

Local Access Forum – Meeting held on Monday, 21st January, 2013 at the Training Room 5, Chalvey Community Centre

Present:-

LAF Members

Ian Houghton, Local Access Forum (Vice-Chair)
Trevor Allen
David Munkley, Local Access Forum (Chair)
Toby Evans
Ken Wright
Councillor Wayne Strutton

Observers

Officers, Slough Borough Council

Esther Deacon
Community Safety Project Officer
Jacqui Wheeler
Rights of Way Officer

103. Apologies and Welcome

Steve Roberts
Councillor Satpal Parmar
Tony Haines, The Friends of Slough Canal
Alex Deans, Head of Highways

104. Declarations of Interest

No declarations

105. Minutes of the last meeting held on 4th October 2012

The minutes of the last meeting held on 4th October 2012 were approved as a correct record.

106. Matters Arising (if not on agenda)

Ditton Park Cycle Path update – JW explained there has been no response to the joint LAF letter to CA Technologies and asked members how they want to

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proceed. She suggested a site visit would be useful to check if the promised surface repairs have been done. WS thought a site visit followed by a visit to CA Technologies offices to actually speak to someone would be effective.

JW offered to speak to planning enforcement at SBC and also to the LAF contact at Natural England to get advice on enforcement action for non-compliance with S106 agreements. However, it was noted that the route and therefore the agreement are with RBWM so JW agreed to contact Anthony Hurst RBWM and Peter Challis Sustrans for a joint approach.

There was general agreement that the matter should not be dropped and new ways to resolve the matter should be tried. WS suggested a meeting with RBWM LAF chair to keep them updated on this issue.

Resolved – JW to contact Angela Hennell at NE to get advice on how the LAF can deal with a cross boundary issue like this and arrange a meeting of DM with the RBWM LAF chair.

Update on BHS request for additional equestrian access along Jubilee River -

RBWM Rights of Way team have re-contacted Eton College as the previous contact had moved on. Changes in the route have also meant re-contacting the EA and tenant farmers to gain their approval again. Signs are still to be organised.

DM felt that the Jubilee River and all the issues pertaining to it ought to be looked at more closely by the LAF including; access problems, lighting, barriers, car park issues, recreational potential, promotion, management and water sports facilities. He proposed that it be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Some discussion about the suitability of the barriers along the Jubilee River took place with some members feeling that K barriers ought to replace the existing barriers. JW stated that the main cycle way along the Jubilee River in Slough has been re-surfaced since the summer.

Resolved – to keep this issue on the agenda for updates. That Jubilee River as a whole is placed on the next agenda.

107. LSTF (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)

JW tabled the drawings for two separate schemes provided by Viv Vallance;

Stoke Poges Lane Zebra crossing – members agreed with the proposals as shown on the drawings for this scheme.

Lansdowne Avenue experimental closure – various comments were made including;

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- Members expressed concern that the closure would cause even more pressure and congestion on the Stoke Poges lane/Bath Road junction.
- There were feelings that the closure was not necessary and that the use of Lansdowne Ave takes pressure off the Junction at Bath Rd/Stoke Poges Lane. It was felt that turning out of Lansdowne Avenue into the Bath Road is not dangerous as the phases at the junction allow sufficient time and space.
- Members asked to know the reasons behind the closure. What benefit is it felt closing the road will give.
- It was noted that the drawings don't appear to show sufficient space for vehicles to turn around at the closed end of Lansdowne Ave.
- WS suggested that a half closure of Lansdowne Ave as you turn left into Lansdowne off the Bath Road could be a better solution.
- Why can't barriers be put up as a less expensive way of testing the closure than actually constructing a temporary footway and associated works? This would allow the closure to be tested in a cheaper way. In conjunction with appropriate signage which makes the reason clear.
- It would benefit cyclists if there could be a dropped kerb all the way along the closed section at the Lansdowne Ave/Bath Road junction.

JW suggested that she would forward the minutes to the appropriate officers dealing with these schemes.

Chalvey Road Schemes -

JW tabled the feedback from the Traffic Engineer, Lynsey Brookfield about the changes to the Ragstone Road scheme. LAF comments about green surfacing on cycle lanes were understood, however, the Council has decided to trial a new green coloured tarmac that will be longer lasting and won't break up. The general consensus was that cycle lanes are marked out on the carriageway and do not require an additional colour. Members felt that marking cycle ways in green tarmac will further reduce the flexibility to adapt to changes and that it would create problems for utility companies when reinstating.

JW will find out why green is used in Slough, is it Council policy? Also why is it used in some places and not others, as members are aware that it is not used in adjoining towns? There was concern that it is not money well spent and perhaps the funding could be diverted to be of more benefit for cycling infrastructure or access elsewhere.

IH offered to measure the cycle lane at the island in Ragstone Road where the white line has been obscured, to make sure it's 1.5m as the feedback states.

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Better Bus Farnham Road and Junction Improvement at Buckingham Ave/Farnham Road and Albert Street/Windsor Road junction -

JW tabled detailed design drawings for these schemes. There will be a new Bus Lane on the south end of Farnham Road and a pedestrian phased crossing at the Farnham Road Buckingham Ave junction. There are also to be pedestrian phased traffic lights at the Whitby Road/Farnham Road junction. The Albert Street/Windsor Road junction is to be improved with pedestrian phasing in preparation for the Windsor Road widening.

Initial comments are;

- At the Albert Rd/Windsor Road Junction - All the advanced cycle stop areas seem to have been removed from the junctions. IH was concerned that all cyclists are being directed to the shared used off carriageway facilities. He thought both facilities ought to remain to give cyclists choice.
- IH stated that Slough Council was criticised by Cycle England for not having sufficient cycle lanes on carriageway.
- Farnham Road - WS suggested it may be useful to have a drop off zone along the Farnham Road outside the Centre. People already use the bus lane to drop off anyway which blocks the bus/cycle lane. However, members considered there may be safety issues with this.
- Farnham Road/Whitby Rd junction - IH questioned why there is to be a grassed verge area at the junction with Whitby Road which has the effect of narrowing the useable cycle lane, creating a sharp corner and the grass still has to be maintained by the Council. If the Council wants to create off road cycle lanes then why not use all the space available.
- There were concerns that reducing the useable lanes width on Farnham Road for a Bus Lane will worsen the congestion.
- The plan showing the Three Tuns southbound on the Farnham Road seems to suggest that in the southbound direction there will only be one lane.

Heart of Slough –

A cycle about the Heart of Slough with LAF members and SBC Officers took place on 2nd November 2012. TE put together a google map record of the issues encountered. JW will send members the link to this and forward to relevant officers.

Resolved – Members agreed they would like clarification on the layout at the Three Tuns Junction and would like to invite an Officer from Transport along to the next meeting to explain and give updates on the schemes

Pavement Parking Trial –

TA updated members about a trial of pavement parking proposals due to take place in the Central ward. This will include two up two down parking on some roads and yellow lines on corners/junctions. Enforcement remains an issue; however, TA has been told that SBC will be getting a parking car. The public will be consulted after the trial. Members expressed concern that actions to deal with pavement parking ought to be targeted at the hotspot areas in the borough first rather than being rolled out uniformly. Members also requested that the LAF be consulted on the Pavement Parking Policy and updates be brought to the next meeting.

108. Gating - updates

Rossiter Close –

ED informed the meeting that the statutory Gating Order consultation had received various representations, including objections and 2 petitions; one petition for the gating and one against. The Gating Panel has reviewed the representations and no decision has been made yet as to whether to make the Gating Order. There will be a monitoring period with a Stryker camera currently set up in the alleyway, residents issued with incident diary sheets, regular attendance by police patrols and also by community wardens with the alley on their hotspot list. The Wardens will engage with residents by door knocking to gauge feelings about the alleyway.

There have been no recent reports as the main complainant has been away for the last month. The main objections are that the gating is unnecessary and the alternative route is unreasonably inconvenient. The Stryker camera will be in this location for the next few months and any reports from residents will be checked against the camera footage. The decision is on hold.

DM recalled the LAF's previous response including caveats about the youth service in the area near the alleyway and that the alleyway land be utilised in some way. WS confirmed that the youth bus which had been attending Kedermister Park weekly is due to be scrapped. Also, the space in the alley could not be used as it remains public highway and contains services under the surface.

Members were surprised at the distances involved in the alternative route and how significant this is for older residents.

ED reiterated that in the face of such strong opposition there is a need for the evidence coming in to be checked to make sure it is firm enough. The main evidence is of youths gathering, knocking on the walls, shouting, talking loudly. According to the police the gatherings usually happen when it's raining. Sound proofing was suggested again as a possible solution,

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however, this would probably not be funded by the Council. IH thought the problem was not unexpected behaviour.

DM felt it was negative to gate the alley and walk away without dealing with the underlying problems. ED explained that local residents had suggested a mosquito device and this proposal is being investigated. ED stated that the Gating Panel meets every month and evidence from the Stryker camera would be important in reaching a decision.

Members felt strongly that the LAF should make further representations as follows;

- emphasising their previous concerns and recommending additional resources are directed towards youth services.
- adding an expression of concern over the detour distances detrimental to local residents

Resolved - members agreed that the LAF would make further representations as above. JW to action.

Kendal Close Path -

ED explained the idea for a mural project on two walls, one running along the path and the other on land adjacent. The artist will be Spencer Lowe who undertook murals at Britwell and at the footpath leading to the Jubilee River near Chalvey Waste and Recycling centre. The project is likely to involve local young people and local secondary schools. There was a request to have the path gated, though the Gating Panel considered there was insufficient evidence of crime to justify this. Housing is looking at the possibility of lighting the footpath.

JW has heard from James Lazarus at CRT who says that a development scheme at the basin is being progressed, though; it appears to be some years off at present. He would not agree anything at this stage about public access crossing CRT land. So it is likely that Housing will be asked to dedicate the route as a public footpath anyway.

The mural project will go ahead if sufficient funding can be accessed and members agreed that the project has full LAF support.

KW mentioned the new path surfacing on the towpath on the south side of the canal saying it's better than it was and is improved for cycling though had not been done very well. JW said the works were done by hand due to accessibility issues and that they wanted to ensure the budget stretched as far as possible; she would go and check. Members also noted the difficulty for pedestrians and cyclists in accessing the car park area safely due to commercial vehicles using it.

Usage surveys –

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JW tabled the usage survey results for;

- FP57 – Glentworth Place to Tuns Ln
- Lerwick Drive to Mildenhall Road
- Birch Grove cut though

Resolved – updates on Rossiter Close and Kendal Close project to be brought to future meeting. Forward extract of minutes to Esther Deacon.

109. Cycle About Slough

This item was covered under item 94. Local Sustainable Transport Fund Designs (LSTF) above.

110. Regional and National Updates

There will be a National LAF conference in Sheffield on 27th February 2013. DM is checking his availability to attend. WS offered to attend if DM could not.

Huddle – JW asked members if they have been able to log onto Huddle yet. Members' responses were not clear.

111. Any Other Business

It was noted by TE that there doesn't appear to be any cycle parking at the **Chalvey Community Centre**.

Resolved - Members felt that this lack ought to be raised with the Centre to solve, JW to action.

WS explained about a problem with the **new Bus Station** in that disabled people cannot dismount from the bus if there is not a pier available. There is a separate drop off area where there is not enough width for the wheelchair to dismount and turn. Members felt this issue ought to be raised with the Council as it concerns the accessibility of a promoted green mode of transport.

Stoke Poges Lane Road Safety scheme - IH wanted confirmation that the safety audit recommendation about the kerblines which were moved out into the carriageway had been followed. JW would check the Council's response to the safety audit and check to see if the Council were obliged to adhere to recommendations.

A safety issue has been noted by TA about the disabled parking bay in **Chalvey Road West**. – There is insufficient space for a disabled person to

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exit their vehicle at this location. Members agreed to recommend that if the disabled parking bay is moved further along where the parking area is wider the problem would be solved. DM thought that disabled parking needs to be forethought rather than an afterthought.

WS expressed the desire for a disabled parking bay/s to be placed by the doctor's surgery in the Wexham area. WS agreed to forward the details of this request to JW who would send to the relevant officer.

112. Date of Next Meeting

Date of the next meeting is TBA.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.00 pm and closed at 8.20 pm)