

Minutes of the meeting of Orkney Local Access Forum and Countryside Committee

Wednesday 25 September 2013 at 7.30pm
St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall

Present:

Cllr Rob Crichton	OIC
Steve Jenkinson	KC/SKC
Andy Knight	RSPB
Roddy MacKay	OIC
Ian Wilkins	OIC
Alice Lyall	WHS
Anne Gascoigne	OFC
Sandra Miller	OHS
Jenny Campbell	Eday Rangers
Roderick Thorne	Sanday Rangers
Simon Treasure	Orkney Tourism Group
Elaine Clarke	Chair
Barbara Scollay	Secretary

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Liz Dennison, Sandy Firth, Ian Thain and Alan Corrigan.

2. **Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 June 2013**

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Sandra Miller, seconded by Andy Knight.

3. **Matters Arising**

Dog fouling/control of pets in the countryside

- Andy Knight and Victor Muir have been working together on two press releases.
- OTG have added information their bedroom folders.
- There will be an SNH event at the Battleby Conference Centre on Wednesday 29 January 2014, and they have publicised the issue recently via radio advertising and leaflets.

4. **Update on Access Officer posts**

Roddy MacKay introduced Ian Wilkins, who explained his role involved the maintenance of the core paths. Of his full time post he will spend 2.5 days per week on maintenance but at the moment he is spending all his time on it in order to catch up.

Interviews are due to be held in October for the other half of the access role and Roddy is fairly certain they will happen. The delays have been due to getting a funding package together in order to establish a permanent post. This post will be advertised internally within the Council and Roddy hopes we will have another new face at the next meeting.

5. **Environmental Strategy – Eileen Summers**

Eileen Summers, Policy Officer (Environment) attended from Orkney Islands Council to speak about the new draft Orkney Environment Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2018. The Environment Partnership, one of the community planning thematic groups of the Orkney Community Planning Partnership, is responsible for section 12 (our environment) and section 14 (combating climate change). The 16 aspects of the plan relate to the 16 national outcomes.

Eileen took us through the local priorities, the nine themes identified and the questions asked when creating the strategy. She then explained about three areas where she thought OLAF might have some participation: 1.4 ecosystem services, 4.5 climate change and 5.3 waste (please see copy of presentation attached to the minutes for further details). Discussion took place on the three items and some suggestions were made regarding re-wording or cross-referencing.

The plan will be reviewed at the Partnership Liaison Group in October and then at the CPP steering group in November. The previous strategy was drafted in 2002 but was not formally adopted, so the team hope to get agreement from all groups involved in order to get the strategy adopted this time, as they have been working on it for around a year.

Eileen then took various questions and comments from those present and Elaine thanked her on behalf of the committee for her interesting presentation, and commented that we hoped that the plan would successfully be formally adopted this time.

6. AOCB

- Rod Thorne, as a follow-up to issues raised in the presentation, commented on issues with flytipping in Sanday, electrofishing for spoons and unsightly property. Roddy remarked that Environmental Health were aware of the issue of electrofishing and were working with Marine Scotland on the issue, and that Nick Blowfield has enforcement powers with regards to the issuing of amenity notices, whereby landowners are instructed to tidy up their land and remedy any issues causing concern. Roddy was only aware of one such notice having been issued in the last five years.
- Alice Lyall pointed out that there would be a new WHS management consultation in November and she encouraged comments to be submitted.
- Simon Treasure commented that there was a new OTG website and that OTG were reviewing their bedroom folders, and he would email OLAF members asking for input on both.
- Anne Gascoigne questioned Roddy MacKay about the mention on Radio Orkney that there was a £100,000 underspend on capital projects in the access budget; Roddy explained that the money is tied to capital projects only of £10,000 or more and cannot be used for maintenance or any other purpose. There are approximately 10 car parks that have been identified as requiring upgrading in order to improve access and parking facilities and it has been agreed to spend the money this financial year. Roddy will provide a list of the projects to OLAF members via the secretary. Stephen Jenkins commented that part of the problem lies in that capital funding can be used for new items, but there is usually no uplift in budgets for maintenance of those items in the future.
- Roddy enquired about the £2,000 grant from Orkney Islands Council and the secretary confirmed she would send him an invoice for it by early October. He also mentioned correspondence he had received from the National Access Forum (which the secretary had not received) regarding a meeting of local access forums in Glasgow on Tuesday 5 November; Roddy will forward the information to the secretary.
- Ian confirmed that he was happy to attend the OLAF meetings frequently and Elaine mentioned the intention to have both persons in the access posts attend a future meeting to talk about their roles.

- Elaine explained that she thought that there was not enough sharing of information between groups who are often talking about the same matters. She suggested that OLAF write to other environmental groups, pass on our adopted minutes and agenda and invite them to attend an OLAF meeting, and possibly have some OLAF members attend one of their meetings; all agreed to this and a letter will be drafted by the secretary with Elaine's assistance.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was provisionally set as Wednesday 22 January 2014, depending on availability of Chair/Vice Chair.

Thanking everyone for their attendance, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.10pm.