



## Minutes of meeting held on 7th June 2022 in Borough Hall commencing at 6:30pm

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Members present:	Apologies received:
Bob Wallace – Chair of the meeting David Mitchel Ann Kennedy Barry Ingram	Cllr Royden James Russell Nigel Jacobs
In attendance/Observers:	
Andrew Prigmore - Bedford Borough Council April Quinn – Bedford Borough Council Yo Higton – Bedford Borough Council Mike Clarke - Public	
Clerk: Georgina McDade	

1.	<b><u>Welcome by Chairman</u></b>  The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Minutes from March agreed and signed.
2.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b>  As above.
3.	<b><u>Item 3 – Green Wheel</u></b>  Presentation by Yo Higton Team Leader of the Sustainable Transport Team.  Bob had previously contacted Yo advising that the LAF wish to encourage more public use and whilst the Green Wheel has various spokes going in and out of the Borough, they need to ensure that all connect to allow the public to use the cycle ways efficiently.  Yo advised of the possibility of a Green Wheel Town Deal. The proposal also includes updating and improving the Mowbray Road area and Brickhill area.

*Handwritten signature/initials*

Ann requested equestrian use be taken in to consideration as much as possible, especially to create circular routes for riders.

Yo confirmed that rubber crumb surfacing was being considered for equestrian routes.  
Ann confirmed its use in other authorities.

Yo advised that consultations are taking place for the Local Cycling, Walking & Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for a 1, 5 & 10 year plan. Consultation methods include people counter, phone surveys and STRAVA data.

Ann advised that STRAVA is predominantly used by individual cyclists to record their time and speed for fitness improvement purposes.

The current consultation covers the Bedford and Kempston Urban areas

Yo agreed to share the findings of the consultation with the LAF and seek their views.

Bob advised that the 1, 5 & 10 plan is a Government's direction to local Councils which need to be undertaken.

He had been contacted as part of the Borough consultation. The main focus should be "connecting routes".

Andrew advised that there was an agreement with National Highways to surface an area from Stewartby to the underpass, providing connectivity. It is apparently still in the works to be created by National Highways, together with the A421 to Manor Road. The Council has Section 106 Agreement funds allocated for cycleway surfacing. however the funds are time limited.

Andy advises that the Bedford Milton Keynes Waterway also require surfaced areas to form part the tow path. The Council has chased National Highways and await their confirmation of funding and where necessary S106 monies can be used.

Yo confirmed that the Local Plan is out to consultation. Yo's team are actively engaging with developers to negotiate new routes.

Andy advised that the RoW team have pushed for Bridleways in the new Sharnbrook and Clapham developments. The Council is actively seeking more routes be included in new developments.

Bob advised that the BoBLAF want to be involved and engaged with new developments. The forum can help to advise the Council of what the priorities are for residents.

When the land fill site is available to be reclaimed it could provide a link to Stewartby, a possible multi user path. Barry requested a route away from the busy roads at Cattle Creep be considered

Andy confirmed that there are plans to connect-Footpaths 5 and the land fill site once the area is reclaimed.

Barry suggested a route between Great Denham roundabout to Kempston Mill.

	<p>Yo confirmed that is a route that is currently being considered.</p> <p>Bob suggested a date be set in 6 months to further discuss the routes. The BoBLAF wish to assist and offer further advise where necessary to move these possible schemes forward.</p> <p>It was agreed that Yo would provide the results of the consultations, which are due at the end of the summer. Andy will present the findings to the LAF at the next meeting in September. <b>Ongoing.</b></p>
4.	<p><b><u>Item 2 – Governance</u></b></p> <p>Bob thanked Mike Clarke for the attending the LAF. He advised that LAF groups were set up 20 years ago to encourage the use of open spaces, however it appears currently that there is no funding available from central government to assist Local Access Forums</p> <p>It was confirmed that there should be rules for public attendance. It was confirmed that 10 minutes would be allocated at the start of each meeting for any public comments.</p> <p>It is preferable to give the Secretary advice of any attendance in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The Secretary will request updates on the Council’s website showing the ground rules. New members are encouraged .</p>
5.	<p><b><u>Item 4 – Communication</u></b></p> <p>It was confirmed that a copy of the consolidated definitive map and statement had been circulated to all parishes.</p> <p>Barry advised that parishes are sending requirements to Allison regarding works that are needed, she then involves the volunteers.</p> <p>It was agreed that a draft “news letter” would be produced by the September meeting that could be sent to parishes, which would hopefully show the benefits of the LAF and raise awareness of the forum.</p> <p>Andy suggested that the letter could include information regarding things like the LCWIP.</p> <p>Ann suggested that the LAF section of the Council’s website could include links showing what improvement works have been carried out benefiting the network.</p> <p>Bob agreed it would potentially encourage more members.</p> <p>Andy advised that Dean are setting up a group to specifically look after rights of ways and the LAF could perhaps encourage other parishes to do the same.</p> <p>Bob agreed and suggested that the communication should include reference to the rights of way network for that specific parish, and highlight the works that had been carried out in that parish.</p>


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	<p>It would be helpful if the Parish Council provide contact details of any Parish Councillor responsible for the rights of way in their area. Bob did raise a point regarding those areas that are not parished and that are wards, asked if the BoBLAF newsletter could be sent to the Ward Councillors to send out to residents.</p> <p>It was agreed that Andy would speak to Cllr Royden to ascertain the best way to communicate the use of green spaces to residents in the ward areas. <b>Ongoing.</b></p> <p>Andy would request a member of Parks and Green Spaces attend the next meeting.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>Item 5 Public Rights of Way – a guide for Farmers and Landowners</u></b></p> <p>Andy asked if any comments or amendments were required to the document.</p> <p>Mike Clarke advised that the order of the document in his opinion is peculiar. It's supposed to be about rights of way and that isn't mentioned until page 17.</p> <p>It should be noted that the introduction of the document states that "The aim is to help understand some of the legislation which applies to Public Rights Of Way"</p> <p>Ann advised that as far as she was aware the order is alphabetical.</p> <p>Ann advised that she doesn't believe there is much to change/amend, other than the section on enforcement.</p> <p>Andy confirmed that it will be reviewed a new draft will be completed by end of August so that it will be available to view at the next meeting. It will also be sent to the NFU for their comments.</p> <p>Ann suggested sending a generic email to the NFU asking if any representative would be interested in attending.</p>
7.	<p><b><u>Item 6 – Ploughing and Cropping</u></b></p> <p>Mike Clarke advised he was hoping that a representative of the maintenance team would be in attendance.</p> <p>Andy confirmed that the ploughing and cropping letter had been sent to all known landowners. This letter is a reminder to landowners of their responsibilities and is used as the first contact in enforcement. The area team are currently taking enforcement action if necessary when complaints are received.</p> <p>Ann commented that it was too onerous on an officer, having to constantly check the complaints received. The Protocol should be changed advising a user or user group to send images of concern. This enables council officer to make better use of their time when investigating an issue.</p> <p>Barry advised that photographic evidence in terms of a specific location and identifying the issue is required. Vague or misleading information does not help clarify the possible problem and is very unhelpful.</p>

	<p>Mike Clarke asked if the Rural Payment Agency is still operational.</p> <p>Andy confirmed it is.</p> <p>Bob directed secretary to attach a copy of the letter that was sent to landowners to the minutes. <b>Completed.</b></p> <p>Enforcement issues on rights of way are often personal subjective opinion. The team investigate issues raised and take action if necessary.</p> <p>Mike Clarke suggested having a spring and autumn “campaign” focusing on enforcement, drawing in extra officers to complete the task. Andy advised that the Council does not have “spare” staff to meet this request.</p> <p>Mike Clarke advised that serial offenders should be focused on. Andy advised that the Council has previously, successfully taken action against serial offenders.</p> <p>Bob confirmed issue would be revisited at the next meeting. Asked secretary to send draft minutes to all attendees including public attendees. <b>Completed.</b></p> <p>Ann advised that she had received an issue from a user who has raised a CRN but they have not received any update or feedback on their complaint.</p> <p>Mike Clarke advised that he raised a CRN with Buckinghamshire Council and received a full update confirming the issue had been resolved. Andy advised he would consult with other departments to see if the system could be updated to provide status updates. <b>Ongoing.</b></p>
8.	<p><b><u>Item 7 – Ideas for improvement schemes/routes</u></b></p> <p>Andy advised that there is a current scheme being proposed for a route from Bromham Road to Queen’s Park, which has the possibility of being a Bridleway and is in a future year’s programme to move forward.</p> <p>The A428 Black Cat Scheme would provide a riverside walk in Wyboston and the Council is in discussion with National Highways. The route is under consideration for funding. The issue is trying to avoid routes that require bridges as will likely to be unaffordable. The initial feasibility of the scheme has completed and is now on the design phase.</p> <p>April confirmed that the new route around the Covanta lake in Stewartby is currently being constructed. There will be a harder surface. Ecologists has advised it has to be constructed in sections due to wildlife protection issues.</p>
9.	<p><b><u>Item 8 – Let’s Go website</u></b></p>

	Meeting taking place on Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> June. Funding ends in July 2022. The URL is being retained so that it can potentially be transferred to Marston Vale Trust.
10.	<p><b><u>Item 9 – DMMOs and update from the Definitive Map Team regarding current cases</u></b></p> <p>List of current cases circulated to members.</p> <p>April confirmed that an accompanied site visit has been requested by the objector for 2 submissions – Ravensden and Trent Road.</p> <p>Andy advised that the team's bids for funding for new bridges has been successful including a new bridge at Mortal Man Farm. Currently awaiting exact costs for this bridge before issuing the pre order consultation. Bridges at Stagsden, Odell Mill and Swineshead will be replaced/repared this year.</p>
11.	<p><b><u>Item 10 – Maintenance</u></b></p> <p>Covered in item 7 and item 11.</p>
12.	<p><b><u>Item 11- Volunteering</u></b></p> <p>Barry circulated an up date amongst members showing works that have been carried out. <b>Attached as a document.</b></p> <p>They have painted and replaced 200 waymarker posts. Have marked 2 ft 3 on all posts to ensure posts are inserted to the correct depth.</p> <p>Future works to be noted in news letter.</p> <p>The LAF would like to thank Barry and the volunteers for all of their contributions and hard work.</p>
13.	<p><b><u>Item 12 – Any other business</u></b></p> <p>Ann raised an issue with Byways and some of the surfacing especially along Forty Foot Lane with the Section towards Santa Pod car park from Souldrop.</p> <p>Andy advised that the "Dungee" end of the BOAT will be putting in a bid for funds, which is ongoing.</p> <p>April has been able to secure some road planings to add to the surface for when funding is available.</p>
14.	<p><b><u>Future Agenda Items</u></b></p> <p>Communication Ploughing and Cropping LCWIP &amp; Greenwheel</p>

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15.	<p><b><u>Close of Meeting</u></b></p> <p>The meeting closed at 20.45</p> <p>Next Meeting dates:</p> <p>27<sup>th</sup> September 2022</p> <p>Signed:  Date: 27/9/2022</p>

