

**Local Access Forum – Meeting held on Thursday, 15th December, 2011 at the Mercury Suite 1, St Martin's Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire**

**Present:-**

**LAF Members**

David Munkley (Chair)  
Ian Houghton, Local Access Forum (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Satpal S Parmar  
Councillor Nimrit Chohan  
Toby Evans  
Ken Wright  
Steve Roberts (Observer)

**Observers**

**Officers, Slough Borough Council**

Alex Deans  
Principal Engineer, Highways  
Nahid Moghul

**58. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Parmar resides in Mildenhall Road and therefore declared an interest in the Mildenhall to Lerwick Drive gating proposal should it be discussed under Item 4.

**59. Minutes of the last meeting held on 27th September 2011**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were approved as a correct record.

**60. Matters Arising (other than those on the agenda)**

Election of Chair

With full membership in attendance at this meeting members decided that the election of the Chair of the LAF be endorsed again at this meeting. KW once again nominated DM as Chair; TE seconded and the motion was carried.

Start Time of Meetings

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Members agreed that future meetings would start at 6pm.

Stoke Poges Lane – Elliman Avenue Junction – JW reported that the MOVA intelligent management system at this junction was planned initially but never installed due to financial constraints. Members expressed their disappointment at this news.

Ditton Park Cycle Path update – JW advised that Anthony Hurst Principal Rights of Way Officer RBWM and Peter Challis Area Manager (Thames Valley) Sustrans have both been trying unsuccessfully to contact Julia Stacey of Computer Associates to arrange a meeting to discuss the ad hoc closure of the gates and the poor condition of the path surface on the Ditton Park Estate.

Anthony Hurst has also confirmed that planning contraventions on footpaths are generally left to him to deal with; though he would get input from the RBWM planners on this issue when a meeting is arranged. Members agreed that more pressure needs to be put on CA Real Estate by Sustrans as they part funded the route. DM noted that this issue has been ongoing for some time now.

**Resolved** – JW would speak to Anthony Hurst RBWM and Peter Challis for an update and report back to members.

### Update on path dedication in memory of Margery Hitchman

The dedication of the Margery Hitchman circular path in the Nature reserve area of Herschel Park took place on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2011. It was well attended with TE representing the LAF. JW informed the group that the Slough Civic Society Newsletter contains an article about Margery.

**Resolved** – Members requested that JW arrange for the dedication to be publicised, by asking Communications to issue a press release and that the family be asked first.

Borderside to Shaggy Calf Lane – KW advised that a no cycling roundel is still in place at the Borderside end of this path. JW would arrange for it to be removed.

## 61. Membership Update

No further updates.

## 62. Mallard Drive Development - footpath closures - link path and existing FP4c

JW drew members' attention to the report on this agenda item; explaining the situation and the need to gather input from members about the residents' petition request for closure of the existing public footpath 4C. Members were

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told that the existing path was historically used as a short cut to the old school site, which is now the new development of Eagle Road/Swift Close. TE stressed the need to see rights of way as the arteries of the town allowing people to move about and the need to demonstrate that the actual path is causing the anti-social behaviour.

Members considered the alternative routes available and discussions ensued about options for improving the existing paths; with closure seen as the last resort, this included the possibility of lighting them. SR asked if there was a particular time of day the incidents were happening and wondered if the detached youth team could engage with the youths in this area. He thought pedestrians often feel that gating cuts the options for short cuts. NH informed the meeting that she has been receiving constant complaints from residents since the development has become occupied and that the British Legion adjacent to the path has complained in the past; she emphasised that there is a convenient alternative route using rights of way nearby.

Members felt a usage survey was necessary to establish actual legitimate use of the path and actual statistical evidence indicating that the path was causing the problems. NH confirmed police and anti-social behaviour statistics and reports will be available soon. DM requested that the Council's response to the petition be sent to members. TA suggested that a camera using an SD card and incorporating a light could be mounted in the path to measure usage dependent on a suitable power source. The equipment was relatively cheap compared to CCTV and he would forward details to JW. This item would remain on the agenda and an update be brought to the next meeting.

**Resolved** – that actions are taken as detailed above including; a usage survey of the surrounding area and investigation into the feasibility of using the SD card camera.

### 63. Chalvey One Way Experimental Scheme Consultation

Members considered the current status of the scheme, LAF comments made and feedback received from the SBC Transport team in papers tabled. Over the last three months LAF members have been sent design drawings for the various sections of the scheme and all subsequent LAF comments have been forwarded to relevant Transport Officers.

At this point members were able to reflect on the feedback received from the Transport team. IH made it clear it was not a split level segregated path he'd asked for. He also thought that a shared use environment was not necessary in a situation with a secondary school in opposition to the Transport team's view. However, members generally agreed they were happy with the physical layout of the scheme in terms of walking and cycling; though there was a concern that people might go wrong in the one-way system. AD pointed out that this problem would probably be eased when the scheme is complete with all signage in place. JW informed members that the scheme is due to be complete by mid January 2012.

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*[NB: Information received after the meeting: the scheme is now due to complete by end of Feb 2012]*

KW highlighted the reliance of the older population on buses and the resulting isolation felt if the Bus Company decides to alter bus routes without considering of the needs of older people. He also raised concerns felt by older people about the new Slough Bus Station being uncomfortable and cold for users; bringing the design into question. He told members there is due to be a special meeting of the Older People's forum in late January to talk specifically about problems with travel and the new Bus Station.

DM added that it is a LAF concern if buses are not serving all sections of the community, going where they're needed. The tendency seems to be for services structured around employment patterns. Problems with the bus schedules/routes and the bus station both have the potential to reduce overall accessibility, discouraging use of public transport.

AD stated that the council is aware of the problems being experienced with the new Bus Station.

### **Resolved –**

a) KW will bring details of the Older Peoples' forum meeting to the next meeting. This issue will continue to be followed.

## **64. Feedback from Cycle About Slough with SBC Transport Officers**

Issues discussed are as follows:

Stoke Poges Lane (Belgrave Rd/Bradley Rd) Safety Scheme – As per the request from the previous minutes JW confirmed she would be circulating a copy of the safety audit to members.

Shackleton Road dead end junction with Queens Road – JW updated the group that a revised bollard layout has been implemented on site with agreement of local residents to re-use existing bollards and reduce the total number of bollards in the whole area in total, aiming to stop footway parking and increase pedestrian and cycling access in this area. Periodic feedback on how the layout is working to be provided.

Shackleton Road/Gilliat Road/Montague Road – AD stated that there was a wider issue within this area about footway parking where it completely blocks access to the footway for pedestrians. Photos taken by TA had been circulated showing the problem and TA also stated that the local PCSO, Maggie Morton had placed 30/40 warning stickers on cars completely blocking the footway, with the intention of ticketing if the offence continues. AD said the police can only ticket someone for obstructing the footway not for contravening parking restrictions which is enforceable by the Council. TA went on to explain that pedestrians are forced to walk in the carriageway by

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this inconsiderate parking, which is incredibly dangerous. It was agreed that this is an issue all over Slough and questioned as to whether the Police actually give tickets where footways are obstructed. AD gave the view that Police ticketing policy is sporadic.

TA thought that new powers from the DfT could make it easier for local Council's to use signage together with Traffic Regulation Orders to ban footway parking on a designated length of highway. TA also stated that an Order would not need to ban two up two down parking if the road is too narrow for parking entirely within the carriageway and he would like to see serious consideration of the problem either with SBC or the police having a definite policy to undertake enforcement.

Members suggested that white lines could be put on the footway indicating the allowance for two up two down parking however, AD stated that putting white lines on the footway would legitimise the offence of driving on the footway. If an accident happened as a result, the Council would be liable as they'd authorised the action, in addition footways are not designed for vehicle loading.

Members agreed they needed more information about the new powers from the DfT before the next meeting and if appropriate to recommend thereafter that the Council utilises the necessary powers to tackle this parking problem in the borough.

Members felt the council needs to give guidance to all road users not just to the Police.

TE suggested that the LAF approach the police, (the local area officer) as an official body to voice concerns about full on pavement parking and ask what the current police policy is in relation to this issue. It would also be useful to advise them about the Maggie Morton PCSO good practice attempt in Montague/Shackleton Road. All agreed.

Park Street/Herschel Street and Hencroft Street North/South crossovers (rear of High Street Slough) – JW informed the meeting that drop crossings at these locations have been implemented.

Herschel Street – (cyclist only option to cyclists as they cannot use the High Street)

There are currently double yellow lines along this route. JW will clarify what the parking restrictions are and bring to next meeting.

A4 Langley Road junction and Datchet Road crossing near the Myrke – Previous minutes stated that the cycling signs are confusing at this location. After visiting site it was found that the footway marking on the Myrke side of the carriageway of Datchet Road could be misleading. A request would be made to remove it.

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Primary Way, Chalvey & Path between Spackmans Way and White Hart Road, Chalvey – The safety audit has been done and the items identified as problems by the LAF ie; the cut through on Primary Way and the staggered barriers on FP33 were picked up in the audit. Officers are currently awaiting the designers' response.

Shaggy Calf Lane/Wexham Road Temporary Roundabout – members highlighted concerns that the layout of this temporary roundabout causes more difficulty for cyclists, as the cycle lane doesn't feed into the roundabout on the east side of Wexham Road when on the carriageway. AD stated that the guidance for mini-roundabouts says that on the approach cyclists should be taken off carriageway. IH also identified that there is no feed into the cycle lane situated on the east side verge of Wexham Road. This concern would be forwarded to the relevant Transport officers and feedback requested.

### **Resolved –**

- a) Actions would be taken as per the above notes and updates provided at the next meeting.
- b) To have another meeting where key council officers involved in transport scheme design could cycle with LAF members to see first hand the types of problems encountered. JW will get back to members with some possible dates.

## **65. Regional and National News**

Martin Gilchrist, Access and Engagement Lead Advisor with Natural England took members through a demonstration of the Huddle website via a live remote link. All members confirmed they would like to be registered to join the Huddle site.

The National Local Access Forum Conference for the south is due to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at Temple Quay House, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EB. DM volunteered to be the Slough LAF representative at this event and JW would forward the invite to members.

**Resolved** - JW will email members' names and email addresses to Martin so they can be set up. JW will let DM know the details of the conference so he can book his place by the deadline of 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

## **66. Annual Report Draft**

JW asked whether members felt a work programme would help Slough LAF and what targets they would like to work towards for the forthcoming year. There was general agreement that a work programme would be useful in providing structure, a sense of direction and challenges.

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Members' comments on the remainder of the annual report were as follows;

- The Slough LAF is not taken seriously – there are small occasional gains which just manage to keep members motivation alive.
- Council officer's who take decisions on access issues don't cycle or live in the borough themselves and members feel there ought to be a representative from the Transport section coming to LAF meetings.
- Members feel that they are not consulted on all relevant schemes.
- JW circulated Slough LAF Terms of Reference to members asking for them to review and bring comments to the next meeting.
- Members discussed LAF promotion and the possibility of refreshing the leaflets. Members requested that an article is placed in the Slough Citizen and JW requested input from members.

TE noted that Slough LAF though not rural still has an important place in advising on access issues relevant to the urban environment. The point was made that walking for leisure still takes place in towns. Members agreed to let JW have any further comments on the draft annual report.

### **Resolved -**

- a) DM & JW to progress the LAF work programme
- b) JW to progress LAF promotional literature/articles
- c) JW to forward completed draft annual report to members for approval.

## **67. Any Other Business**

### Sara Church – British Horse Society Request for additional equestrian access

JW provided information about the request by the local BHS to have routes along the Jubilee River which do not currently have horse riding rights. This matter was discussed at the recent Windsor and Maidenhead LAF meeting where it was decided that a working group could be set up to trial the use of routes by horse riders. Members were in favour of improving equestrian access.

**Resolved –** JW to forward details of this item via email and to place on agenda at the next meeting.

Farnham Road and Buckingham Ave – KW questioned the reason why this junction improvement was not attached to the contributions for the development of old people's residences in Northampton Avenue. With the bus stop located outside Wickes this crossing point is particularly significant for older residents to access public transport links. AD informed the meeting that SBC transport planners are aware that this improvement is needed and that it would be secured for any suitably large developments that arise. It has to be shown that a development would increase the amount of people needing to cross the road by a certain percentage in order for a contribution

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from developers to be gained. He added that Transport keep a priority list of potential schemes. LAF members agreed that the LAF would formally recommend that a pedestrian phase is installed at this crossing location regardless of planning contributions and that the Transport priority list is checked to see if this improvement can be added or moved up the list. As the relevant commissioner, Cllr Swindlehurst would be copied into the LAF recommendation.

### Resolved -

- a) A formal LAF recommendation is made to the Council as per the above minute.
- b) The Transport priority list of schemes is checked for this improvement.

Heart of Slough – Members requested a review of the design of the Heart of Slough with TE noting a couple of issues relevant to cyclists;

- There used to be a clearly marked shared use path on turning right out of Slough Rail Station up Brunel Way. This is now not marked at all and has new paving.
- When cycling north on Windsor Road towards the Heart of Slough buses can go straight on. Bus lanes can be legitimately used by cyclists and taxis, but there is no detection facility for cyclists at the traffic signals at this junction. This means a cyclist would have to wait for a vehicle to arrive in order to proceed. Cyclists cannot therefore ride on carriageway straight across the junction, but are obliged to use the pedestrian crossing points.

### Streamside route to rear of Montem School, Chalvey

SP mentioned that he will report back to the LAF after his meeting with Montem School, who are thinking about opening the gates leading to the streamside cycling and walking route.

## 68. Date of the next Meeting

Date of the next meeting is Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at 6.00pm.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.40 pm and closed at 8.20 pm)