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Minutes

Meeting held on 02 June 2026 at 18.30 at Borough Hall.

Members present:

Ann Kennedy (AK) – Chair of the meeting
Bob Wallace (BW)
James Russell (JR)
Barry Ingram (BI)
Nigel Jacobs (NJ)
Cllr Martin Towler (MT)
Cllr Nicola Gribble (NG)
Wayne Brads (WB)

In attendance/Observers:

April Quinn – BBC
Peter Simons – BBC

Speakers:

Harriet Falconer – Highways Inspector BBC

Apologies received:

Mark Poxton
David Mitchell
Clare Gregory- NFU
Andrew Prigmore

Clerk:

Georgina McDade

1 & 2. Welcome by Chairman/Apologies for Absence & Governance

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received as above.

Minutes from March were agreed and signed.

There were no matters arising.

It was agreed by members to welcome the appointment of Wayne Brads as a new member. Members agreed that moving forward the forum would “co opt” with the Authority when approving new members and the Authority will formally appoint candidates.

3. Highways Inspector Update

Presentation by Harriet Falconer on RoW works to provide a better connected, improved and more continuous RoW network.

NG asked where funding is coming from for new gates. AQ advised Authority is focusing on working with landowners to provide gaps rather than gates (where applicable) to allow for more accessibility.

AK noted that surface issues on BOATS is predominantly due to illegal use by users during closed periods. Pointed out that fly tipping is also an issue, which costs the Council further costs to rectify.

JR asked how the Authority decides on which routes should receive investment.

HR advised BOATS are an example of focused investment due to their lengths and the number of areas they serve. Longer & more popular routes would be prioritised compared to shorter and sparsely used routes.

ROWIP

Members agreed that ROWIP update would take place annually.

AQ advised that the CAT team use RoWIP to influence decision making with other departments ie planning applications and how the team responds to applications.

4. Local Transport Plan / LCWIP/ Green Spaces

Peter Simons provided a brief update on the online Walking Wheeling and Cycling Infrastructure Plan ('WWCIP') Survey that had been circulated in March. Advised the responses received were minimal. The main focus is on cycle routes using existing highways and routes that are anticipated to be heavily used. LCWIP more focused on active travel rather than recreational use of existing RoW.

JR asked if the focus is just on active travel will this limit the scope of trying to get more people to use these routes and RoW and out of cars?

PS advised has to be read in conjunction with the strategic plan and local transport plan. The main focus is on routes that will definitely be used. Strategically, it's focused on getting people in to work not using cars.

AK asked if it was focused on making the main road network safer to use for cylists

PS confirmed. Advised the infrastructure should be making existing routes safer and more direct, especially for wheeling as an example and the lack of drop kerbs that users have to navigate.

BW advised that whilst there are numbered cycle routes in the town, but no information as to their final destination.

PS advised there are physical cycle maps and electronic versions available that provide those details. Signage will be improved to provide more information regarding the route.

WB asked why the strategy is only focused on existing routes

PS advised this is due to the need for it to be evidence based. Can't make assumption that a new route will be heavily used, but can anticipate potential use where new developments are proposed.

6. **ACTION: PS to present strategic overview of LCWIP & Transport Plan at next meeting including how the Economic Health and Social Value of Outdoor Recreation Report can be used by the LAF to assist Authority by promoting open spaces to improve health.**

7. EPE

AK advised hearing to take place on 09 June specifically focusing on the effects on RoW.

5. EWR

AK provided update on consultation, confirmed closes on 09 June. Advised she believes there is an issue on the affected routes between Clapham & St Neots, BOAT 61 Wilden and relocation of recycling centre in that area that could cause conflict between HGVs and horses. The consultation doesn't offer much improvement to the RoW network or mitigation to make up for the severance of so many RoW. Advised there is a forum that EWR has set up "Active Travel Forum."

Members thanked AK for all the work that she has put in to responding to both EWR and EPE consultations.

8. Universal

AQ confirmed that archaeological digs are currently underway. Project is looking to begin road constructions this summer.

9. Planning Applications Review

CAT responses to planning applications have been circulated to LAF.

AQ confirmed team go to site of new applications to confirm what improvements can be requested within planning responses.

MT raised point that new procedures in place that is an application is made for a new development of 150 + houses that is refused by the Authority, the application has to be referred straight away to PINS.

JR advised any new developments within the Forest of Marston Vale area contact Darren directly.

10. Volunteering

BI provided updates on recent volunteering works.

11. The Economic Health and Social Value of Outdoor Recreation Report

MT advised would consult with public health team for their opinion on the impact use of RoW has.

ACTION: GEM to re circulate report. COMPLETED

ACTION: AQ to provide update at next meeting on the stage the active travel route project that Ann Pape was working on reached with the view of possibly continuing this.

12. NCN51 / Boundary Walk Update

NCN51 – Awaiting information from O & H. JR confirmed Forest of Marston Vale are trying to expedite this with O & H.

Boundary Walk - Project on hold as funding needed for waymarker signage.

13. AOB

- **Regional LAF Meeting on 15 July 2026**

WB to attend.

ACTION: GEM to circulate minutes from last regional meeting. COMPLETED

Recurring agenda items, EWR, Walking Wheeling Cycling Infrastructure Plan, East Park Energy, Little Barford, Countryside and Access Team update, Universal and Planning Matters

Next meeting date confirmed for 29 September 2026.

Meeting concluded at 20.45

Signed:  **Date: 29/09/26**