

MID AND WEST BERKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of Meeting of the Forum
2 pm Wednesday 24th May 2023
Shaw House, Newbury

Presentation prior to the Meeting from Clive Tombs, Senior Engineer, Network Management (WBDC) regarding the proposed extension of the Eling Way.

Present: Simon Pike (Chair), Margaret Pawson, Jan Heard, Graham Smith, Helena Barker, Janice Bridger, Julian Le Patourel, Sharon Bovingdon. Nicola Greenwood, Donald Peck, Judy Haynes (Swindon&Wilts CAF). Alan Coxon, new PROW officer WBDC.

In Attendance: Sandra Griffin (Secretary), Elaine Cox (WBDC), Natalie Lucas (RBC)

Apologies for absence: John Walmsley, Tim Lewis, Angus Ross, Tony Vickers, Greg Wilkinson, Mark Bullen.

Local authority notation: WBC - Wokingham Borough Council.
WBDC - West Berkshire District Council.
RBC - Reading Borough Council.

2: REAPPOINTMENT OF FORUM MEMBERS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All Forum members whose terms had expired and wished to remain on the Forum were accepted unanimously. Both the current Chair and Vice Chair left the room whilst any other applicants were asked to make themselves known. No-one was forth coming. Simon Pike was proposed as Chair by Donald Peck and Seconded by Julian Le Patourel. Jan Heard was proposed as vice Chair by Nicola Greenwood and seconded by Margaret Pawson.

ACTION 2: Elaine Cox and Sandra Griffin to consider membership.

3. WELCOME TO FORUM MEMBERS.

Simon Pike welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a quick round-up from Judy Haynes about the current interests in her LAF.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC.

No questions submitted in advance

5. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS WITH RESPECT TO AGENDA ITEMS.

Simon Pike appointed by Thatcham TC area of interest Greenham and Crookham Commons.

6: CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM JAN 2023 MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING.

It was agreed that most actions had now been closed or were appearing on today's Agenda.

Outstanding items regarding **GREENWAYS UPDATE from September 2022 and January 2023.** Connor Clark to update Forum please.

GREENWAYS UPDATE outstanding questions from meeting 22 September 2023

Connor Clark is happy to take back any questions:

- there is no indication on the report as to which routes are for which type of user,
- Section B not running near the river, can this be moved or is it down to permissions and/or development?
- Section I, regarding the objections to the bridleway creation order, how will this be resolved?
- Loddon Drive, is this a private road as the route has changed to busier roads?

GREENWAYS UPDATE outstanding question from meeting 25th January 2023.

Nicola Greenwood did comment on Greenway D being pointless if not extending to Ennis Hill. Is the land owned by the Council or the Solar Farm

7: REMOTE DRIVING CONSULTATION.

The Forum considered the option of maintaining a watching brief on the development of both automated vehicles and autonomous vehicles. The Law Commission have included the Forum's comments in their report when seeking further information. Technology is well advanced with walkers using FP's crossing fields safely, whilst remote driving vehicles are in use. Jan Heard to advise if the LAF is contacted again.

8. MOLE ROAD REVISITED.

Disappointed to have no representation from WBC at this meeting. Mole Road has been resurfaced with a much poorer replacement without adding the non-slip coating and therefore adding to the danger of the crossing on the bend at the bottom of the hill.

ACTION: Connor Clark to investigate and report back.

9. STREATLEY FP21.

The general plan is still on track to open the FP fully in Autumn 2023. However there are still works to complete that may impact the timescales. Fencing on both sides of the path, clearance of the log pile, safety tree work, and bridge structure. Consent is awaited from the Environment Agency, as it is a flood plain. Following discussion about gates it was considered to be the least restrictive being the better way forward. Currently no motorbike or cyclist issues.

ACTION: Elaine Cox to continue to liaise and report back.

10. DUCKS NEST.

Comments have been sought from Forum members and submitted by the Chair and separately by the Vice Chair as the deadline fell between meetings of the Forum. The next meeting of the WBC planning Committee is mid-June, Ducks Nest will be considered at that time.

11 GREENWAYS UPDATE.

No one in attendance from WBC however Connor Clark stated by email that the appendices had not been updated and were therefore unchanged.

The Forum has 2 questions for comment

- 1 What proportion of the project is going to be delivered?
- 2 What have been the main constraints?

Nicola Greenwood commented that the proportion of the project completed is very small currently with no guarantees of full completion.

Regarding the constraints question, it is mainly about funding but also landowner sympathy and achieving surfaces to suit all users.

ACTION: Connor Clark to provide answers to questions.

12. READING ROWIP.

The document has now been formerly adopted by RBC. It has generated a lot of comments within the borough, public are now more aware of the network creating work for officers regarding maintenance etc.

13. DISABLED ACCESS WORKING GROUP.

Nothing to add to the report circulated.

14. CROSS BOUNDARY LIAISON.

Hampshire: lack of momentum within the group, Local Authorities not engaging.

Swindon/S. Wilts CAF: April meeting discussed ELMs, enforcement and use of volunteers.

Online reporting system currently not working.

Wiltshire: Report circulated.

Bracknell Forest: Notes from the recent meeting shared by Nicola Greenwood,

1. BFC are progressing routes on their ROWIP, 2 new bridleways and one new footpath with permissive horse rider use were discussed.

2. They are reviewing their definitive map and statement.

3. Site to Bucklers Park SANG - agreed it was well designed.

4. Jealott's Hill development rejected by Planning Inspector, reason - not sufficient exceptional circumstances to justify so many houses in green belt. This decision means that the new bridleways planned as part of the development will also not be put in.

5. They plan to link 2 SANG areas, Frost Folly 1 and 2 to form a circuit.

6. Crown Land update - A note was made that electric bikes are a nuisance but no comments/recommendations were made.

RBWM: No report

Streatley Youth Hostel: Local campaign has secured funding to complete a study that will be limited in scope. Simon Pike is on the Steering group and will keep the Forum updated.

15. WEST BERKSHIRE ROWIP.

Elaine Cox gave an overview of the current state of the document following the Consultant's work, which is inclusive of other strategies and policies relevant to the local authority.

Engagement with stakeholders has been thorough including the Forum.. Specific actions are yet to be formulated but must be achievable within a maximum 3 year period. Elaine has suggested that the annual work programme of the PROW team is now pinned to the broad actions in this strategy document.

Forum members asked to read the document and send comments to Janice Bridger within 2 weeks in order for minor updates to be incorporated prior to public consultation planned for the beginning of July.

ACTION: Forum members to comment via email to Janice Bridger asap.

16. COMMONS REPORTS.

Updates circulated prior to the meeting.

Bucklebury Common: Janice Bridger will stand in for Mark Bullen at the next meeting.

Erection of gates and fencing has caused some concern as to who authorised the work.

WBDC appeared to be unaware of the work and has now stopped it.

Snelsmore Common: A new member requested a copy of the constitution, no one appears to have a copy of said document. Possibly something the Forum might like to discuss further.

Wokefield Common appears to have a constitution and Margaret will attempt to obtain a copy.

17. AOB.

Speen Moors Footpath - in the absence of Tony Vickers nothing to report.

Cold Ash Neighbourhood Development Plan (CANDP) - Regulation 14 Consultation, Simon Pike has sent a response from the Forum.

West Berkshire Regulation 19 Plan - Regulation 14 consultation submitted by Simon Pike.

Lawrences Lane, Thatcham, TRO - Simon Pike will update further as developments occur.

MEETING ENDED AT 1659.

NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER - WOKINGHAM location tba.

POTENTIAL MEETING DATES FOR 2024 TO BE AGREED.

Wednesday 31st January - Reading.

Wednesday 22nd May - West Berkshire.

Wednesday 25th September - Wokingham.