



# Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum



Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 November 2024 commencing at 10am and concluding at 11.55am

## Members Present

D Barnes, D Briggs, S Broadbent, A Clark, K Haining, N Harris, R Johnson, C Hurworth, A Turner, B Worrall

## Officers Present

J Clark, J Spratley, C Hudson, J Fuller, I Malik and Alistair Strong

## Guests Present

T Jones and D Kelly (Sustrans)

### **1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from R Jennings and G Thomas

### **2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 10 July 2024 be confirmed as a true record.

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received

#### **4 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

A member enquired about the action point with regards to estimating future costs for the reinstatement of closed footpaths up to the HS2 boundaries in the absence of ongoing maintenance. It was confirmed that work around this matter was ongoing, and would be reported upon as soon as possible

The meeting was also informed that Melanie Rose had tendered her resignation and that the process for her replacement would now commence.

#### **5 CHESHAM TO MISBOURNE VALLEY WALKING AND WHEELING ROUTE**

A report was submitted which highlighted the plans for the development of the proposed new Two Rivers walking route attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The views and comments of the members of the forum were sought.

Members were informed that Chiltern Society and Chiltern National Landscape had been working with Sustrans to identify a new and accessible walking route around the River Chess catchment. Sustrans had hosted a stakeholder workshop to this end. Considerable public engagement had taken place and an online survey had been launched which would run until the end of November 2024.

The walk in question was over 5k in distance and would take approximately 75 minutes to complete.

A member asked regarding the alterations that would be made to accommodate disabled access. In answer to this it was confirmed that there were a whole host of interventions and improvements being developed, including surfacing, controlled crossings at busy roads and mileage signs. However currently the appetite for such a development was being gaged.

A further comment related to the impact the development would have upon bridleways, as horse riders had an equal right to the use of bridleways. It was reported that this too would be kept in consideration. In answer to further questions on collaboration and consultation it was confirmed that parishes and Chesham Town Council had also been involved in the engagement process, and that social media posts had also been used to promote and disseminate the relevant information. It was hoped that other partners could get involved to further spread knowledge.

The Forum as a whole felt that it was refreshing to see the level of planning and hard work that has gone into the development of the plans and praised the work being undertaken

**RESOLVED:** that the presenter be thanked for his attendance and report

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

## **6 LAF RESPONSES TO BUCKS LOCAL CYCLING & WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**

A report was considered which stated that the Bucks LCWIP proposed a future network of corridors for walking cycling and wheeling between town and villages across Bucks. The current consultation sought feedback on the proposals. It was anticipated that the Cabinet would approve the plans for adoption in 2025.

A member stated that he considered buckinghamshire`s plans in this area of work as exemplary particularly with regards to horse riders and carriage drivers. He gave mention to the need to consult within urban areas during the process and made a plea that consideration be given to use of the routes by vulnerable people, and horse riders.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted

## **7 KEEPHILL WOODS HIGH WYCOMBE – SURFACING**

The presenting officer reported that work was currently being carried out to bridleways within the Keep Hill Woods with the main phase of works due to be completed in November and concluded by early 2025. Feedback was sought for future active travel projects which would potentially involve use of bridleways.

A member raised concern over the level of expenditure in improving and developing this particular route. He was informed that there was a requirement to upgrade the route due to the new development sites in the area. This would include focussing on the existing rights of way alignment, surfacing materials and wayfinding.

Members were encouraged to explore the route and were informed that the team had been mindful of the ability of people to access the route from their properties situated in the new developments.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

## **8 MAINTENANCE BACKLOG**

RESOLVED: This item be withdrawn for consideration at the next meeting and a written document with the detail also be circulated

## **9 ROSEFIELD SOLAR FARM**

A report was considered which stated that the council had recently been consulted on the Rosefield Solar Farm and that the formal response would shortly be submitted, in relation to right of way matters only. The report highlighted the 3 main changes to the public rights of way network on page 20 of the agenda pack.

Members were informed that a more detailed management plan was being drawn up and that a further presentation would follow in due course.

Some members felt that the proposal was not a good use of resources, and that the routes would be unattractive and rarely used if surrounded by solar panels. It was emphasised however that the council was required to respond in its capacity of a statutory consultee for major infrastructure applications under development consent orders, and that it would be sensible to feedback in a way that would bring about the most beneficial outcomes. The meeting was encouraged to feedback the comments directly into the consultation process.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### **10 RIGHTS OF WAY GROUP UPDATE**

RESOLVED: That the rights of way update be recirculated with the latest most up to date version.

#### **11 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 5 March 2025 at 10am in the Paralympic Room, Gateway Aylesbury.