

## BEECH ROAD SAFETY WORKING GROUP

### MINUTES OF MEETING 22.06 HELD ON 21 JUNE 2022

**1) Attendees:**

Charles Cockburn (CC)  
Ian Gibson (IG)  
Graham Webb (GW)  
Malcolm Ward-Close (MWC)

**2) Apologies for absence:** None

**3) Approve minutes of the previous meeting:** Minutes 22.05, 21 April 2022 were approved.

**4) Declaration of interest:** (in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils Model Code of Conduct adopted July 2018) Councillors and Working Group members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Localism Act 2011. You must withdraw from the room or chamber when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.  
No interests were declarable.

**5) Footpaths Project**

**a) On-Road Footways**

*CIL Funding Application*

Our application for a grant of £14,000 for the installation of the on-road footways was submitted as planned. We have recently been informed by EHDC that their decision on the allocation of funds has been delayed until 28<sup>th</sup> July.

*Engagement with HCC (on-road footways)*

Plans for on-road 'white line' virtual footways in Beech Centre and Kings Hill are being developed in collaboration with Ian Janes, HCC Highways Department, who remains very supportive of the objective of improving pedestrian access in Beech. Aspects such as footway width (1.2 m remains the preferred width), starting and finishing on road markings, left or right-side footway, marked pedestrian crossing points and associated signage and minor sightline improvements have been discussed and Ian Janes has undertaken to produce a draft design for the on-road footways and it is anticipated that this will be ready in the coming weeks. This will be reviewed by BRSWG and it is anticipated that the HCC/BRSWG design will be ready in early September and, subject to funding and BPC approval, installation of the on-road pathways could take place this autumn.

**b) Off-Road Footways**

*Engagement with HCC (off-road footways)*

After consulting with Ian Janes and others on the best way to progress the off-road footpaths, GW has established a dialogue with Ben Brooks-Martin, Senior Transport Planner in the Economy, Transport and Environment Department, HCC. Ben has provided information on how the Community Funded Highway Infrastructure (CFHI) scheme might be used to support our off-road footways project and has

also investigated other council administered schemes that might be appropriate. Approaches to HCC Countryside services have so far been unsuccessful and it seems they only deal with infrastructure development on non-HCC land. Ben Brooks-Martin suggested that the next step should be a Feasibility Study of our off-road footways proposals and he has provided a quotation of £20,000 for his department were to carry out the study. After further discussions on the scope of the work and an acknowledgement from him that the CFHI scheme may not be ideally structured for straightforward improvements in small parishes like ours, this figure has been reduced to £12,500.

This latest quotation was discussed and it was agreed that, subject to further clarifications from Ben Brooks-Martin, this would be the most expedient route to follow.

**ACTION: GW** to ask for the quotation to be re-issued for the new amount and about the following:

- i. Ben Brooks-Martin has indicated that if the cost of the work comes in below £12,500, BPC will be due a refund. Can we agree an upper limit on their spending on the Feasibility Study as well?
- ii. When we reach the tendering stage, are BPC (or HCC on their behalf ) able to seek tenders from contractors outside the Traded Services list?
- iii. Is there just one approved contractor on the Traded Services list for each type of job? Or is there a panel?
- iv. What is the time-line for the feasibility study? Can we have a fixed deadline for delivery of the cost estimate?
- v. Can we reduce the cost of the feasibility study further by excluding the proposed footway section between Bushy Leaze car park and the start of the footpath through the privately owned woodland leading to the bottom of Kings Hill, as this is unlikely to involve any significant work other than removing fallen branches, etc?.

*Existing off-road woodland pathway across the private woodland (created in 2020), from Kings Hill to the old access ramp (approx 150 m west of Bushy Leaze car park entrance)*

Concerns expressed by the Beech residents who own the property immediately opposite the old access ramp, about being overlooked from the new woodland footpath, have been addressed with an undertaking from BPC to install a temporary green mesh screen beside the pathway and, for the longer term, to plant laurel bushes to screen their house from view (scheduled for November/December this year). Concerns of a similar nature have been expressed by the residents of two other adjacent properties and CC has taken an **ACTION** to contact them and arrange a meeting to discuss the existing woodland pathway and the proposals for a new section of off-road pathway connecting to the Bushy Leaze car park entrance.

*Proposals for new Off-Road Footpath between Bushy Leaze car park and the footpath to Kings Hill*

The current proposal is to create route starting from the western edge of the Bushy Leaze entrance beside the existing Bushy Leaze Sign, following the line of an existing deer-track across approx 100 m of Forestry England land and joining the existing woodland path to Kings Hill above and to the west of the old access ramp. It is hoped that this will be sufficiently far from properties on the other side of the road and well screened by heavy undergrowth and small trees to avoid any overlook issue.

FE have previously advised us that this area is 'open access' land and people are free to take any walking route they wish. Fallen timber and undergrowth can be moved aside but it is not permitted to fell trees or lay hard surfaces. As a courtesy, we should contact FE to explain our plans (after finalising discussions with nearby residents) **ACTION GW**.

## 6) 20's Plenty for Us

CC reported that he had received an email from Dr Hannah Greenberg, Hampshire Co-ordinator for 20's Plenty for Us raising two important matters:

- a) She highlighted that "...in the 3rd funding tranche for Active Travel Hampshire only secured 700k which equates to 69p/head. This is enough to build approximately 0.7miles of cycle lane or provide 7 miles of walking infrastructure. For the WHOLE of Hampshire. Slough received £69/head and many others received well over £20/head. It is estimated that to achieve mode shift we will need to be investing over £25/person per year for the next couple of decades to make a real difference. Hampshire is being somewhat short-sighted here with their unambitious bids for funding as future funding for ALL road projects will depend on ambitious active travel plans being part of the design. So expect much more 'managed decline' of our roads in the coming years... it's essential that they make the most of LTP4 or we shall be stuck with no money to do anything for many years to come." CC considered that this news was concerning because our road safety scheme in Beech set out to encourage active travel and that it was exactly the kind of scheme that HCC should be putting up into a bid for funding from central government money that has been allocated for that purpose.  
**Action** - CC to write to Mark Kemp-Gee raising the issue with him.
- b) She encouraged local parishes to respond to the then open consultation on Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). **Action** - Graham Webb undertook to send a response to the consultation on behalf of Beech PC.

**7) Date of next meeting:** TBD

Malcolm Ward-Close 22/6/2022