

WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM - SERVICE DELIVERY SUB-GROUP

10 am on 8th May 2025 – Meeting via MS Teams

Attendees: Bobbie Matulja = BM (LAF Chairman), Sandra Starkey = SS, John Cuthbertson = JC, Lyndon Bracewell = LB, Julian Grubb = JG, Gordon Bunker = GB

Susan Satchell = SSA (MHT), Rowena Lloyd = RL (WCC), Tony Kerbey = TK (LAF Secretary)

Agenda Item 1 – Introduction

TK – Asked for permission to auto-transcribe the meeting – all agreed. Apologies were received from Peter Hughes (PH) and Glyn Thomas (GT).

BM – Welcomed Susan Satchell, Malvern Hills Trust (MHT Governance Change Officer) who was invited to provide an overview of the MHT Parliamentary Bill's progress and its implications for access. **BM** asked those present to introduce themselves and their interests.

BM - Also explained the routine aims of the Sub-Group meeting (analysis of, and questions regarding, PRoW Key Performance Indicators and statistics for 2024/25) and asked for a pause between each section of the report for questions.

Agenda Item 2 – Malvern Hills Trust Parliamentary Bill – Susan Satchell

SSA gave a detailed presentation, providing an overview of the Parliamentary Bill, its aims, its rationale and its progress. The accompanying slides are attached to these notes at Enclosure 1.

She also mentioned that MHT was working with WCC PRoW Team to resolve concerns about the bill and its powers in relation to PRoW legislation.

SSA took questions on:

Powers to limit access – **LB** Had a concern that the powers vested in MHT might challenge or overrule existing PRoW legislation and circumvent the current requirements for consultation.

BM – Summarised the general concerns of WLAF re the understanding of MHT's powers, conferred by the bill, and how they would work alongside those of WCC.

SSA replied that this is acknowledged as a genuine concern and MHT are in conversation with WCC to ensure processes are understood and coordinated.

Cycling on the Malvern Hills – **LB** Wanted reassurance about previous discussions surrounding a cycling ban on the hills.

SSA Said there was no plan to ban cyclists, and they have an inherent legal right to use the bridleway network anyway. The current permissive cycle paths are still in existence and could be expanded if there is a high enough demand.

Consultation when limiting access – **BM** reiterated concerns voiced by the BHS and other LAF members that plans to restrict access to the hills and/or commons should be required to undergo the same consultation processes as those made under existing legislation and WCC policy.

RL – gave an overview of the organisations consulted by WCC regarding PRoW matters. **Action RL** to send a consultee list to **SSA**.

JC – Thanked SSA for her hard work and her forbearance with some of the public reaction.

BM – Thanked SSA for her presentation on behalf of the LAF.

Agenda Item 3 – Public Rights of Way Report

RL – stepped through the report and took questions on:

PRoW Budget – Figures were not released until immediately before the meeting and will be covered in more detail at the full LAF meeting in July.

LB – Asked if the budget information could be sent to members before the main LAF meeting in July.

Action RL – Agreed to go through the budget figures at the main LAF meeting in July.

The appointment of a new enforcement officer – **BM** asked for an update on the enforcement officer position.

RL explained that permission to recruit into the position was awaiting approval and would provide another update in July.

Supervised Ramblers Volunteer Groups – **LB** spoke on behalf of GT to ask if WCC were ready to restart volunteer group work.

RL – explained that the difficulty arose from having only one assistant area officer in post as it is this role that schedules, prepares, and supervises, volunteer group work.

Agenda Item 4. ROWIP Development

RL - gave an update on the ROWIP. The Action Plan is awaiting sign off before the initial consultation question set is made public. Progress has been held up a little by the elections and new WCC cabinet appointments. Sign off is expected at the end of May or into June. **Action TK** to inform LAF members when the consultation starts.

BM - pointed out that the LAF were promised an additional, supported, sub-group specifically for the ROWIP and asked RL to confirm that the LAF would be consulted once the author had created a draft.

RL – agreed but thought it would probably happen towards the end of the year.

Agenda Item 5 - AOB

Nil

Tony Kerbey (Secretary)

03 June 2025

Enclosures

1 MHT Presentation Slides (not included in public version).