

# ANGUS LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Note of the Meeting of the Angus Local Access Forum held at Angus House, Forfar, on 15 April 2024

**Present:** Andrew Matthews (Chair), Irene McGugan, John Hamilton, Jonathan Dymock, Kelly-Anne Dempsey.

**In attendance:** Paul Clark, Countryside Access Officer, Angus Council

**Apologies:** Euan Walker-Munro, Norma Lyell, Mike Strachan

## **1. Minute of previous meeting**

The minutes of 15 January 2024 were approved.

## **2. Matters arising**

PC confirmed that he had sent LAF comments on the proposed Glen Clova woodland creation to the agent.

AM had prepared a LAF response to the Angus forestry and Woodland Strategy consultation, which PC had submitted on behalf of the LAF.

IM had written to the Nick Cole, the local access forums representative on the National Access Forum, regarding the suggestion of asking representative organisations to publicise the need for LAF representation in their respective members newsletters. The suggestion had subsequently been put to, and agreed by, the NAF.

## **3. Cairngorms Fire Management consultation**

The consultation was seeking views on options for fire management within Cairngorms National Park. Options included a complete ban on fires (including on prescribed burning by land managers), temporary bans at times of high fire risk, or no restrictions.

There was consensus on the need to restrict fires, and communication fire risk to the public, at times when fire risk was high. AM had first hand experience of inappropriate lighting of fires by members of the public. There were however concerns about inconsistent messaging across neighbouring areas if bans were only introduced in the National Park. The issue was of significant national importance to warrant a nationwide framework for fire bans. JD thought that responsible use of campfires at appropriate times was a legitimate recreational activity, and that a year-round ban was unnecessary. He also didn't believe that there was a need to restrict prescribed burning, as land managers were generally well trained and equipped to manage fires.

It was agreed that the Forum should respond to the consultation, expressing support for the principle of temporary seasonal fire bans, but a preference for them to be rolled out as part of a national framework rather than only in the National Park. PC agreed to draft a response for AM's approval.

## **4. Membership, recruitment and publicity**

There was discussion of the possibility of the Forum taking a stall at Angus Show, on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, to help raise awareness of the work of the Forum. There was agreement that it would be a good idea, but unfortunately neither AM or PC were available

on the date of the show. KAD agreed to forward details of stall booking once she had them.

#### **5. Access issues update**

Ferry Road, Monifieth – The owners had advised PC that works would commence in April, and that the intention was to re-open the track soon thereafter.

Newbigging, Tealing – PC had not yet fully assessed the questionnaires received. However, from an initial review there appeared to be limited evidence to support the existence of a public right of way.

Barry, Carnoustie – PC briefly outlined the issue, which involved a locked gate between farmland and a golf course. It was claimed that much of the access onto the course was for the purpose of recreation on the course, which is not within access rights. But there were also through routes that enable people to cross the course, which is within access rights. It wasn't clear how well used the through routes were. There were allegations of previous unlawful activity and, recently, significant criminal damage to the farmland had been reported to the Police. PC intended to follow the matter up further when time allowed.

#### **6. A.O.C.B.**

There was no other business.

**7. Date of next meeting:** 15 July 2024