



# Minutes of meeting held on 1st March 2022 in Borough Hall commencing at 6:30pm

[www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk)

<b>Members present:</b>	<b>Apologies received:</b>
Bob Wallace – Chair of the meeting David Mitchel James Russell Nigel Jacobs Ann Kennedy Barry Ingram	Cllr Royden
<b>In attendance/Observers:</b>	
Andrew Prigmore - Bedford Borough Council Allison Nelson - Bedford Borough Council April Quinn – Bedford Borough Council	
<b>Clerk:</b> Georgina McDade	

<b>1.</b>	<b><u>Welcome by Chairman</u></b>  The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
<b>2.</b>	<b><u>Apologies</u></b>  As above.
<b>3.</b>	<b><u>Item 2 - Governance</u></b>  Nigel confirmed he was stepping down as chair after 4 years and Bob Wallace would take the position on for the next 12 months. It was confirmed that Ann Kennedy would take the position of joint vice chair with James Russell. All members in agreement with positions and a big thank you to Nigel for leading for the last 4 years.  It was agreed by all members that the group must continue so there is a connection with the authority to ensure a good RoW network and access. Bob raised the point that all members must make the effort to ensure the success of the group and to increase monitoring and effectiveness with the authority.

*m*

Ann commented that one of the main issues are concerns raised by the group don't actually reach the main decision makers.

Bob agreed and reiterated that communication is imperative ie need to raise the importance of the LAF-need members to target Cllrs, Parish Councils and user groups to highlight the success of the BoBLAF such as the volunteering that has taken place, would be helpful if this was circulated around the Parish Councils and Cllrs.

Andrew confirmed that the authority had undertaken an internal press release regarding the volunteering work and the success of Barry's work in particular. Confirmed the communication is something that the LAF and authority can do together to reach further audiences.

Bob advised that the group must ensure that what is discussed during meetings is followed up ie an action against progress like other LAF groups have. It was agreed that there would be a review in January 2023 to see what progress has been made on agenda items.

James agreed and reiterated that the benefit of the LAF must be highlighted whether it's the endorsement of matters or the group raising a critical voice on matters.

Andrew pointed out that it often comes down to when the LAF should get involved in matters specifically relating to developments and schemes so for example at the point Neighbourhood Plans are released.

Nigel advised it would be useful to see the 2040 plan for developments so the group can see if/what RoWs may be affected.

James advised that consultations will take place from April onwards for land allocation for developments and will update when in a position to do so.

It was agreed that a newsletter would be circulated highlighting the works and improvements that have been carried out to the network. Barry and Allison to forward details of the works/improvements so the newsletter can be updated accordingly. **Ongoing.**

Georgina to contact Sonia regarding neighbourhood plans. **Ongoing. NB – the Neighbourhood Plans that were received last year were circulated to members including Willington (12/04/21), Bedford (25/10/21), Harrold (05/03/21) and Clapham (Feb 2021).**

James asked if there was a technical way that a polling system could be introduced so members can vote on topics. This would help to ensure future agenda items were specific and would help to streamline the items. **Andy to contact ICT to see if there is a way this could be set up. Ongoing.**

Bob asked if there would be an update to the Green Wheel and cycling. Andrew confirmed that this would be a running topic so will always be an agenda item.

It was agreed that all future agenda items will be streamlined to ensure the efficiency of each meeting.

4.	<p><b><u>Item 3 – A428</u></b></p> <p>Andrew confirmed that the examination period had come to an end and the findings were currently being deliberated. Advised that negotiations were still taking place regarding designated funds but confirmed that the authority had been successful in obtaining parapets.</p> <p>April confirmed that everything that was put forward from the LAF had been acknowledged and considered.</p>
5.	<p><b><u>Item 4 – East West Rail</u></b></p> <p>Andrew confirmed this has gone back to the government to consider. No further update available.</p>
6.	<p><b><u>Item 5 &amp; 6 Farming and Ploughing</u></b></p> <p>Andrew has asked the group to consider the letter that the authority intends to send to land owners regarding reinstatement to ensure the network is maintained and kept in a useable manner.</p> <p>Ann commented that the current process in place is resource draining. Process is too long winded. Has asked if specific people/users groups can just send pics of offence and the authority will act upon that image instead of sending officers out to verify.</p> <p>Andrew confirmed would be happy to act upon receipt of image of offence if received from user groups. It was acknowledged that the authority had previously been weak in enforcing reinstatement, but is seeking to change that approach.</p> <p>Ann stated that the timescale should be 14 days from receipt of the image of offence for land owner to rectify before authority enforces.</p> <p>Andrew confirmed wheelings is one issue and the actual spraying of the crops is another.</p> <p>Ann pointed out that if it's too wet for the wheelings then the landowner hasn't reinstated to an acceptable standard in the first instance. Proposed letter is too soft.</p> <p>Nigel agreed and advised there were too many "may" "possibly" etc.</p> <p>Bob asked how many landowners have received enforcement in the last 2 years.</p> <p>Andrew confirmed the authority successfully enforced on one landowner who lost their grant and ultimately did start reinstating sufficiently.</p> <p>James commented that the softer approach won't work now that the authority has built a relationship with the Borough farmers.</p> <p>Andrew advised that the Council will now be taking enforcement action against farmers that do not reinstate.</p>

	<p>It was agreed by all members that the current letter would be considered and the LAF would approve a final version of the letter. Members to provide comments by 14<sup>th</sup> May so the proposed letter can be circulated to members prior to the next meeting for approval. <b>Ongoing.</b></p>
7.	<p><b><u>Item 7 – Improvement Schemes</u></b></p> <p>Bob asked if any of the routes previously proposed by Barry had been implemented.</p> <p>Andrew advised that the authority has a “bank” of proposals that can be considered by the authority should development in the area come forward. For example the Bromham Road link- the authority is currently negotiating with the land owner to create a link to Queens Park.</p> <p>It was agreed that the LAF would put forward ideas for the Council to consider and act upon. It was confirmed that proposals are logged.</p> <p>Members agreed that a proposal list would be reviewed yearly. Proposals to be an agenda item for the next meeting.</p>
8.	<p><b><u>Item 8 – Mortal Man Farm</u></b></p> <p>Bob advised the route hasn’t been useable for years.</p> <p>April advised that the issue is the barns were granted planning permission in the 70s. The definitive map obviously shows the current line of the footpath through the buildings that have planning consent but we are now trying to rectify the issue.</p> <p>Andrew confirmed that the authority has got the approval of the land owner for the diversion and have put a request in for funds for the bridge. It is hoped that the funding will be allocated so the scheme can be moved forward in the summer.</p> <p>Bob suggested that the Council should perhaps focus on other anomalies that don’t require the amount of financial resource this scheme requires specifically if it requires a large bridge to be constructed at the northern end.</p>
9.	<p><b><u>Item 9 – Land West of Milton Road Clapham</u></b></p> <p>Ann to forward comments previously made to Andrew prior to his meeting on 03/03/22. <b>Completed.</b></p> <p>Barry confirmed he would forward the comments/plans from previous LAF meeting. <b>Barry advised on 03/03/22 that this was not something the LAF had previously discussed. It was however in the Clapham Development Plan, which he personally commented upon at the time. He has kindly provided a map with his proposals and this has been circulated amongst members.</b></p>
10.	<p><b><u>Item 10 &amp; 12 – DMMOs and update from the Definitive Map Team regarding current cases</u></b></p>

	<p>It was agreed unanimously that the LAF would be consulted on all DMMO applications.</p> <p>James asked if there was a policy/framework that could be sent to members so that they know what tests they should be following when deciding whether a case should be determined or not.</p> <p>Ann advised that the legislative tests are too grey/subjective to have a set policy for the LAF, but if the LAF was consulted and the group approved a case it would assist the authority for all matters that resulted in a case being submitted to PINS if there was backing from the LAF.</p> <p>The list of current cases that the definitive map team were working on was displayed. April confirmed that all of the cases on the first page were cases that had to be submitted to PINS due to objections.</p>
11.	<p><b><u>Item 11 – Let’s Go!</u></b></p> <p>Bob advised he has a meeting with the BRCC and will send further information on Thursday. <b>Ongoing.</b></p> <p>Bob confirmed he is reasonably confident that “Let’s Go!” will have something in place by July at least for walked routes. The domain name will continue.</p>
12.	<p><b><u>Item 13 – Maintenance</u></b></p> <p>Allison confirmed that the majority of works are allocated to the ground maintenance team who regularly install bridges and carry out clearance work. The authority is trying to replace stiles with gates to make the network more accessible but the authority is facing some resistance from land owners.</p>
13.	<p><b><u>Item 14 – Volunteering</u></b></p> <p>Barry confirmed that the volunteers have painted 50 posts already this year. To ensure the posts are in deep enough they have put markers on the bottom to show how deep they have to be inserted. The volunteers have also carried out clearance works. Confirmed that the numbers are increasing, but there is sometimes an issue with volunteers being unable to/reluctant to travel certain distances. He will send notices to Parish Councils advising of future works to try and increase the volunteering numbers.</p> <p>Bob advised that it would be helpful if updates could be sent to the LAF so that this can be advertised.</p> <p>Ann commented that the LAF section of the Borough’s website requires updating. <b>Ongoing.</b></p> <p>It was agreed by all members that all future meetings will have a break in the middle for refreshments.</p>
14.	<p><b><u>Future Agenda Items</u></b></p> <p>Reinstatement letter to farmers  LAF to confirm what anomalies the Council should prioritise  Land allocation for developments  Newsletter content and design  Green Wheel &amp; Cycling  A428 publication of findings</p>

*Be*

Let's Go update  
New developments and potential RoW/access proposals

15. **Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 20.40

Next Meeting dates:

7<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Signed:



Date: 7th June 2022