

Note: Subject to approval at next meeting

FAVERSHAM FOOTPATHS GROUP

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING ON 17 FEBRUARY 2016

Present: Trevor Payne (Chairman)
Brian Caffarey (Secretary)
Roy Campbell
John Coulter
Andrew Osborne
Anne Salmon
Brian Turner

MINUTES OF EC MEETING ON 1 DECEMBER 2015

1. The minutes were approved.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA

(i) Walk on 10 January 2016 and next walk on 21 February 2016 (para 3)

2. In spite of very poor weather earlier that morning 22 people had taken part in the walk on 10 January 2016. The next walk will be on Sunday 21 February, meeting at 10.00am outside the Guildhall. Steps had been taken to publicise the walk.

(ii) Proposal for an exhibition at the Fleur (para 4)

3. It was understood that Clive Foreman of the Faversham Society planned to revive plans for an exhibition on 'open spaces' once the current work on events connected with the Great Explosion had been completed.

(iii) Website 'hits' (para 5)

4. In a recent 30-day period 130 users had used the website for 156 sessions, looking at over 230 pages in total. This represented a significant increase in users over a similar 30-day period prior to the last meeting but a slight reduction in the number of sessions and a more substantial reduction in the number of pages viewed. This possibly reflected a recent focus on the proposed Creekside path at Faversham Reach and Waterside Close.

(iv) Social media etc (para 6)

5. The website, Facebook page and faversham.org had been updated as necessary. A Twitter account had not yet been opened. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

(v) Proposal for a path from Jubilee Way to the Rec (para 9)

6. John Coulter said that the proposal for securing limited vehicular access from Jubilee Way to the Rec was still being considered by Swale Borough Council. The recently-published 'master plan' for improvements to the Rec included two possible routes but these were merely indicative and there

were issues, such as changes in ground levels, that would need to be resolved. It was agreed in discussion that it would be very desirable to end vehicular access from the Whitstable Road and to enable pedestrians to take a route from Jubilee Way linking up with existing footpaths near the rugby club but it would be important to avoid encouraging unofficial paths over grassed areas.

(vi) Ramblers' Big Pathwatch (para 11)

7. The Ramblers had drawn this initiative to a close in mid-January, although the 'app' could still be used to report problems with footpaths.

(vii) Google searches (para 12)

8. It was agreed in discussion that the limited steps which could be taken to try to ensure that the Group's website came up in searches had already been undertaken and that the key determinants were frequency of use of the website, postings and linkages to it.

(viii) KCC budget (para 13)

9. The Chair had received an encouraging reply to his letter to KCC praising the PROW service and urging that its budget should not be cut further. It was understood that it had been decided to maintain PROW's current funding.

TREASURER'S REPORT

10. All subscriptions had been banked. The Group now had 54 members and £270 in its account. There would be a small annual payment required for hosting the website and a room would need to be hired for the AGM. Although the HSBC branch in Faversham had now closed, paying-in of subscriptions could be done at the Post Office.

11. The Treasurer confirmed that there would be no obstacle to the plan to encourage renewed subscriptions to be made via standing order. Further consideration would be given before the AGM to the operative period for subscriptions, with a suggestion being made that it might be more convenient for membership to be on a calendar year basis.

12. HMRC had acknowledged the Group's application to be registered for gift aid.

FOOTPATH ZF5 AT FAVERSHAM REACH AND WATERSIDE CLOSE

13. The meeting warmly welcomed the recommendation by KCC officials, which would be considered by KCC's Regulation Committee Member Panel on 22 February 2016, to approve a continuous Creekside path along the waterfront of Faversham Reach and Waterside Close. It was thought that the paper made a very strong case for the recommendation and that it was difficult to see on what grounds the Panel could take a contrary decision.

14. The Group had submitted written comments to the Panel, to which the Group's representative would speak. Other steps taken included keeping members fully informed and encouraging their attendance at the meeting; placing all papers on the website; issuing a press release; submitting letters to the local papers; liaising with Faversham Town Council and Swale Borough Council; discussing with Natural England the question of financial contribution to the works required; and consulting John Trevelyan, who had represented the Town Council and other bodies at the public inquiry.

15. The Chairman's work commitments prevented him from representing the Group at the meeting. Andrew Osborne proposed that Brian Caffarey should speak on behalf of the Group. This was seconded by Brian Turner and agreed unanimously.

KCC'S CONSULTATION ON THE DMMO APPLICATION

16. KCC officials had put forward a recommendation in mid-January that a delegated decision should be made to add to the Definitive Map of Footpaths the path round the perimeter of the Faversham Reach estate. There had apparently been no objections to this proposal during consultations. A final decision was awaited.

ENGLAND COAST PATH

17. The Secretary had obtained an update by telephone from Natural England about progress in determining the route of the coast path through Faversham. NE were still chasing up some landowners who had not so far responded and were looking at individual sites, taking advice as necessary from their colleagues who were responsible for national policies concerning the coast path. They expected to issue provisional proposals in April/May, following which they envisaged meetings with the Group and others as part of the consultation process. Their plan then was to put final proposals to the Secretary of State in "late autumn/early winter".

18. In discussion it was agreed that the Group should seek a meeting with NE before their provisional proposals were issued. It was reasonable for the Group to seek some feedback from NE on the proposals which the Group had presented to them last August. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

DESIGNATION OF FOOTPATHS BY 1 JANUARY 2026

19. Andrew Osborne, John Coulter and Brian Caffarey had held a preliminary meeting to consider how to take forward the examination of paths etc in the town centre which might require designation action in order to ensure that rights of way were not lost. Detailed maps had been obtained and a further meeting would be held on 23 March. Other EC members were invited to draw attention to any paths etc of uncertain status and it was agreed that all members should be invited to contribute suggestions. **ACTION: ALL/BRIAN CAFFAREY**

USE OF PRIVATE ROAD AT HOLLOWSHORE

20. The Group had been asked by the owners of the private road at Hollowshore to sign a legal agreement, and to pay a nominal sum, authorising FFG walking groups to use it. It was suggested by the owners that this was required by their public liability insurance and also in order to ensure that people could not seek to establish a public right of way over the road. An identical request had been made to Linda Harrison in respect of the Health Walks. In discussion it was agreed that it would be inappropriate for the Group to enter into an agreement of this kind. The Secretary was asked to reply accordingly. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

21. It was also agreed that the Secretary should investigate whether the Group should take out public liability insurance in respect of the walks which it organised. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

LOG OF ISSUES RAISED WITH THE GROUP

22. The meeting noted the revised update of issues that had been raised with, or pursued by, the Group.

DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGM

23. The next EC meeting will take place on Wednesday 20 April 2016 at 7pm at 130 Athelstan Road.

24. Subject to establishing the availability of a suitable room, the AGM will take place on the evening of Tuesday 8 November 2016. **ACTION: BRIAN CAFFAREY**

19 February 2016