

**Local Access Forum – Meeting held on Tuesday, 12th January, 2010 at the Mayor's Conference Room, Town Hall, Bath Road, Slough**

**Present:-**

**LAF Members**

Councillors May Dodds  
Councillor Satpal S Parmar  
Toby Evans (in the chair for part of the meeting)  
Margery Hitchman  
Ian Houghton (in the chair for part of the meeting)  
Margaret Innis  
Ken Wright

**Officers, Slough Borough Council**

Savio DeCruz, Team Leader, Integrated Transport  
Bruce Hicks, Community Parks Project Officer  
Esther Deacon, Community Safety Project Officer  
Gerald Pleace, Parks Development Officer  
Clare Robinson, Bike-it Officer  
Jacqui Wheeler, Rights of Way Officer

**External**

Alan Woodley, Evergreen 2000 Trust

**Apologies for Absence:-** Laurie Tucker

**47. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Parmar advised in respect of agenda item 8 – Gating Order Proposals, Mildenhall to Lerwick Drive, that he was a local resident but he would approach the matter with an open mind. Councillor Dodds advised that she was Chair of the Planning Committee, Slough Borough Council.

**48. Minutes**

Minutes of the last meeting held on 10th September, 2009 were approved as a correct record subject to an amendment to correct the surname of Margaret Innis.

**49. Matters Arising**

Cinder Track linked to Farnham Royal

## **Local Access Forum - 12.01.10**

Jacqui Wheeler (JW) advised that Bucks County Council had confirmed that the Farnham Royal Parish Council had agreed in principle to the upgrade. Work was now needed to check whether or not the Order to upgrade the path could be proceeded with.

### SEGRO proposals for Slough Trading Estate

The Forum was advised that a planning application had been received and this would be determined during the period between January and March 2010. JW advised that there were two possible routes shown on a Plan tabled at the meeting. A Member questioned whether or not there was a guaranteed access route and was advised that it had not been stipulated whether this was a public right of way or a permitted path. Savio DeCruz advised that there were several different agreements in place as the land in question was owned by several individuals but it was likely that a preferred route would be adopted.

#### **Agreed:**

- (a) That JW refer the LAF's comments regarding the situation of the path and the contaminated land to the relevant Officer.
- (b) That the LAF recommends that the path be sited within SEGRO land.

## **50. Cross Boundary Issues - Buckinghamshire LAF**

The LAF noted that a letter had been sent to the Buckinghamshire LAF on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2009, highlighting cross boundary access issues. A similar letter had also been forwarded to the Surrey Countryside Access Forum.

**Agreed** – That an update report on Cross Boundary Access issues be considered at the next LAF meeting.

## **51. Membership Update**

JW advised that Les James who was not in attendance at the meeting had indicated that he had completed a membership form. The Forum was advised that the membership of several Members would expire in 2010 and those Members would need to decide whether or not they wished to renew their membership.

## **52. Evergreen Trust**

Alan Woodley of Evergreen 2000 Trust, introduced a report to the Forum explaining how the Trust was formed and detailing the work that the Trust had been involved in to date. Mr Woodley advised that the Trust promoted the area known as the Burnham Grove Nature Reserve, which linked a number of open and wooded spaces to the north-west of Britwell, owned by Slough Borough Council. Since 1998 the Trust had undertaken path improvements

## **Local Access Forum - 12.01.10**

and planted a number of trees and shrubs. The Forum was advised that the issue of wheel-chair and cycle access was of particular concern to the Trust together with the unwelcome use of motor-cycles on local pathways. Mr Woodley discussed the proposed walking route known as the Britwell loop. The Forum thanked Mr Woodley for his informative presentation. In the ensuing debate, Forum members suggested ways in which the access could be improved and the use of motorcycles prevented. A Forum member suggested the use of a palisade fence similar to the one on Ditton Park in Datchet which he felt was very effective. In relation to the Britwell loop, it was highlighted that point B on the map going northwards had a footpath which was very overgrown and inaccessible. It was noted that nothing had been done to resolve this problem because the road crossing in this location was very dangerous. JW commented that the path needed to remain open on the Bucks side.

**Agreed-** That JW would look at the issue relating to the pathway at Point B.

### **53. Gerrard Road to Long Furlong Drive Diversion Order - Update**

JW advised that Forum that the Garrard Road to Long Furlong Drive route would become a public footpath.

### **54. Cycling Training Update**

Clare Robinson, the Council's 'Bike-it' Officer gave a presentation to the Forum to provide an update on recent work that had been done in the area of cycle training. She advised that she had been in post for two years and her post was shared between South Bucks and Slough BC. She currently worked with 18 schools and funding would continue for another two years. Savio DeCruz discussed the bikeability scheme and advised three years previously SBC had conducted cycle awareness training. There was however a low uptake and parents were not willing to volunteer to assist running the scheme, and Slough BC could no longer fund the scheme. The council had bid for funding for bikeability in 1998 and was allowed £10,000. This allowed the Council to deliver 250 training spaces for children. It was noted that children were taken out onto local roads. In 2009 the Council applied for a £15,000 grant and this was provided, allowing for 375 children to benefit from training. The scheme was open to schools, children who were home schooled and scouts. In the current year there were only 37 spaces left out of the 375 available.

In the ensuing debate, Members raised a number of questions/comments as follows:-

- A Member suggested that SBC should examine the location of Montem School, Chalvey Grove, because he felt that this was dangerous for cyclists due to the hazardous parking in the area. Clare Robinson advised that she would discuss this with the staff member who devised the Council's Travel Plan.

## Local Access Forum - 12.01.10

- A Member asked whether there was any funding available for adult cycle training and was advised that there was no funding at present and also that such training was very complex.
- A Member was concerned about the number of children who did not own a cycle and asked what could be done to enable such children to have cycle training. Clare Robinson advised that there had been some discussion about the use of cycles that were left over at the police station but these were often auctioned or passed on to other groups. She advised that she was unaware of any national schemes to provide cycles for children.

### 55. Gating Order Proposals

#### Mildenhall to Lerwick Drive

JW advised that Vinay Vyas was unable to attend the meeting and it was agreed that Esther Deacon, Community Safety Project Officer, would circulate and update report to Forum members via Jacqui Wheeler.

#### Shaggy Calf Lane to Borderside

Esther Deacon, Community Safety Project Officer, SBC, provided the LAF with an update on the Shaggy Calf Lane Gating Order. She advised that residents living adjacent to the alleyway and in Grasmere Avenue, were placing pressure on the Council to close the alleyway. There had been incidents of criminal damage to properties and anti social behaviour in the area. In September a woman with a child and a pushchair was attacked by a group of 4 people.

The Officer advised that it was proposed a consultation should be carried out with residents of Shaggy Calf Lane, Borderside and Kendal Drive, to gauge their opinion.

In the ensuing debate, Forum Members raised a number of comments/questions as follows:

- Several Members did not feel that closing the alleyway was the solution to the problem.
- A Member felt that the questionnaires used in the consultation process were not compiled properly and should not provide a 'shopping list' of tick boxes.
- A Member asked whether the police had submitted crime reports and was advised that this was the case.
- A Member argued that it was not appropriate to close every alley where there had been an incident. Crime figures were needed for all alleyways to compare different locations and it was felt that the crime may not have happened purely because of the alleyway location. He pointed out that numerous crimes happened in open locations in the Borough and the closing of the alleyway for this reason was not justified.

## Local Access Forum - 12.01.10

The Officer advised that the consultation would be carried out at the end of January. JW confirmed that a Gating Order would be required to close this alleyway as it was a public highway.

### **Agreed-**

- a) That the Forum note the current position.
- b) That a copy of the consultation document be forwarded to the LAF for information (via JW).

### Salt Hill Park Tunnel

JW advised that the Salt Hill Tunnel ran from Baylis Road, through to Salt Hill Park and was not in a residential area. It had been suggested that the tunnel should be closed and gated in hours of darkness for reasons of safety. The Forum was advised that a bid had been made for the park to achieve green flag status.

**Agreed-** That the current position be noted and that an update report be brought to the next meeting.

## **56. Route K - Walking and Cycling Route**

The Forum was advised that Route K ran from the top of Farnham Road, through Baylis to the Town Centre and was one of the named routes in the Walking and Cycling Strategies. JW advised that the LAF's view was sought in terms of improving the facilities on the route for walkers and cyclists. It was anticipated that the route would go down the west side of Farnham Road, along Buckingham Avenue East, linking eventually with Herschel Grammar School on the way to the Town Centre.

LAF Members commented as follows:

- It was felt that there was a serious problem with cars parked on footways in Shackleton Road and Queens Road, that should be addressed.
- A Member asked whether cycle racks could be provided on Farnham Road.
- A Member commented that Buckingham Avenue East was the most dangerous road in Slough and care would be needed in this area to protect walkers and cyclists.

**Agreed-** That the LAF note the current position and that any further comments be forwarded to JW.

## **57. Cinder Track Update**

## Local Access Forum - 12.01.10

JW advised that extra planting on the cycle path had now been carried out, to fill the gaps.

Members expressed the following concerns:

- There had been no LAF site visit for some time.
- The cinder track had gravel scattered everywhere which was unsightly and this was unacceptable.
- There were many cases of dog fouling on the track.

**Agreed-** That a site visit be arranged and an update report be added to the next agenda.

### 58. Regional and National Update

The Forum received a report, outlining DEFRA good practice guidance on the Disability Discrimination Act and Structures on Rights of Way for Local Authorities.

The intention of the guidance was to identify good practice to help authorities fulfil their obligations under legislation.

**Agreed-** That when the guidance is ratified, the LAF make the following recommendations to Slough Borough Council:

- a) That a policy is developed on how it will deal with structures on rights of way. (This could be a stand alone document, part of a wider DDA or access policy or addressed within the Rights of Way Improvement Plan).
- b) That all available information on structures and limitations on rights of way in the Borough be displayed on the map based internet site where and when possible.

### 59. Involvement of LAFs in developing coastal access routes

The Forum noted the receipt of a letter from Duncan Graham, the Chair of the England Access Forum and the Cumbria LAF.

It had been acknowledged by the Minister that LAFs played a pivotal role in the development of coastal routes. An assurance had been given that LAFs would be involved in the proposal that would go to the Secretary of State.

**Agreed-** That the report be noted and that Members may forward their own comments regarding the Coastal Access Route if they so wish.

**Local Access Forum - 12.01.10**

**60. Any Other Business**

New Public Right of Way

JW advised that following a claim made by local residents, a new public right of way had been established between Beechwood Gardens and Windsor Road.

A Member advised that to date the signage was not in place and Jacqui Wheeler advised she would look into this.

Stoke Poges Lane/ Elliman Avenue

Members were concerned that Stoke Poges Lane/ Elliman Avenue was a dangerous location for pedestrians and asked what measure were being taken to improve this. Savio de Cruz advised that the current priority was to address the co-ordination of traffic on the A4 and improve systems within the budget that had been allocated. The Officer noted the Member's concerns.

**61. Next Meeting Date- 12th May, 2010 at 5.30 p.m.**

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.30 p.m. and closed at 7.50 p.m.)