

## **ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM**

### **NOTE OF THIRD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2005 AT THE BARN AND BUSHEL, THAINSTONE CENTRE, INVERURIE**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Jim Anderson  
Molly Atkinson (User representative)  
John Brownlee (Community representative)  
Peter Dawes (User representative)  
Cameron Ewen (Land Manager representative)  
David Finlay, (Land Manager reserve)  
David Fyffe (Land Manager representative)  
Patricia Goodwin (Land Manager reserve)  
Alan Harper (Agency [Forestry Commission Scotland] representative)  
Tom Johnston (Land Manager representative)  
Ron Macdonald (Agency [Scottish Natural Heritage] representative)  
Neil McLean (User reserve)  
Brian Martin (Community representative)  
Robin Maitland (Land Manager representative)  
Alison Mitchell (User reserve)  
Iain Taylor (Community representative)  
Owen Vaughan (User representative)

#### **Council officers also present:-**

Interim Chair: Christine Gore, Director of Planning & Environmental Services  
Advisory role: Keith Jones, Head of Law & Administration (North)  
Linda Mathieson, Environment Planner (Strategic)  
Colin Miller, Countryside Access Officer  
Alastair Fulwood, Assistant Countryside Access Officer  
Helen Young, Access Ranger

#### **1. Apologies and Introductions**

Christine Gore welcomed those attending the meeting and advised apologies from Councillor Jenny Watson and from Bill Dow, Jonathan Dymock, Daniela Mayes, John Risby and Ken Thomson.

#### **2. Minutes of Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> April 2005**

The minute of meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> April 2005 were held as read and approved.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

##### **Item 7 – Website Update**

Colin Miller indicated that Aberdeenshire site had been updated to refer to him as the principal contact for the Forum. In the long term, the website would be considerably updated and approved.

#### **4. Procedures**

##### **(a) Expenses Claim Procedures**

Colin Miller reported that all claims received from members had now been processed and would be paid. For future reference he pointed out that where outlays were incurred, e.g. rail fares or cost of meals, receipts would be required.

##### **(b) Insurance**

Colin Miller reported that he had contacted a number of authorities that had Access Forums up and running. None yet had procedures in place for insuring members. Linda Mathieson had also discussed the matter with Denis Scott of the Council's Insurance Section, who indicated that along with the Council's insurers he would review risks once he had sight of the final draft of the Operating Principles. Particular risks are those that might be incurred on site visits.

##### **(c) Operating Principles**

Revised Operating Principles had been circulated in terms of discussions at the last meeting. A further revised version had been tabled at the start of the meeting, incorporating changes suggested by Ken Thomson. These were accepted subject to minor adjustments. Additionally, it was agreed that with regard to proposed Clause 4.5, public attendance at Forum meetings, Ron MacDonald would supply a list of specific instances where confidentiality might be applied for incorporation into the final version of the Operating Principles. Keith Jones also recommended terms of a clause allowing the Principles to be amended should circumstances so require. It was agreed that a revised version of the Operating Principles would be circulated to the June meeting of the Forum for final approval.

##### **(d) Nomination Papers**

Colin Miller reported that only one nomination had so far been received on behalf of Ken Thomson. Ken Thomson had confirmed his agreement to the nomination by separate letter. It was agreed that this was a valid nomination. It was open for other nominations to come forward provided that they were lodged by close of business on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2005. In the absence of any further nominations by the due time, Ken Thomson would automatically become Chair. However, under these circumstances officers would

require to separately canvass for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

## **5. Examples of Access Issues**

There was submitted a paper containing three examples of access issues. It was agreed that at the close of the formal part of the business these would be considered by members as training examples.

## **6. Work Priorities**

There was circulated a table showing Outline Work Programme for the period to February 2006. Colin and Linda explained the principles as to what was envisaged. Priority would require to be given to the establishment of Exemption Procedures under Section 11 and procedures for upholding Access Rights under Section 13. Some concern was expressed that an accelerated timetable was necessary in connection with the framework procedure for the Core Path Planning Consultation and the subsequent Consultation Programme itself. It was explained that the guidance from the Executive was only due next month and that an officer-level training course was also to be taking place at the end of June. The current timetable took this into account. It was, however, agreed that the Outline Work Programme should be amended to accelerate the timetable for these particular processes. Thereafter the issues would be discussed at the meeting after next. It was suggested also that the Outline Work Programme be amended to show the date of the Annual Gathering, which it was agreed would be discussed at the next meeting when a view of public involvement at Forum meetings would be taken. .

## **7. Events, Training and Information**

There was some general discussions on the communication process and when it would be appropriate to issue Press releases. There was general agreement that the trigger for considering Public Relations matters would be the appointment of a Chairman. It was, however, considered that the Council's web-site with reference to Local Access Forums would merit updating.

## **8. Events, Training and Information**

Colin spoke on the communication from Mark Wrightham of SNH, which had been circulated to the meeting. This included papers circulated to the National Access Forum meeting held at Perth on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2005. Reference was also made to a Ramblers' Forum held recently. Although no member of the Forum had attended, Alison Mitchell advised that a colleague of hers had found it very useful. It would be repeated on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2005 at Stirling.

## **9. Agenda Suggestions for Next Meeting**

The following items were put forward:-

- Election of Chairperson
- Review of future Work Programme, including Section 11 and Section 13 procedures
- Dates of future meetings over a 12-month period taking account of likely programme of work
- When to invite the public to meetings and go public on activities
- Future attendance of reserves
- Discussion of further case studies

#### **10. Date of Next Meeting**

This was confirmed as 27<sup>th</sup> June 2005 at the Barn and Bushel.

At the conclusion of the formal part of the meeting, members split into groups to discuss the three examples of access issues previously circulated. This was followed by a plenary session with regard to issues raised.