



## Meeting of the West Sussex Local Access Forum Wednesday 20 October 2021

A meeting of the West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) was held online via Teams at 10.30am on Wednesday 20 October 2021.

### M I N U T E S

#### Present

Graham Elvey (GE) – Chairman	Ian Hunt (IH)
Tricia Butcher (TB) – Vice-Chairman	Christine Johnson (CJ)
Andrew Baldwin (AB)	Christine Supiot (CS)
Helen Baldwin (HB)	Phil Miles (PM)
Monica Collingham (MC)	Carol Montgomery (CM)
Duncan Crow (DC)	Tim Thomas (TT)
Janet Duncton (JD)	Clare Weston (CW)
Geoff Farrell (GF)	

#### Officers

Jane Noble (JN)	Forum Officer, WSCC
Neil Vigar (NV)	Countryside Services Manager, WSCC
Ami Dye (AD)	Rights of Way Officer, Public Path Orders, WSCC (part meeting)
Donna Trethewey (DT)	Planning and Communities Officer, WSCC
Andy Ekinsmyth (ES)	Head of Transport and Network Operations, WSCC (part meeting only)

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Nicol Beard (NB), Jason Lavender (JL) and David Green (DG).

#### 2. Welcome and introductions - New WSLAF members

New members Janet Duncton and Andrew Baldwin were welcomed. Both have joined WSLAF as County Council representatives.

JD – WSCC member for Petworth division. Enjoys walking, has previously ridden horses and her husband is a keen cyclist.

AB – WSCC member for Holbrook and is a keen walker

#### 3. Minutes of the Forum

##### a) Minutes of formal meeting of 28 April 2021

- i. The minutes of the formal meeting on 28 April 2020 were approved as correct.
- ii. Actions and matters arising not covered by agenda:

**Item 3, 2b Bridleways on the Coastal Plain** – TB explained that the proposed working group had not met, following Julie Robinson (JR) contacting WSLAF in 2019 asking for help to create new bridleways on the Coastal Plain. The lack of suitable safe routes to ride in this area is an issue the Forum has long been aware of. The Forum gives advice and seeks new routes for all NMUs (non-motorised users) via the planning process wherever opportunities arise, and it is felt that this is the most appropriate mechanism for WSLAF to help. TB has contacted JR who is happy with this approach. It was agreed WSLAF should continue to push for safe NMU access by continuing to respond to strategic planning applications, road improvement consultations and ensuring relevant policies are in the Local Plan. Others mentioned they are also involved with schemes to protect / improve NMU access, notably CJ relating to the A259 at Yapton and HB who is still representing WSLAF at GLAM meetings (Green Lanes across the Manhood).

**Item 3, 10a – Old Ford to Hunston Canal (Greenway)** – Chris Sprules was not invited to this meeting, as although originally it was hoped to be held face-to-face due to WSCC's COVID guidance it has been held on-line and there are technical difficulties with observers attending on-line meetings. Also WSLAF is considering its position regarding supporting schemes in Item 8.

**Action – JN to contact Chris Sprules**

**Item 6a - Higher Level Stewardship access in West Sussex** – The agreed letter has now been sent to three landowners. No responses have yet been received.

**Item 6b – Agriculture Act 2020/Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).** - WSCC Legal Services has not been involved with reviewing/commenting on these. JN did contact Natural England to ask if they still keep a current list of Local Access Forum Chairmen and Secretaries, but none was forthcoming.

**Item 10 –PRAM dates** – Dates of the meetings where WSLAF's agenda is agreed (referred to as PRAM; Pre-agenda meeting) to be circulated so interested members

can attend and learn how meetings are organised. **Action - JN to circulate PRAM dates**

**Item 11; Scaynes Hill to Lindfield cycle/walkway** – A response was sent and circulated to members.

b) **Minutes of informal meeting of 14 July 2021**

For the benefit of new members, GE explained that the Forum holds 2 'formal' meetings that are fully supported by WSCC and between these holds 'informal' meetings supported by the Forum members.

i. Actions and matters arising not covered by agenda:

**Item 3 - Minutes** – It was agreed the minutes should cover enough detail so members and public not attending can follow what was covered, along the with resulting actions. Following a delay issuing the minutes of the December 2020 meeting WSCC has been given assurances that minutes will be available shortly after the meeting.

**Item 3 – WSLAF email alerts** – JN confirmed that it is still possible to sign up for WSLAF email alerts on the first page of the WSLAF web site ([www.wslaf.org](http://www.wslaf.org)). An email will be sent out once the minutes are on the website.

**Item 4 – Rampion 2** – TB raised one question she was made aware of at the Project Liaison Group (PLG) meeting.

**Item 7 – A27 Arundel by-pass workshops- Highways England (HE)**  
**Action - JN to ask HE if notes are available**

**Item 8 – Monitoring of Planning Applications** – JN said it was not feasible for WSCC to notify WSLAF of all planning applications affecting access and, even if it were it would unlikely to be manageable for the Forum. CJ stated that Parish Councils check on all local planning applications. This was discussed further in Item 8 on the agenda.

**Item 9, 1 & 2. – A259 consultation** – GF had provided details of the Government’s walking and cycling vision and policy documents for inclusion in the A259 consultation response. The DfT website has details of these: The [Local Transport Note \(LTN\) 1/20](#) and its vision document for increasing walking and cycling titled [Gear Change](#).

**Item 9, 3 – SDNPA Design Guide SPD Consultation** – GE had circulated WSLAF’s response to this.

4. **Any urgent matters to be considered not on the agenda**

None

5. **Planning matters – how can WSCC & WSLAF best support each other**

Donna Trethewey gave an update of her role as Public Rights of Way (PROW) Planning and Communities Officer, which she has now been doing for six months. The main aspects of her work have included:

- DT deals with larger strategic planning applications and comments on over-arching planning framework documents. Access Rangers continue to deal with small planning applications and Nick Scott, Principal PROW Officer, currently deals with roads schemes.
- Working with local planning authorities (LPA) and WSCC Highways/Planners to raise the profile of PROW and ensure a robust system is in place so the PROW service is consulted on relevant planning applications.
- Requesting access improvements where they can be reasonably justified. It is the LPA’s decision whether to include any improvements, over and above complying with legislation, as a planning condition.
- Landowner permission can be a barrier if an improvement requested involves land outside the development. WSCC/LPA or developer cannot insist on improvements beyond the boundary. PROW will try to ask landowners for their agreement.
- Working to identify outstanding S106 agreements where money has been allocated to PROW improvements.
- Currently funding is through S106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL is controlled by LPAs, with a portion given to parish and town councils (P&TC). CJ added that the amount P&TCs get depends if they have Neighbourhood Plan. County Councils do not have a strong record in influencing where CIL is spent. The Government is reviewing the funding with

a possibility S106 may be scraped, which may be detrimental for PRoW improvements. A decision could be made in Autumn. It was asked if the Council had filled the S106 post vacated by Nick Scott.

**Action - JN to check if a S106 officer is in post**

- DT now has access to WSLAF consultation responses and welcomes the opportunity to work closer with WSLAF to bring about access improvements. *Post meeting note – a meeting has been set up between DT, GE and TB to discuss this further.*

JD stated that the SDNPA has just issued its CIL monies. DT explained that PRoW does get consulted on CIL funding infrastructure documents.

Members thanked DT for her interesting presentation.

**5b. Introduction – Ami Dye, WSCC Rights of Way Officer, Public Path Orders (Agenda Item 2)**

AD – Replaced Judith Grimwood and is responsible for processing Public Path Orders (PPO), changes to existing public rights of way network and liaising with LPAs re development diversions. Previously worked for WSCC Legal Services processing Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs). A couple of specific questions were asked:

- Washington 2086 - it has been agreed with the landowner but there are issues about proving title.
- Golf Links Lane, Selsey – using S26 creation order to create a new bridleway to join up with Medmerry.

AD said she would be happy to attend a future meeting to further explain her role in more detail if useful.

It was requested if WSCC could provide an organogram showing PRoW organisation structure.

**Action - JN to circulate PRoW structure chart**

**6. Countryside Service’s shared use routes surface specification**

NV explained the revised bridleway specification, circulated before the meeting, was produced following discussions with other local authorities and also WSCC contractors.

A concern over a recently surfaced bridleway where the limestone dust was very ‘gravelly’ was raised. TB confirmed it is suitable for horses, providing it is not sharp.

There was a discussion about the benefits of sealed surfaces for cyclists to allow all weather use to encourage more cycling. NV explained bridleways are a shared resource and the surface shouldn’t hinder or obstruct other users - horse riders are not keen on tarmac and prefer a softer surface for recreation. The Downs Link is multi-use recreational promoted route and not a specific cycleway, so tarmac is not considered suitable. Concern was expressed about the speed of cyclists on such routes, which would only increase if a sealed surface was provided.

NV would be happy for members to send in comments.

**Action – Members to send in surfacing comments to JN to forward**

## 7. Consultations and advice

### a) Current consultations

#### i. Lyminster bypass – WSCC (pre-formal consultation input)

WSCC would welcome some early thoughts on the aspirations for non-motorised user (NMU) access into Arundel. The options being off-road or alongside the carriageway. This will also feed into Highways England's work on the A27 Arundel bypass. GF offered to lead. Further details can be found on the [WSCC Lyminster Bypass \(North\) webpage](#).

**Action – all to send comments to GF by 16 November**

**Action – GF to send WSCC WSLAF comments by 30 November**

#### ii. A259 Chichester to Bognor Regis Corridor Feasibility Study – WSCC

CJ and GF attended the webinar on 14 October, which they said was very good. JN will circulate the presentation. WSCC is inviting further comments by 25 October - GE offered to coordinate WSLAF response.

**Action – JN to circulate presentation**

**Action – GE to coordinate & send WSCC WSLAF comments by 25 Oct**

### b) Consultation responses, advice given

GE thanked members for input. Responses /advice had been sent regarding the following:

- i. West Sussex Local Transport Plan Review 2022-2036 - WSCC
- ii. Rampion 2
- iii. Arundel to Ford Pathways – Arun DC and Arundel Cycling and Walking Group
- iv. South Downs Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document - SDNPA
- v. Agriculture Act 2020 & Environment Land Management Schemes (ELMS) – Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- vi. Scaynes Hill to Lindfield cycle/walkway – Scaynes Hill Sustainability Group

## 8. WSLAF's work

A briefing note has been circulated to members. GE had looked at the minutes of neighbouring LAFs and none showed the LAF providing 'support' for schemes, but of offering advice to improve NMU access, in line with the proposals in the paper circulated.

After a brief discussion it was agreed to write a position statement to help with responding to direct requests for support.

**Action – GE/TB to draft a position statement**

## 9. Downs Link / A281 crossing at Rudgwick

Andy Ekinsmyth, Head of Transport and Network Operations, WSCC, updated the Forum on work being done following the coroner's investigation into the tragic fatality where the Downs Link crosses the A281.

Vegetation clearance, including the removal of a tree, has taken place to improve visibility. WSCC has commissioned consultants to look at options for a crossing.

They have identified three possibilities; at grade improvements with an island/road widening, Pegasus crossing (traffic signalled controlled crossing) to allow all to cross (e.g. at Ferring) and a bridge. The feasibility report, with as accurate indicative costs as possible, will be submitted shortly.

Once the report has been submitted the cost benefits will be analysed along with acceptability of the options and how these can fit in with WSCC's capital programme. The favoured solution for many is a bridge, the cost of which is likely to be in the low millions as it is a considerable span.

The report will initially be reviewed by senior officers and relevant Cabinet Members, Cllrs Dennis (Highways) and Urquhart (Environment). The report should be available after that.

WSCC is also looking at other PRow crossing points of major roads, including and beyond the Downs Link. Records show no significant casualties. AE will ask the new Road Safety Group Manager, Chris Stark, to look to see if improvements are required as part of a wider road safety programme.

A short discussion followed including:

- ensuring other funding streams are considered, such as via development
- at grade-crossing with an island should be discounted
- AE understands the coroner has no directive powers in terms of how the Council chooses to spend its money, but the Council has to make its decisions with due regard of the coroner's findings
- accident reports don't always give the full picture as people have just stopped using the more dangerous ones. AE accepted this but WSCC has to have a way of prioritising funding.

GE thanked AE.

## 10. **General Report**

The General Report was noted. JN was asked to clarify if the A283 crossing west of Washington roundabout is to be a Pegasus crossing.

**Action - JN to check if it is to be a Pegasus crossing**

## 11. **Dates of Next Formal Meetings**

- Informal: January TBD end Jan/early Feb – date to be advised shortly
- Formal: TBA, as JN is unable to make original date of Wednesday 27 April 2022 a new date will be circulated – AGM Chichester/online.

## 12. **AONB**

CS – Vegetation clearance on paths around Bramber has been insufficient. JN explained this year has been hampered by the contractor's staff being pinged to self-isolate and it has been a very good growing season. The way WSCC's PRow summer surface vegetation clearance is carried out is due to be reviewed to see if improvements can be made in future.

PM – Asked WSCC to look at anti-slip surfacing on bridges, boardwalks and stiles.

MC – Monks Farm site, Lancing. The 4<sup>th</sup> arm proposal has been approved by SDNPA and Adur and Worthing Councils (AWC), with conditions. Details can be viewed on the [AWC planning portal under Monks Farm planning application AWDM/1906/20](#).