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| **Medway Local Access Forum**  **Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 7 March 2019 at 4.00pm**  **Civic Room, Gun Wharf, Chatham, Kent** | | |
| **Item** | **Main Meeting** | **Action** |
|  | Annmarie Behn (AB) Paths and Promotions Manager MC  Ian Gray (IG) User representative (CCG)  David Palmer (DP) Public Health MC  Sharon Bayne(SB) Blackwood Bayne  Sue Saunders (SS) British Horse Society (Vice Chair)  Chris Morris (CM) Medway Towns Footpath Group  Adam Taylor (AT) Paths and Rivers Manager MC  Michael Dale (MD) Grain Coastal Park  Marion Phillips (MP) Partnerships Officer MC  Maggie Coleman OSS representative  Graham Jenkinson Ramblers | |
| 1 | **Welcome to guests, members and officers**  SS welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2019. She stated that it was sad that Rita had resigned her position and left the forum but that this event had also presented a wonderful opportunity for the LAF to re-identify with itself, target where it wants to go and develop accordingly and proactively.  SS felt that as a statutory advisory body, the LAF should of course comment on major strategies, but that the LAF focus should also be just as keenly targeted where it is most successful, with current ‘on the ground issues’ that it can physically do something about, in the short term. |  |
| 2 | **Apologies**  Simon Curry, Darren Taylor, Martin Hall, Karen Beer, Su Ormes |  |
| 3 | **Minutes of last meeting (6th September 2018)**  SS said she would reschedule the equestrian meeting with SB for the ROWIP.  MC reported that Whittings Farm permissive path had not progressed in the past year. She will chase HPC to ascertain why the PPA had not yet been signed by both parties.  MP reported that the £500 had now been paid to Rede Common.  The Minutes of the last meeting were then signed off. | **SS**  **MC** |
| 4 | **Update on key LAF roles**  SS advised that she would remain as Vice Chair and attend the Kent LAF as representative for the MLAF.  On behalf of the Forum she welcomed the news and supported the appointment of SC to the position of Chair.  GJ confirmed the need to reply to major planning and other access strategies.  MC and SS confirmed that they regularly check the planning pages  AB advised that she was working to find new representatives for disabilities and dog walkers.  MD asked if there was a contact for the Alzheimers Society. AB said she would look for one.  MD suggested the forum share email addresses with each other.  AB to bring a form to June meeting for people to sign to say they are happy to share their email amongst forum members, to cover GDPR.  MD also said it would be good to have another volunteer day. | **AB**  **AB** |
| 5 | **Local Plan Update**  Catherine Smith gave a presentation on the Local Plan process (attached as an appendix to the minutes).  CS supported the pragmatic view of the LAF to comment on the planning as it develops, but also accepting that development will take place. She advised that the sites were very carefully chosen in the Local Plan and that a key issue is infrastructure. Bigger outside pressures from other LA areas, new major road infrastructure (i.e. the Lower Thames Crossing) all impact on Medway as well as local development and it is a big challenge to find the best way forward.  MD suggested Grain as a development area. CS advised that land contamination and the requirement for more travel by car due to its distance from the towns precluded this option.  GJ queried the criteria to build houses at the moment, as Medway is without a local plan. CS advised that there is standard criteria which is applied and any development approved will count towards our target in the Local Plan.  GJ expressed concern that developments may come forward on land not earmarked under the Local Plan.  Deangate was raised as part of this discussion. CS advised that it is being considered but MC need to look at the ecology of the site first. She advised that just because the land was LA owned, it was not given any special arrangements and had to follow the same procedures as any other piece of land. |  |
| 6 | **Matters Arising**  Lodge Hill –Considered to be part of the Housing Infrastructure Bid environmental management scheme, more will be known once the outcome of the HIF bid is known. MH will liaise with Homes England regarding access for volunteer path maintenance, once the HIF bid is submitted.  Gibraltar Farm – CM shared a flyer that was independently distributed further to a new planning application submission MC/19/0336 for 450 homes. The flyer is attached as an appendix to these minutes and comments are encouraged to be submitted from the LAF.  Strood Riverside –AT advised that there is a note on the website advising the section of the Strood Community Trail that is closed.  The path should be open again between April to June and AT will repair the broken signage.  RS206 – IG reported that a concerted effort will be made using Kelly Tolhurst as there has been no progress due to internal staff transfers at Network Rail.  Cliffe Pools – Meeting will be held on 22nd March.  Union Place car park – AB advised that works would be taking place this month with the path opening for April.  RR12- Temple Gardens – AB advised the work is anticipated to commence by the end of the month.  Walking Festival – AB reported that this would take place on the 10-23rd June and there were anticipated to be 14 walks taking place. AB would forward more information when it was available. | **AT** |
| 7 | **ROWIP**  SB gave an update on the ROWIP and shared analysis of surveys that had been received.  SB asked that LAF members look at the questions at the end of the presentation (attached as an appendix) and reply individually. SS asked that members look and submit their responses to Adam by the end of the month.  CM felt that the ROWIP was a waste of time if there was no budget to actually improve ROW for the purposes of access for able bodied people let alone for the disabled. AT advised that the ROWIP could be a tool to fight for a budget increase, as it is a statutory document. | **ALL LAF MEMBERS**  **AT** |
| 8 | **England Coastal Path**  AT reported that the Woolwich to Grain stretch should be open by the end of the year  The Iwade to Grain section would likely be open at some point next year due to staff changes at Natural England.  AT advised that the Port of London Authority had agreed to pay for a marker post at Grain Coastal Park |  |
| 9 | **AOB**  IG reported that people were walking unofficial paths in Cuxton. (ghost paths). AB advised that this was a landowner issue as it is trespass against them. AB advised IG to let any landowners know that they have to tell people that the paths are not PROW, in order to protect their land. i.e. putting up of notices, completing a Section 31(6) deposit to the Local Authority.  MD reminded the LAF about the Coastal Park Walks that he runs out in Grain. They last approximately 3 hours and over 200 people had attended last years walks, raising over £500 for charity. MD asked that any interested groups be given his contact.  CM and SB gave an update on Berengrave, advising that the board walk had now gone and there would be a meeting the following week to discuss a management plan. SB took CM’s email and advised she would keep him updated.  IG asked when the RR13 at Digger Land would reopen. AT said he would find out and let IG know.  RS112 Stoke Road – CM asked if the bridleway was being retained within the new housing development and AT advised that it was.  MC gave her apologies for the June meeting in advance. | **SB**  **AT** |
|  | The Forum’s next main meeting will be held on Thursday 6 June 2019 at 4 pm with a pre-meeting for members at 3:30 pm in Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham.  Civic Room |  |