



Leighton-Linslade Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group

2 September 2021 at 10:30 am

1. Appointment of Chair

Cllr T Morris was proposed and seconded as Chair; there were no further nominations. Cllr Morris took the Chair.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

Cllr V Harvey was proposed and seconded as Vice Chair; there were no further nominations.

3. Introduction and Apologies

Present: Cllr Tony Morris (LLTC), Cllr Victoria Harvey (LLTC/CBC), Cllr Clive Palmer (LLTC), Cllr Steve Owen (LLTC), Pauline Hey (Local Access Forum), Jon Balaam (Greensand Trust), Steve Lakin (CBC), Lyndsey Brannan (CBC), Howard Hughes (remotely CBC), Ian Haynes (LLTC), Sarah Sandiford (remotely LLTC), Mellony Jahn (LLTC), Gill King (remotely Friends of the Earth).

Apologies: Clive Beckett (Local Access Forum), Councillor Versallion, Councillor Perham

4. Approval of Minutes of 4 May 2021

One amendment was made to the item 5 GST to say that the Stanbridge Meadow Site was already owned by the GST and they had taken ownership of an additional area.

5. Matters Arising

The Tiddenfoot Masterplan was circulated after the last meeting and a request was made to add this to the Partnership Project List and a **recommendation made to Grounds and Environmental Services Committee to follow this up.**

Concerns were raised regarding the effects to the River Ouzel and the riverbank of the clearance at the Travelling Showman Site which had been undertaken in recent weeks. Members agreed the riverbank should be protected and also this area had been earmarked as an access route within the Green Wheel. An update was needed from Central Bedfordshire Council to find out what was happening on this site with the boundary and environmental implications It

was suggested that Councillor Gent be invited to visit and walk the site with Councillor Harvey and Jon Balaam to gain a clear understanding of the issues. A request was made to add this to the Actions List on item 5 for the next meeting for further discussion and an item added to the Agenda regarding the Cycle Strategy highlighting the importance of the access route across this site.

6. Review of action list

See attached updated action list with the latest comments in purple.

7. Information updates

CBC

Members discussed the provision of a small car park opposite the Grovebury Road Retail Park to allow easier access to the Water Meadows and Tiddenfoot. Concerns were raised regarding whether a car park would attract anti-social behaviour and increased litter in the area and would become an overflow for the retail park car park. The installation of a barrier would combat this to a certain extent but would incur extra costs for employment of a company/person to close it each night and reopen each morning.

The Group were informed there would be changes to the management of Riverside Walk over the next few years and a local consultation would take place regarding this.

LLTC

The Service Level agreement for Town Mill Bridge was progressing slowly towards a more formal process.

GST

A 135 metre stretch of the GST Ridge Walk had been resurfaced with probably a further 80m to go. This was a key area for the Green Wheel.

An artist for Project Gateway had been contracted and had produced a draft design for the Town Centre. Sustrans and CBC were involved.

GST would support the Right of Way Ouzel Valley Meander to Riverside Walk from the new Eastern development with a map and panel near to the new development.

Volunteer engagement/training was up and running and returning to normal.

Pollution in River Ouzel

A concern was raised by Councillor Harvey regarding the sewerage in the River Ouzel and the smell from the river had become worse. Jon Balaam informed the group the amount of water needed to provide for the area had increased

which meant more water would be extracted from the river. This would not be sustainable, and it was suggested an invite should be given to the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Canal and River Trust to attend a meeting of this group for further discussion and this concern added to the agenda for the next meeting.

8. **Link between countryside access and health** – this was removed from the agenda as no more updates needed at the present time.

9. **Leighton Buzzcycles Cycling Strategy**

A comprehensive document had been submitted to the group from Leighton Buzzcycles regarding a cycling strategy for the area. Thanks were given for the hard work in producing this document and a question raised whether a revision might be needed since the Government Gear Change policy had been introduced. Members were in favour of the strategy but felt further discussion with Buzzcycles was needed to ascertain the priorities from this document and whether it needed updating. An invite to the next meeting was suggested so representations could then be made to CBC with our views.

10. **Towpath improvements, Rosalind Bacon, Sustrans** – would be attending the next meeting of the group.

11. **Any other business**

Councillor Harvey raised a concern regarding the Walking for Health within the town and why it had stopped. Jon Balaam would talk to the Health Co-ordinator regarding this.

12. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday 9 December at 10.30 am,

Meeting ended 12.37 pm.