



Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2019, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.28 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr R Pushman, in the Chair

Mr R Jennings, Mr D Briggs, Mr N Harris, Mr C Hurworth, Mr A T A Lambourne, Ms A Heath, Mr A Clark, Mr B Worrell and Mr C Harriss

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr J Clark, Ms J Taylor, Ms A Williams, Ms E Hackling and Mr P Fox

OTHERS PRESENT

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr G Caspersz, Mr P Turner, Mr B Chapple and Mr J Elfes.

The Chairman welcomed Ms P Natrass, British Horse Society, to the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING/ MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising:

Item 5

- Mr A Clark, Chiltern Society, highlighted that the society did not receive path copy orders. The Chairman responded that the matter would be handled in the main agenda item.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2019 were AGREED as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

4 RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2020 - 2030: DRAFT CONSULTATION

Mr J Clark, Strategic Access Officer, Buckinghamshire County Council, presented the consultation and highlighted the following:

- The draft consultation was published on the BCC website on 1 October 2019 and was open to the public.
- Officers and members of the public had the opportunity to comment on the consultation. Edits would be made based on the comments received.
- Comments could be submitted either verbally or in writing. The deadline was 24 December 2019.

The following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members of the forum:

- Praise was given by members of the forum to the officers that had worked on the consultation.
- It was highlighted that theme six did not include details on how the service would collaborate with parish councils to implement the plan. Concerns were expressed that this was an ambition as opposed to a reality.
- Investment would be needed to improve the software and access to the website for members of the public. The website was not user friendly and promoted routes were not kept up to date, but there was no mention of the resources required to improve this.
- It was highlighted that the Greenway was not reflected in the report as it had only emerged in the last year.

RESOLVED: Members of the forum NOTED the consultation.

5 RIGHTS OF WAY GROUP REPORT

Mr P Fox, Rights of Way Structure Inspector and Interim definitive Map Team Leader, Buckinghamshire County Council, presented the report and highlighted the following:

- Mr Fox gave a brief summary of the report and highlighted recent cases and definitive map applications.
- The list had increased and a contractor had been brought in to manage it.
- A member of the forum enquired as to what the progress was on item 4-Tingewick. In response it was highlighted that legal services had been consulted and that comments received from the Riders Association had to be incorporated into the order.
- A draft order for a pathway going through National Trust owned land had not been advertised due to issues highlighted by the association. There was currently a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) in place to stop four wheeled vehicles travelling on the land due to safety risks.
- A member of the forum enquired as to whether the TTRO included or excluded carriages. Ms J Taylor, Rights of Way Team Leader, would find this out following the meeting and feedback.

ACTION: Ms Taylor

- It was highlighted that there was an ongoing situation with the condition of stiles. Fences had disappeared and members of the public were using the gaps to walk through. A member of the forum expressed that she had experienced the opposite issue and that members of the public were erecting their own stiles in the existing gaps.
- A member of the forum highlighted that "footpath number 2" had disappeared from the definitive map list but continued to be an issue. Clarification was given that the diversion order had been discontinued at the time of the

meeting.

- A member of the forum emphasised that the Chiltern Society did not receive copies of diversion orders, despite being told it was a statutory requirement. It was clarified that notifications should be received when diversion orders were made, not when applications were received. It was confirmed that the Chiltern Society would be consulted prior to diversion orders being made.
- If there were a lot of objections during the informal consultation phase then a diversion order did not have to be taken forward.
- Public path orders were up to date.
- A member of the forum asked about the impact of the number of routes no longer available for four wheeled drivers. It was clarified that there was not a high number of four wheel drive routes in Buckinghamshire regardless, and that the main clearers were the Chiltern Society.
- The process maps in statutory guidance would be circulated following the meeting.

ACTION: Ms Taylor

RESOLVED: Members of the forum NOTED the report.

6 LAF MEMBERS' REPORT

Mr Clark, Strategic Access Officer, presented the report and highlighted the following:

- An independent review was underway to decide if HS2 work would continue but construction work continued in the meantime.
- The main contractors were dealing with archaeology and fencing, but were also focused on keeping footpaths and highways open.
- Great Missenden and Quanton had been affected by overhead power works resulting in path closures.
- The Ramblers had attended a parliamentary committee to oppose the closure of Old Shire Lane, Chalfont St Peter. An alternative bridleway was proposed but rejected by parliament.
- A member of the forum highlighted that a footpath in Great Missenden had been closed for a year but no work had taken place which members of the forum considered to be unacceptable. Mr Clark would register the concern with the HS2 Team.

ACTION: Mr Clark

Greenway

- Greenway was a vision to create a new, multi-user cycle routes. The scheme was member led and a letter had gone to Central Government to fund the new route, running from north to south from Uxbridge to Silverstone, and east to west from Banbury to Milton Keynes.
- Currently HS2 work would get in the way of the project. Discussions were taking place with HS2 as to how they could redesign their structures. Representation had also been made for equestrian use.
- The project was a top priority for Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC).
- Improvements around Hertfordshire canal between South Harefield and Denham was part of HS2 mitigation.
- It was highlighted that a bridleway should be a minimum of 4 metres wide and a footpath should be 2 metres wide. Greenways should be 6m wide with grass verges for walkers and horse riders.
- A written response was being commissioned in order to engage with colleagues in Hertfordshire County Council to encourage them to participate in

a similar scheme.

- The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway consultation would be delayed until the new year due to the general election.

ACTION: Mr Clark

Maintenance Update – Joanne Taylor, Team Leader Operations

- It was highlighted that the figures included in the report were reflective of the expectations for the mid-year period.
- The number of Chiltern Society volunteer hours had decreased from previous years, but extra volunteers had been added through the Ramblers Ripple scheme.
- The service was awaiting the results of the latest Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) survey. The results were late and there were plans in place to conduct a 5% BVPI test survey each year as opposed to two separate tests.
- The amount of outstanding issues reported had increased by 40% in 2019.
- The capital projects list included in the report was highlighted.
- A method of installing structure continued to be reviewed for the Fawley Footpath. There was sensitivity around the site with a protest march due to take place. Mr Clark would liaise with the Chairman to co-ordinate a written statement to the council on behalf of the forum.

ACTION: Mr Clark, Ms Taylor

- A suggestion was made that BCC issued information to the general public to explain how to report access and rights of way issues in an attempt to avoid negative press.

Equestrian Reference Guide

- The Equestrian Reference Guide was a strategy adopted by Hampshire County Council and was available on the [Hampshire County Council website](#).
- The document was guidance for planners and developers, detailing issues around equestrian needs.
- The strategy was being looked into by Hertfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire County Council.
- BCC would revisit the item in March 2020. During the March 2020 meeting members of the forum would look into the need for a similar strategy in Buckinghamshire so it could be submitted to local planning departments.
- The document would benefit any member of the public in the county responding to a local planning consultation.

Buckinghamshire Council: Unitary Update

- Following the formation of the unitary council, the Rights of Way team would likely sit under Highways and Technical Services.
- It was unknown what service area the Definitive Map team would come under.
- The Local Access Forum would continue in the unitary council.

RESOLVED: Members of the forum NOTED the update.

7 NEW BRITISH STANDARD FOR GAPS, GATES AND STILES (BS 5709: 2018)

Mr C Beney and Mr T Bindoff, who sat on the Committee for the 2018 British

Standard, delivered a presentation appended to minutes. Following the presentation the following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members of the forum:

- The York Horse Trial did not include gates for carriage drivers in their standard. The example in the standard was no longer appropriate for modern carriages and needed to be revised.
- The British Horse Society (BHS) recommended the Kent carriage gap. The recommendation had been withdrawn and was in the process of being reviewed.
- One of the key points studied in the York Trial was the number of hoof prints next to each gate. The easier the gate was to access, the less damage would be done to the path.
- A member of the forum asked if there was anything in the British Standard to deal with the use of arsenic on gates. In response it was highlighted that the standard was a functional standard, but a small scale trial was about to be undertaken to test methods of treatment.
- It was highlighted that if bridleway structures were unlawful then legal action would be taken.
- Historically, Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) did not keep a full record of all previous Section 147 Agreements.

RESOLVED: Members of the forum NOTED the presentation.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9 DATE OF NEXT AND FUTURE MEETINGS

4 March 2020, 10:00am, Mezzanine Room1
15 July 2020, 10:00am, Mezzanine Room1
4 November 2020, 10:00am, Mezzanine Room 1

Chairman