

NEW FOREST ACCESS FORUM

Meeting: *Monday 5 December 2016*

Agenda item 4: *Forum Officer's Report*

1. Future meeting dates

Proposed Forum meeting dates for 2016 are listed below:

13 March
12 June
4 September
4 December

Members will notice that in March and June the dates depart from the usual pattern of the first Monday of the month. This is to avoid conflict with the National Park Authority's Resources, Audit and Performance Committee meetings.

2. HCC update

- ***Working with the Ramblers***

Local Ramblers have just started on the next Ease of Use survey, which audits 5% of the Hampshire network in May and November each year. The current survey includes 16 parishes including (in the New Forest District) Lymington & Pennington and Damerham. The County Council is also having discussions with the Ramblers about carrying out a full survey of the Rights of Way network in Hampshire, recording all structures and surfaces. Using a mobile application within the Council's Countryside Access Management System (CAMS), the aim is to create a comprehensive record of the whole network which will facilitate: the reporting and resolution of problems on the network, funding bids and the programming or works, and enable the creation of volunteer work programmes.

- ***Consultation on Minerals and Waste and County Council developments in Hampshire***

Hampshire County Council is asking residents their views on how the role of local communities could be strengthened in the local decision making process for determining planning applications for minerals and waste, and County Council developments in Hampshire. The public consultation will run until **Monday 19 December**, and is available online at: <http://www.hants.gov.uk/sciconsultation2016>.

3. Southampton ROWIP

Southampton City Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan is due for renewal in 2017. The City Council is beginning its preliminary research and will later on be asking for comments from the Forum and for a questionnaire to be completed. If you have any queries or wish to discuss anything please contact Christine Brislane on 023 80 832431.

4. Consultation on Local Government in Hampshire

This consultation has now closed. Feedback was received from over 5,000 local residents, businesses and key stakeholders, and will be at the heart of future decision-making on what the future of local government could look like across the county. It was clear that the majority of people supported keeping Hampshire together. In a statement the Leader of the County Council, Cllr Roy Perry said:

"The County Council remains strongly opposed to parts of Hampshire joining a Solent Combined Authority as it is currently proposed. This would lead to services the County Council currently provides to the whole of Hampshire, such as highways and transport, being broken up and handed over to a Solent mayor. If this was to happen, the County Council's planned investments in major road schemes could be seriously jeopardised.

"Overall, the national and local context surrounding devolution is very fluid with much uncertainty. Added to which, all councils face massive funding pressures which mean we can ill afford to add still more layers of local bureaucracy. The County Council's focus remains firmly on getting the best outcome for Hampshire residents. We have a duty to the people of Hampshire to do all we can to sustain public services in the most cost effective way. That's why I want to keep Hampshire together – for our community, our services and our economic prospects."

Following consideration by Cabinet, the County Council's position on devolution and local government reorganisation is to be considered at a meeting of the Full Council on 24 November.

5. National updates

- **Ramblers Big Pathwatch**

Last year the Ramblers launched the Big Pathwatch campaign to conduct their largest comprehensive nationwide analysis of the condition of paths with the help of local people. With the help of over 3,000 'citizen surveyors', they managed to survey 45% of the path network in England and Wales. Results were published on 14 November – the full report can be found at <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/get-involved/pathwatch/the-state-of-our-paths-report.aspx>.

- **Fly tipping**

Keep Britain Tidy has published an [action plan](#) to turn the tide on fly-tipping. It features six key actions: 1) Give householders the information they need; 2) Make it easy for householders to do the right thing; 3) Develop effective and consistent enforcement strategies; 4) Encourage stiffer sentencing in Magistrates' Courts; 5) Encourage the development of a more circular economy; 6) Better research and greater innovation. [Find out more](#).

Petronella Natrass
November 2016