

# MID AND WEST BERKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Minutes of Meeting of the Forum

**Held at Council Chambers,**

Reading Borough Council,

Civic Offices, Bridge Street,

Reading, RG1 2LU

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2018, 2 - 5pm

**Present:** Janice Bridger, Nicola Greenwood, Jan Heard, Patrick Todd, Tony Vickers, Simon Pike, Graham Smith, Chris Marriage, Colin Patient, Jed Ramsay, Helena Barker

**In Attendance:** Elaine Cox (West Berks Council), Natalie Lucas (Reading Borough Council), Rebecca Walkley (Wokingham Borough Council), Emma Smith (Secretary), John Walmsley, Ray Clayton, Sarah Wright (Ridgeway Officer)

**Apologies for absence:** Roger Penfold, Margaret Pawson, Angus Ross, Gustav Clark.

## SITE VISIT

No site visit had been arranged on this occasion.

## 1: WELCOMES

The Forum welcomed Mark Hall (of Hall Hunter Partnerships), John Walmsley and Ray Clayton as observers.

## 2: PRESENTATION - Sarah Wright presented on The Ridgeway Partnership.

The Ridgeway is a National Trail that covers six highway authority areas.

SW illustrated the physical scope of The Ridgeway - 87 miles long and covering six Highway Authority areas. Formally designated in 1972. From 2015 there has been a requirement by Natural England that all national trails should be managed by a partnership, so in 2015 a partnership was formed for The Ridgeway, of which JB is a member (representing the BHS and updating on the work of the LAF). The Ridgeway Partnership works with landowners and WBC to maintain the trail, with EC ensuring that an annual survey is carried out each year. SW works for the trail four days per week, supplemented by one volunteer who

works one day a week on practical tasks, plus one further member of staff, again one day per week, who deals with public enquiries.

The team links its projects to the five Ridgeway themes which recognise that The Ridgeway has benefits to society which go beyond recreational access. One of these projects, 'Strategic Links', aims to make it easier for people to move between the trail and settlements. Local residents should have easy access to the trail, and visitors to the trail should, equally, be able to reach local villages with all their local amenities, such as pubs, B&B and bus routes. In 2016 the Ridgeway team carried out a survey which helped identify which settlements would benefit from more direct links to The Ridgeway, and work is ongoing to improve those links, with clear signage and accessible surfacing. It is hoped that local businesses will help with funding through grants and sponsorship. Members were asked to contact SW if they knew of any settlements or train stations that would benefit from these kinds of links.

Another project that SW outlined concerned the team's work with Oxford University on national trails as ecological corridors. Because The Ridgeway passes over chalk hills, its verges contain areas of chalk grassland, with native bird and insect populations which the team works to protect, as well as local farmland species which might be struggling. Three years of funding has been secured for a PhD student who is researching how grasslands can be managed over a long distance trail. It is hoped that his findings can be shared with local landowners. SW also explained how drones had been used to establish the extent of chalk grassland along the trail .

SW then spoke about a recent initiative - the Events calendar. At the end of each year she emails and phones local events organisers, gathering information about what is coming up for the year. The calendar is circulated to interested parties and is also put on The Ridgeway website.

With uncertainty over their funding, the trail team are always looking to broaden their sources of income. Donations have been received from landowners along the trail, and event organisers often charge one additional pound per participant for the benefit of The Ridgeway. All money received in this way is put aside for the maintenance of the route. The charity 'Friends of the Ridgeway' has also been an important source of support, with members making regular donations.

JB mentioned that SW produces a Ridgeway newsletter that anyone can sign up to.

The floor was opened to questions.

Ray Clayton asked whether there were any plans to extend The Ridgeway. SW explained that The Ridgeway had originally formed part of a prehistoric route, running from the Dorset coast to The Wash. The Friends of the Ridgeway were keen to form partnerships with The Icknield Way and the Wessex Ridgeway, which lie along on the same route, in the hope of reinstating The Great Chalk Way. Discussion was in the early stages and, with limited funding, they were currently limiting their efforts to getting the route recognised.

TV asked whether signs along the Ridgeway would be regularly updated. SW acknowledged that it was difficult with a physical sign to keep information current in terms of local amenities, for example. Currently, their priority was to provide signage for settlements with a variety of attractions.

SP raised the difficulty of finding out about taxi transportation and there was discussion around negotiating fixed prices on certain routes and checking drivers' policies on muddy dogs.

JW had noticed that The Ridgeway team used QR codes and mentioned that he had used these to help create two interpretative trails for BBOWT. Coverage could often be an issue in these circumstances. JW offered to talk further with RW about his experiences with QR codes and alternative technologies.

JH queried how members could help further with the PhD project into the management of chalk grassland along the route. SW outlined the need for long term monitoring, by groups or individuals, gathering their perceptions of whether and which species were in decline. She agreed to circulate PhD student Chris Woodham's contact details to members.

CM asked whether the whole route excluded recreational vehicular use. RW responded that there were some sections of The Ridgeway that were classed as byway, though some were closed all year round by TRO. Streatley to Compton byway was closed to vehicles only during the winter. There was still a problem of occasional illegal use, often related to hare coursing or joyriding. Those with a right to drive on The Ridgeway still caused problems in wet conditions, including those with a private right of access who were still driving throughout the winter. Utility trucks could also cause problems.

JR picked up on the large number of events taking place along the route, asking if there were plans to restrict these, or to charge participants. SW knew of some cases where events had been stopped, but only in extreme circumstances, such as damage to SSIs or pressing safety issues.

JB thanked SW for coming along and wished the team well with all its projects.

### **3: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

PT declared an interest in agenda item 21 - Padworth Common.

TV had been co-opted onto Greenham Parish Council.

### **4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting. No questions were submitted on the day.

### **5: MINUTES FROM MAY 2017 MEETING, ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes had been circulated, and were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

#### **Actions and matters arising**

##### **Actions:**

- Register of members' interests (ES): to circulate. Information on date appointed, category of membership, relevant interests and borough of residence.

- Item 7 - Finchamstead Bridleway Gate (NG): RW updated the Forum Wokingham BC have served notice on the landowner. Deadline for action will be w/c 19<sup>th</sup> March. If the landowner does not bring the gate up to British Standard, then WBC will do the work themselves and charge the landowner accordingly.
- Item 20 - Cross Boundary Liaison (HB): HB had updated Hampshire LAF on MWBLAF's meeting with Richard Benyon. She still felt that they had a 'lukewarm' interest in the issue of Brexit and future farm subsidies.
- JH asked to tie up a couple of loose ends, as she had been absent from the previous meeting.

There had been a discussion about the need to mow paths on a number of side roads that linked to PROW. JH clarified that she had sent an email about this in January last year. As no mowing had been undertaken last year, she asked if this could be taken on board this year. RW stated that this work would be requested, though it would be difficult to monitor whether it was carried out. JH agreed to monitor, and to contact RW if the work was not completed.

With regard to the minerals consultation in the Shinfield area, JH referred to the standard response that had been drawn up by the Forum. She had started looking at possible routes that could benefit if this application went ahead. RW informed members that this issue was pending and would soon be available for comment.

**ACTION: JH to send the results of her research to ES, to pass to RW.**

#### Matters Arising:

With reference to the OFCOM consultation, to which the Forum had responded in the middle of 2017, SP updated the Forum. OFCOM have now published a statement in which they have referenced our response and have amended the document accordingly. JB thanked SP for spotting the omission in the original document and acting so effectively to address it.

**ACTION: SP to send relevant link to ES to circulate to members.**

#### **6: ISSUES DEALT WITH BY EMAIL SINCE LAST MEETING**

- JB commented on the opening of Wokingham's first Greenway - this was California Way, the site that the LAF had visited in September 2017. RW reminded the LAF that this had been a huge £600,000 project for a flexi-paved multi-user route. The hope was that more landowners would agree to these routes, which would encourage more people off the roads and into a healthier lifestyle.

CM asked whether RW knew of any Greenways where sections of the land had had to be acquired, either by lease or purchase. RW stated that there were gaps in

some proposed routes, which might have to be filled through creation orders. This would be a slow process, with the next phase, at 6km, likely to take 3 years to come to fruition. The new staffing structure had provided funding for a Greenways Project Officer. £3 million had been obtained from CIL for Greenways, with a further £10 million to follow in the next 10 years. JH commented that the LAF had informally consulted on Greenways over the years, and had, in fact given words of support in the past for the second phase of the Greenway, explaining some of the advantages to the local community.

**ACTION: JH to forward to RW the original document that was submitted in support of the second phase of The Greenway.**

- Waterloo Road railway crossing. This is a road crossing of the railway. The LAF made representations to the planning application. JH commented that AR was hopeful that there would be an opportunity to put in a tunnel, though it was not yet known when that might happen. The proposal was to close the crossing as there had been fatal accidents in the past and it was felt that safer methods of crossing could be found.

**ACTION: RW to chase Highways department to find out whether any progress has been made.**

## **7: GUIDANCE ON GATES, GAPS AND STILES**

JB mentioned that this item referred to a LAF policy statement about the circumstances in which it supports Greenways and the criteria these should meet. The paper had been put together following three recent problems that had occurred in Wokingham concerning gates:

- A gate into one of the SANGS which it was claimed was not disabled friendly.
- The gate the LAF had seen on the new Greenway where MP could not gain access through the gate on her mobility vehicle even though the LAF had been advised that it was 'disability friendly'.
- The Finchamstead gates - bridleway gates which were claimed to fall below the British Standard.

The paper, submitted by JH, queried whether local authorities were aware of the British Standard of gaps gates and stiles, and also DEFRA's guidance on disability. JH referred to a LAF training session which had recommended that local authorities should be encouraged to be familiar with these documents and work to the standards contained within them. Although the LAF had been assured that WBC attained a high standard in its work with stiles and gates, JH felt that the problems outlined above suggested that this might not be the case. She asked how WBC could demonstrate that it was adhering to the correct standards in this regard. RW replied that WBC Greenways were, in general terms, gold standard in terms of width, surfacing and good access. She did acknowledge, however, that the gates were not good enough, and arrangements had been made for their contractor to change them. In the case of Finchamstead, a number of complaints had been

received and the landowner had been served notice. JH suggested that WBC could publicise these guidance documents more widely, perhaps on its website, requiring developers to adhere to the standards promoted within them. JB proposed that WBC could simply liaise with contractors, advising them on the expected standards. RW agreed, adding that all contractors were now aware of what was required to meet the gold standard. As the Forum agreed that these standards should be applied, TV suggested that it could be stated on LA websites that, where work on gates was to be carried out, the British Standard 'must' be adhered to, especially on SANG land.

All agreed that the LAF advice should be that all work should conform to British Standards, and there was further discussion about whether the word 'must' could be used, as these standards were advisory. CM suggested that the LAF could send a formal letter to each of the three local authorities, making the LAF's views clear.

**ACTION: JH and JB to produce a short statement to the effect that the MWBLAF will support proposals for Greenway routes on condition that they improve access, are multi-user, have regard to the British Standard for Gaps and Stiles and improve fragmented links in the ROW network where needed. A draft to be circulated and comments invited.**

EC added that LAs should also be self-policing. Under the Equality Act, WBC is expected to carry out an equality impact assessment for any decision, such as a new structure or re-surfacing work, using a template which requires them to take into account the needs of different users. The proposed LAF statement could also usefully remind LAs of this obligation.

## **8: SOUTH WOKINGHAM DISTRIBUTOR ROAD**

The required LAF action for this item was to comment on the scoping opinion for the South Wokingham distributor road, using the agreed template for the Greenways route. Members were invited to comment on the impact of this road on ROW.

NG had submitted a report, indicating that in this area there were a number of stables and a fragmented ROW network, making it difficult for riders to get far without encountering busy roads. It would be extremely beneficial if routes could be developed which could allow riders to find off road routes, avoiding new housing and busy roads. JH indicated that both she and AR supported NG's report, which listed a number of alternative routes, intended to help alleviate the problems produced by the distributor road. JH also suggested that the LAF might also comment in support of these. RW added that it was not too late to comment. NG's persistent lobbying and reports were extremely helpful, and were more likely to be acted upon when backed by the LAF. This was just a scoping exercise at present, but the LA wanted every right of way to be preserved and for equestrian use to be maintained.

Mark Hall declared an interest in this, having 250 acres on the boundary of this development of approximately 1800 houses.

The LAF were asked to consider whether to support NG's document through a formal letter to WBC, drawing attention to the sections which were of particular relevance.

**ACTION: JH to draft a letter, ES to submit. ES also to forward relevant correspondence to Mark Hall.**

TV commended NG for her exemplary report, which was a model for how to respond to such scoping exercises and planning applications, providing the kind of helpful detail which was appreciated by all parties.

## **9: READING FOOTPATH 21A**

NL updated the LAF. A large site currently used as a Homebase and former ToysRus store had come up for redevelopment, and Reading Borough Council had seen this as an opportunity to provide a ramp to improve access to a lower tier of riverside at the site, instead of the steps that were in situ. This improvement had been secured and the ramped access was now in place. Full planning permission for development of the whole site had been granted, though no timescales had yet been set.

## **10: READING ROWIP**

This item contained two proposed actions for the LAF - firstly to note the action plan, considering route specific works schedules and raising any queries, and secondly to advise the council about any lack of information on the Definitive Map of Rights of Way that is available on the council website.

GS had noticed a road in the action plan that he believed had been wrongly named in the report, under Route Specific Works, Item 1. NL offered to clarify and amend this if necessary.

JB asked about footpath No1, where the ROWIP stated that documents were being prepared to go to the Secretary of State. NL clarified that a public enquiry had not yet been called, and that the path had gone through the consultation process. The council had decided to pursue legal action but the matter was still with their legal team and there were still outstanding objections. If those were not resolved locally, then a public enquiry was likely. NL would update at our May meeting,

SW raised the possibility of creating a cycle route from Reading to the Ridgeway and wondered whether there was a wider vision for routes out from Reading to the wider area. NL commented that Reading Transport Planning Officers did work with WB officers to look at linking routes between authority areas. TV mentioned that he was involved with the West Berks Cycling Campaign Group, which had been looking at a Sustrans route linking Newbury through Compton to Didcot, crossing the Ridgeway. EC commented that the Thames Path National Trail was currently working on trying to find alternative parallel cycling routes. NL added that Reading had a lack of quiet roads, so it was always tricky to find alternative routes. Ray Clayton suggested that it would be best to concentrate on the area North of the river, where there was plenty of existing bridleway.

Reading BC does not publish its Definitive Map of Rights of Way on its website and it was proposed that the Forum should write a letter encouraging it to do so. It is a statutory

duty to have the Map available to the public, and adding it to the website would, of course, make this far more accessible and convenient, allowing walkers to check their route on their mobile phones . NL explained the difficulty that she and others had experienced in trying to get information put onto the website, and added that she would welcome a letter of support from the LAF.

**ACTION: JB to write a letter to Reading BC, urging them to make a digital copy of The Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way available on the council website.**

## **11: RIGHTS OF WAY CROSSING OVER RAILWAY LINES - UPDATE**

GS had checked the website to see what was happening with public enquiries - none had reached a conclusion, as things stood. TV suggested that they should continue to monitor these enquiries, and then adapt the LAF's previous letter and customise it for all the MPS in the MWBLAF area. Network Rail are starting to work on their proposals for our area so it would be well to be prepared.

EC asked whether the enquiries were anything to do with the changes proposed by the Transport and Works Act. GS suggested that they might be linked to the electrification of the railways.

## **12: STREATLEY FOOTPATH 21:**

Two footpaths had been legally created in conjunction with a development in Streatley but the applicant to that planning application (2000) had declined to create the second footpath on the ground. Both paths had been legally created and appeared on the Definitive Map. MP, HB and CM had visited the site recently. MP felt that the route might function well as a circular, easy access route.

EC stated that from W Berks point of view a feasibility study was needed to determine the viability of the second footpath. Following the sad loss of a colleague, no further progress had been made with this to date. Discussion centred on the depth of water at the site. CM felt that the path should be physically created and had seen no insurmountable obstacles when he visited the site, though some engineering work would be needed to establish the best height for a boardwalk. EC had contacted the Parish Council to request a contribution to the cost, but they had made it clear that they saw the issue as a District Council responsibility. WBC had flood money which could possibly be used for the work, plus some budget of its own - or could potentially raid some of the Section 106 open spaces budget.

JB suggested that the Forum should await the results of the feasibility study and hope that eventually the path would be usable. EC had approached The Swan hotel but they appeared overstretched with other projects at present.

## **13: FORUM REPORT TO NATURAL ENGLAND**

All LAFs nationally submit a report annually to Natural England. This year Natural England had been late in calling for this and had since appeared ambivalent about receiving it. ES

had contacted Andrew Mackintosh, the national Natural England representative for rights of way, asking what proportion of LAFs submitted reports and what use was made of the information received. No response had yet been forthcoming. In the circumstances, the Forum advised JB not to compile a report this year.

#### **14: UPDATE ON THE HOUSE OF LORDS REVIEW OF THE NERC ACT**

This was a House of Lords review of the NERC Act, looking into the role of Natural England. The LAF had decided to respond, compiling a paper which took a generally negative view of the support that the Forum is currently receiving from Natural England. All submissions can be found on the website, sent in by a wide range of respondents, and referring to a huge range of topics. Only seven responses were from LAFs, perhaps indicating that most were unaware of the review. Access to the countryside was debated on the 21<sup>st</sup> November. Six oral presentations were made, of which four were dominated by the issue of motorised vehicles in the countryside. LAFs were not mentioned. A report will follow.

#### **15: ACCESS AND FUTURE FARM SUBSIDIES POST-BREXIT**

Most local MPs had been contacted. Anthony Chadley had already met with Reading MP Alok Sharma, together with JB and CM. RP had contacted Matt Rhodda and received a belated reply. AR had contacted Dr Philip Lee.

JB AND CM had, that morning, met Robin Edwards of the CLA with. The CLA had drafted a land management contract which could be developed into a Post Brexit contract, under the terms of which, farmers could be paid for environmental improvements. CM felt that more LAFS should be doing this. The mental health benefits of access to the countryside had been well documented. JB commented that Robin Edwards had immediately understood the need for off road exercise as well as connectivity between ROW, linked with the need to make the network relevant to the present day. PT asked whether a future ROW system would be based on permissive paths. As yet, this was unclear. JB's impression was that people should start to think in very specific ways about how things should work post-Brexit. EC agreed that, rather than talk too broadly, it was important to grasp the details and put together specific, practical proposals.

CM commented that 80% of farm income comes from subsidy, and suggested that a small part of that should be paid for connectivity, making public rights of way fit for purpose, even offering opportunities for owners to exercise their dogs off the lead. TV felt that there was still a lot of uncertainty about Brexit, arguing that a more pressing priority was to increase the dialogue between LAFs, creating a national LAF lobby which could have real influence. SW commented that the LAF could have an important role to play in steering people towards the ROWIP and producing some guiding principles but also concrete examples for the policy makers to draw upon, thinking, for example, about how to manage farms on the edges of urban areas.

#### **16: MEMBER RECRUITMENT - CURRENT POSITION**

**ACTION: ES to check current information as to whose term of office has come or is coming to an end. Information to be sent out with the register of interests.**

## **17: COMMUNICATION OF FORUM BUSINESS**

JB noted that West Berks and Wokingham now had managed to get LAF papers and notices onto their websites, and there was therefore less need to consider setting up an independent LAF website.

The Forum discussed the merits of a social media presence, both to raise its profile and to communicate what it was doing to the wider public, while also achieving the openness and transparency required of a statutory organisation. JW suggested that Facebook and Twitter would be a low cost way to put the LAF's work more firmly in the public domain, with the potential to spread its message very quickly and efficiently through shares and re-tweets. JR sounded a note of caution, stating that maintain a social media presence demanded a lot of time to keep the information current. CM commented that, if JW was willing to take the task on, it would be well worth pursuing. SP felt that it would be possible to manage the site in such a way that there was less expectation of a constant stream of information. JW agreed to take on the task on a twelve month trial, to explore what could be done.

## **18: MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS**

The report was noted. The Public Right of Way would be unaffected, though its use might be, in the sense that those people who would normally use the PROW to access the playing field might now be prevented from doing so. The application is still live and undetermined, and there remain a number of unresolved issues. The issue will therefore not be discussed before the April committee. To update at our next meeting.

## **19: REPORTS FROM NON-ROWIP WORKING GROUPS**

### Development of New Access:

Hermitage to Hampstead Norreys - the section between Hermitage and Hampstead Norreys will be open by the end of the year. The funding is in place and work is about to start - due to finish by April 2019. JB stressed that this was not a cyclepath but a multi-user off road path, though the nature of the questions that Highways England had asked suggested strongly that they regarded the route as an urban cycleway.

EC commented that clearance work had been done at Snelsmore last year, and the area now needed to be cleared again of vegetation and overhang. The decision had been taken not to lay an aggregate route. The road crossing would help to mark the route, designed according to the relevant guidance. There would be an aggregate edge to the road and a corral with fencing, though permission would have to be sought for this. There had been a meeting with the contractor on site and work would proceed as quickly as possible, though EC did remind the Forum that the LA's priority always had to be the definitive network, with any new access usually arising out of situations connected with the current network - e.g. planning or diversions. JB was looking into waymarking for the route and suggested that maybe a subgroup would be helpful with this.

### Disabled Access:

HB reported that she and MP were trying to ensure that all wildlife trusts across the county had easily available information for all users. The BBOWT website would be up and running by March. JB asked whether there was an easy access route at Wokefield Common. HB confirmed that it was already in place. All agreed that BBOWT had responded very well to all concerns raised.

### Education and Communication:

This sub group is not currently active.

## **20: CROSS BOUNDARY LIAISON**

### Hants: (HB)

A paper had been submitted. There was no further discussion.

### Oxon: (CM)

CM highlighted the ten year backlog of work on the definitive map. Little progress had been made in reducing this backlog, which was causing concern in the light of the 2026 cut off for the mapping of ROW. CM felt that, as with Hampshire, Oxfordshire LAF were being slow to grasp the post-Brexit subsidy scenario.

### Wilts: (GS)

GS had missed the last meeting - next meeting would be in a month's time. One of the main issues in Wiltshire was the prioritisation of DMMOs. A new member had set up a webpage, though it was proving difficult to keep it up to date.

### Bracknell Forest / RBWM: (CP)

CP hadn't heard anything from RBWM, who usually only met twice-yearly.

Bracknell Forest LAF were very concerned about the vast developments that were underway locally.

### Berkshire LAF Chairs' Meeting: (JB)

JB had attended a meeting of this informal organisation, largely made up of LA officers and LAF chairs, including representation from Bucks and Surrey. JB found it a useful forum for sharing ideas, and had heard that there was going to be a very large SANG in Bracknell Forest on the old Transport Research Laboratory site.

## **21: WEST BERKSHIRE COMMONS**

### Bucklebury: (CM)

A report had been submitted. Most notably, the 4x4 problem now seemed to be under control, thanks to a number of winter TROs which had been in place since October. These would come to an end on the 15<sup>th</sup> April. EC added that two significant repairs were planned, and would be carried out when the weather improved. The authority would also consider whether inexpensive 'soft' work could also be undertaken to level the surfaces for the summer. Later, there would be a decision about whether to close the routes again this coming winter.

CM added that there had been some problems with motorbikes at Bucklebury 49-7.

### Padworth: (GS)

Plans for a land exchange had been withdrawn. PT was able to update the Forum. The plans had been resubmitted after it was discovered that the release land was covered by two commons registrations. A larger area of release land (originally common) was now to be offered. The situation was extremely complex and an inspector would need to take a decision on whether or not to take the matter to a public enquiry.

### Snelsmore: (JB)

There was nothing to report.

### Wokefield: (MP)

MP was absent from the meeting

### Greenham & Crookham: (JB)

The Forum had written asking for representation on this commission, which had no formal access representatives. The letter had been acknowledged but no further communication had been received. HB to attend the next meeting as a member of the public. TV added that the control tower would shortly be opened to the public, with café and toilet facilities.

## **22: FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME / HORIZON SCANNING**

JB stated that she would be most willing to stand down as chair and invited nominations.

JB had spoken with JR about whether he might say a few words at the next meeting about how Hungerford Common, was run in terms of public access rights.

In terms of future site visits, or meetings, TV had suggested the control tower as a venue. EC offered to find out what was possible.

### **23: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

JH raised the issue of Reading Football Club, asking whether any more could be done to secure their offer of land. RW stated that discussions were ongoing, and that Highways were looking into costings with the club. JB suggested that this should be an item for the next agenda.

EC mentioned expenses claims, asking for top copies of receipts from now on.

CM felt that the Forum ought to be a statutory consultee. JB asked CM to find out how that could be achieved.

JB mentioned that WBC was consulting on its local development plan. That consultation was due to end on the 30<sup>th</sup> March. JB felt that we should be responding to this, stressing the importance of green infrastructure. JB offered to draft a response to circulate among members.

The meeting closed at 5.05pm.