

**Minutes of the Leighton-Linslade and Heath & Reach Sandpit Steering Group
Meeting
17 October 2022**

Present in person/remotely: Cllr T Morris (LLTC), Cllr V Harvey (LLTC), Cllr S Owen (LLTC), J Balaam (Greensand Trust), David Peachey (Central Bedfordshire Council).

Note taker: Mellony Jahn

Joining remotely – Ian Stoner-Redfern (Billington Parish Council), Siobhan Vincent (Central Bedfordshire Council)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ian Haynes.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and approved with any matters arising covered later in the agenda.

3. Green Infrastructure Update from Siobhan Vincent, CBC.

Siobhan Vincent from Central Bedfordshire Council joined the meeting remotely and informed the Group the Green Infrastructure Plan was waiting to be finalised and once completed would be shared with everyone.

The group were informed that Natural England would be releasing their updated Green Space Standards Framework in December and it was suggested this information could be used to update our Green Infrastructure plans for the Parish and also for Central Bedfordshire Council to follow these updated standards as well. Jon Balaam had set up a meeting with Natural England to discuss how we might use this information in Green Infrastructure Planning and could relay details to the group at a later date.

The amount of green infrastructure required is set out in the Leisure Strategy and dealt with by the Leisure Team. It was anticipated a revised Leisure Strategy would have been available within the next few months but it would now be at least 12 – 18 months before the Strategy would be available.

A question was raised regarding how much 'weight' the Local Green Infrastructure Plan of 2014 would hold if it was not associated with a Neighbourhood Plan. It would be considered by planners but would not hold as much 'weight' without a Neighbourhood Plan. It would be advantageous if the 2014 Local Infrastructure Plan was updated as an updated plan would hold more 'weight' than one from 2014.

Jon Balaam stated the major cost of updating this plan would be the mapping and the local green space assessment was a significant factor, the group requested predicted costs be brought back to the next meeting and then taken as a recommendation to the Grounds and Environmental Services meeting in December 2022.

Strategic document looks at blue and green infrastructure in the area and was due to be completed imminently and should be added to the website by the end of October. The information on this document would help with updating the Green Infrastructure Plan. Siobhan Vincent would send a link for standards for green space in Leisure Strategy to the group.

4. Grovebury Quarry Update

It was still unclear whether the restoration plan would be extended after 2026 and concerns whether a further extension would happen after that date.

Any planning application would be dealt with by the Planning Officer at Central Beds Council with the Minerals and Waste Team and each department would give their opinion on their particular area of expertise and recommendations given. There were staffing issues at present at Central Bedfordshire Council in these areas and a question was raised whether changes to the original restoration plan should be taken to the Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group so clarity could be gained from Howard Hughes on how to progress any issues and proposed amendments.

There was a need to balance green space with mineral sands extraction and how to keep this balance on course. A recommendation was suggested to write to Aggregate Industries re delivery of accessible green space and habitats in line with the current agreed restoration plan with the benefits in the short term for local people.

It was hoped the impact on the residents in the Billington Area could be amended and modifications suggested. A 10% net gain to biodiversity was not considered enough.

RECOMMENDATION to write to Aggregate Industries on their delivery of accessible green space and habitats in line with the current agreed restoration plan showing the benefits in the short term to local people.

5. Ledburn Quarry

No update at present, officers to pick-up with EA. The Group agreed a further letter should be written to Mark Kelly to request updates on matters from the last meeting.

6. Current Mineral Application - Bryant's Lane and Reach Lane

Longstanding application, extraction and processing plants. The S106 legal agreement was close to finalisation but still awaiting completion.

Stone Lane Quarry – this should be completed by January 2023 with a detailed restoration plan which would end in 2026. David Peachey would forward a map of potential rights of way. A recommendation to Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group to form a small group to discuss the walking map.

RECOMMENDATION to Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group to form a group to discuss the walking map.

7. Any Other Business – Local Natural Recovery add to Ouzel Valley Steering Group Meeting – Jon Balaam to present.

8. Date of next meeting

Monday 28 November 2022 10.00 am.

Meeting ended at 11.43 am.