

ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

MEETING 23

Monday 21 July 2008

BARN & BUSHEL, THAINSTONE CENTRE, INVERURIE

Present: Gordon McKilligan(Acting Chair), Neil Buchanan, David Finlay, David Fyffe, Cllr Debra Storr, Linda Miller, Bill Dow, Bill Ashcroft, Alison Mitchell, Peter Dawes, Tom Johnston, Paul Timms, Dan Cadle (on behalf of Alan Harper).

Council Officers Present: Linda Mathieson, Colin Miller, Eileen Oliver (Minutes)

Invitees: Andrew Robb (AC T&I Walking and Cycling Strategy)

1. Apologies, Introductions, Deputisings.

Apologies: Ken Thomson, Christine Gore, Alison Espie, Robin Maitland, Molly Atkinson.

Deputisings: Dan Cadle (for Alan Harper), Alison Mitchell (for Owen Vaughan).

2. Minutes of meeting 22

Read and approved, subject to revision to Item 7 (Loch of Skene).

3. Matters arising

Colin Miller ensured that everyone had received copies of John Risby's WIAT PowerPoint and Kelley Miller's SRDP presentation. SCVO information sheets have been distributed in mailing.

CM reported that the list of ALOAF members has been updated on the Council website. He also distributed the SNH Dogs leaflet as referred to in the minutes.

4. Membership

- Contacts list distributed.
- Paul Timms (SNH Acting Representative) explained that he may not be able to continue in Kelley Miller's place but will advise Forum of his availability to attend future meetings.
- E-mail from Simon Pilpel re concern about SNH's future role in LAFs. Paul Timms emphasised that responsibility for access delivery rested with local authorities. SNH's role is to advise Scottish Government, and they have a presence on the National Access Forum. Also SNH itself is on a tight budget. The Forum agreed that SNH's presence should be encouraged at future meetings and their previous attendances had been useful and sometimes vital, and always added value to the meetings. Their future presence to be encouraged.

5. Aberdeenshire Council Update (Papers included)

- Access Expenditure 2007/08 and 2008/09: Discussions led to questions on financial support. Cllr Storr asked why money was listed for the Daviot Estate-Daviot Village path, for which Planning Gain

money was already allocated. Would there be planning gain/landfill money available?

- Core paths plan
 CPP CD's distributed to members present at meeting. Linda Mathieson advised that others had been distributed to libraries/ SNH/Scottish Water/ Network Rail/Forestry Commission. All information currently on website.
 Linda Mathieson gave an update on CPP and invited ALOAF to submit a forum response to the consultative draft. Suggested that 2 members be proposed from each sector to form a sub-group and pull together a combined response. Further discussion re sub-group ensued and it was agreed that the subgroup would be made up of: - Peter Dawes and Alison Mitchell representing User Sector, David Finlay and either Geordie Burnett-Stuart (to be approached by LM) or Alison Espie to represent the Land Management Sector, and Bill Ashcroft and Gordon McKilligan to represent the Community Sector. Agency input could most appropriately be sought from NHS Grampian. Neil Buchanan recommended that the best contact for this would be the Community Health Partnership (CHP) c/o Jenny Hall, Public Health, Woodhill House.
 It was agreed that the Sub-Group should meet and gather their response to be reported at next ALOAF meeting on 8 September 2008. David Fyffe offered to e-mail information for SRPBA Aberdeenshire members. He praised Linda Mathieson on CPP and asked for CD's to distribute. David Finlay asked whether the CPP information could be brought to agricultural shows, etc this summer.
- Walking and Cycling Strategy (Paper enclosed)
 Chair introduced Andrew Robb who explained the development of Aberdeenshire Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy and invited Forum to respond to section B of the Questionnaire. Paul Timms asked if the objectives at the start of section B were hierarchical to which Andrew Robb confirmed that they were not. Alison Mitchell asked how groups/organisations are to be targeted. Andrew Robb replied that they were to be sent forms and information packs. Linda Miller asked if the strategy is applicable to wheelchair users and Cllr Storr showed concern that there might be discrimination against the under 16's. Andrew Robb assured that after summer, the strategy would be promoted in schools. The Forum was supportive towards the Strategy, and in particular the potential for cycling provision in new road schemes to encourage modal shift from the car to walking and cycling for commute travel. All ALOAF members had a copy of the questionnaire and were encouraged to send in their personal responses by 8/9/08. It was agreed that ALOAF feedback be sent to Andrew in the form of an extract from the draft Minute

6. Annual Gathering

Chair asked for comments.

Tom Johnston said he felt that the invited (and able) speakers were not used enough in the discussion session, and he was aware that others had commented likewise.

Peter Dawes was disappointed by a lack of numbers.

Linda Mathieson suggested press release to be issued earlier to encourage a larger attendance.

7. Equestrian access

The meeting had before them the Council's paper suggesting terms of reference for a possible ALOAF equestrian access subgroup to identify generic concerns or difficulties experienced by land managers and horseriders regarding access. Bill Dow stated that path surfaces are often churned up by equestrian access. It was felt that these issues should be addressed for wheelchair users. It was agreed that a subgroup should be formed to address the overall question of equestrian access issues.

Subgroup to be formed as follows:

Molly Atkinson- User sector (LM to approach Molly); Bill Dow-
Community sector; David Finlay- Land Management sector.

Group to meet to discuss the way forward.

8. Plans, Strategies etc (paper enclosed)

Deferred as no paper yet forthcoming.

9. Access Consultations, Issues etc

(1) Menie (paper enclosed)

CM advised that Reporters have been given 3 months to gather and write up information.

(2) AWPR – To be carried forward to next meeting. Public Inquiry date is September 2008.

(3) Haddo – No information/feedback as yet. Bill Dow advised that there had been no reply to his e-mails. Linda Mathieson offered to pursue.

(4) Other – No other relevant matters

10. AOB

CM confirmed that he had spoken to George Skinner of Strathorn and he was willing to accommodate an ALOAF site visit. Possible time of visit – 3pm on 15/9/08. Bill Dow asked if the land there was wheelchair accessible. CM to enquire and advise BD accordingly.

CM reported KT's response to E Grampian Coastal Partnership questionnaire to Forum.

Mileage payment rate: Peter Dawes asked if this may change to reflect increased fuel costs. CM/LM to enquire within Council.

11. Events, Training, Information

- 17/9/08 NAF/LAF Joint Meeting (paper enclosed)

CM read e-mail from Mark Wrightham and confirmed that Council is still willing to fund attendance. Anyone interested should contact Colin.

- 22/11/08 Recreational Users' Workshop

Repeat of previous annual events. KT attended in 2007. Other access users may wish to attend this year?

12. Items for next meeting's agenda

Progress report from Equestrian subgroup.

Forum to consider the CPP subgroup's draft response.

13. Date of next meeting

15/9/08

Meeting closed at 8.40pm