



Herefordshire Local Access Forum Minutes of Meeting 05/09/2025, 11:00am

Plough Lane offices, Hereford

Present

LAF members

Arthur Lee – Chair	AL
Cllr Robert Highfield	RH
Cllr Justine Peberdy	JP
Peter Newman	PN
Ian Carr	IC
Duncan Green	DG

Cllr Dan Hurcomb	DH
Leigh Whitehouse	LW
Natasha Thomas	NT

Members of public

Chris Fowler
Chris Marsden
Peter McKie
David Irwin
Janet Wall
John Thompson
Tim Hardie
Rebecca Bowen
Elora Gray –Burrell
Andy Parr

Apologies

Malcolm Loach

1. Welcome and apologies

2. Minutes

Changes requested to be made – now changed and complete, see attached item.

3.11 – JB, changes to JP

All minutes moving forward will be ‘action minutes’ only, with a record of responsibility and outcomes provided back to LAF members. This will be provided by an in-house Clerking service, namely Elora Gray-Burrell who will be the Clerk of HLAF.

Upcoming agendas will be published 10 working days prior to LAF meetings. DH has encouraged any complex questions to be pre-submitted, allowing officers at least 5 working days to prepare responses.

DG has requested there is a clear audit trail to enable the LAF to track what, who, how and when. Agreed that a tracker will be implemented.

The minutes were approved.

3 Matters arising / action points

JP has committed to continue to attend Marches Forward Partnership (MFP) briefings and will pass on all updates to the group as needed.

3.3 DG has agreed to support with a briefing note for MFP to rally support for the digitisation of all mapping of PRowS (not just highways) – as there is no plan to do this, centrally, at present. JP and DG to action. RH in support if this.

3.8 – Ed Bradford has provided list to of all unsurfaced roads - DG with thanks. DG requested all unsealed, unclassified roads be placed under PRow - DH expressed this may not be possible, explained no changes will take place until public realm project is completed.

4.2 Herefordshire Council to produce landowner responsibility information (similar to Amey's) and supply to landowners and PFO's. Agreed. DH & LW to action.

6.3 purchasing of materials update - LW stated materials ordered and awaiting delivery. DH - discussed grant schemes in place to allow parishes to order direct, this is working well and has had positive feedback from both landowners and PFOs.

4 Intro from cabinet member

DH introduced himself. Gave updates on grants, PFO handbook, and training. Enforcement – DH recognised it is an area of the service that requires support.

Membership of LAF, DH gave update on the recruitment, thanking those who had applied and retained membership, also welcomed new members.

Recruitment within the LAF needs to be varied and provide the group with members from NFU, open spaces, organisational reps. The membership is capped at 22.

DH gave update on the contract with BBLP, he gave assurances that LAF are consulted to ensure contracts are suitable – DH explained new arrangements – back in house, more control over what we can deliver with in house expertise.

JP welcome change

PFOs welcome change

DG – PFO need to see what is happening on network, request access to Confirm Software.

JP – thanks to Joanna for all previous work on this matter

5 Enforcement subgroup

DG – met July 8th, information shared, acknowledged things have changed.

RH acknowledges enforcement is complex, although feels they are making progress, ideally the subgroup will become unnecessary, although not at that point yet - all agreed.
Record thanks JP, DG and CM.

DH explained that permanent TRO process is now no longer in place relating to the previous eight TROs proposed and went on to say we may consider seasonal TROs in the future, following the decision taken to pause the TROs in May 2025.

Temp Repair closures - remain in place.

TROs - to discuss with sub enforcement group.

6 PROW Report

LW – gave verbal update and overview of current team.

RH cited concerns regarding the legal advice, management need support from legal, DH gave assurances these internal conversations are being had.

LW PFO volunteers update - will be after redesign. Inductions now complete and additional training being prepared with RoSPA.

LW updated regarding recruitment within the team.

LW gave update on the positive feedback he and the team have been receiving, with a record number of compliments being received. LW explained how it was important to highlight the positives.

DH has stated that there is an allocation of finance for enforcement.

Communication within council with City, Town and Parish Councils, DH - to pick up how we communicate with parishes, internally and with HALC.

LW gave update on Confirm system, this will be the preferred software used. Assurances were given to ensure the software works well, and no information is lost. PFOs will have access to some kind of reporting software.

DH recorded the exceptional work that Leigh has been doing – all agreed.

RH and DG would like accessibility to be looked at, especially when replacing broken furniture, every parish, ward, circular footpath with accessible furniture, one reasonable walk in every area.

DH states repair and replace of furniture the network to keep open, acknowledge more can be done to make the countryside accessible.

CM – all byways, should be accessible – LAF members agreed not possible but something that should be done wherever possible.

PFOs, can they be shared amongst parishes with no PFO, this needs to be looked at – LW.
DG has suggested that Ramblers Association will work in any parish.

DG asked that HC communicate with wider partners in order to save Inspector's time.

LAF have asked for rolling data allowing for comparison to be completed of enquiries, jobs completed etc. LW to action.

7 Update from LW

Included in previous item.

8 Questions from members of the public present

Pre submitted procedure needs to be reviewed. Can this be published in the agenda.

DH, with new clerking service this will improve this, answer question in writing if they are complex, public questions will continue.

CM – information for all new members (PFOs) to be published dates of training - to be covered by officer. LW explained that officers will continue to provide this training, and that dates are available.

Inspectors' arrangements – LW gave update.

9 AOB

N/A

10 Future meetings

Consider alternative times – evenings to encourage attendance.

DH – we will need to consult with any newly recruited LAF members.

Next LAF meeting – 6 weeks if room booking permits as Plough Lane is undergoing electrical works – 10:30 start for next meeting on Friday.

DH will look at streaming of the meeting so more people can view.