC11 that connects the B576 to Braybrooke Road, Desborough, and the up-grading of it as required by the s106, is complete from Harborough Road, B576 up to Judge's Bridge. The section from the bridge to Pevril Place/Bridge Road connection also is need of clearing. Even now, on this section, it is very soggy and hazardous to use, so the sooner it is completed the better.

Is the Parish Warden Scheme still in practise? If so, please could RM be made aware of the meetings as he wishes to carry out his role as Parish Warden.