

Minutes of Mole Valley Cycling Forum Meeting, Thursday August 13th 2020 Held Online using Zoom

Present: Ron Billard (RB) [Chair], Colin Brewer (CB) [Treasurer], Roger Troughton (RT) [Secretary], Aldith Bruty (AB) [Fetcham], Rod Shaw [MVDC], John Arnold (JA) [Dorking], Julia Dickinson (JD) [Bookham/Effingham], Andrew Matthews (AM) [Bookham/Effingham]

Apologies: Peter Mayor (PM) [Leatherhead], Eric Palmer (EP) [Leatherhead]

1. Previous Minutes

Agreed.

2. Matters Arising, Outstanding Actions not covered elsewhere

RT raised a question at the Mole Valley Local Committee meeting in March relating to the pinch points which pedestrian refuges can create which can make cyclists feel very vulnerable when vehicle drivers attempt to overtake. Full details of the question and the response can be seen on page 3 (Question 4) of:

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/documents/s68117/Item%204a%20-%20Written%20Public%20Questions.pdf>

A supplementary point (basically indicating we were disappointed with the response) was raised to which the effective response was along the lines of “our comments will be taken into account with longer term active travel measures”.

3. Route Development Updates *(Nothing to report unless recorded below.)*

Bookham/Effingham area: Safe Routes to Howard of Effingham School

JD has helped form a group of councillors and residents to work together to look at safe routes to schools and introduced Andrew Matthews who is part of this team.

Dorking Southbound

RS reported that Zena Curry (SCC Highways) had agreed to arrange for vegetation cutbacks on this route.

Dorking centre – Meadowbank links:

Regarding the possibility of improving cross-Dorking cycling connectivity by developing a route along the northern and western sides of the football ground and then on to Archway Place through to North Street. RT had received a response from Mary Ann Edwards (SCC Rights of Way) which identifies the land ownership over which the existing footpaths run. RT recently attended a site meeting with RS along with Cllrs Hazel Watson and Clayton Wellman to look at the possibilities. RS indicated that there might be some legal issues and that the costs could cause problems.

Hookwood/Charlwood area

SCC's Active Travel plans (see below) include a shared cycle/footway scheme (segregated from motor traffic) on the A217 on the approaches to Gatwick Airport. The plan is to convert the existing wide verge to asphalt to create a shared use path of sufficient width along the entire length of the route which links the new Westvale Park housing development at the northern end to the Longbridge Roundabout at the southern end of the scheme.

4. Active Travel Initiatives

A raft of significant publications has recently been announced:

Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england>

Highway Code consultation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-highway-code-to-improve-road-safety-for-cyclists-pedestrians-and-horse-riders/summary-of-the-consultation-proposals-on-a-review-of-the-highway-code>

ALL are urged to respond to this consultation before it ends on 27 October 2020.

DfT Cycle Infrastructure design LTN 1/20:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

SCC Highways have established a microsite covering their plans at ourroads.today/activetravel (easier to remember than: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/maintenance/roads/department-for-transport-capital-funding/roads-and-pavements>) to cover their Active Travel Fund plans for roads and pavements. This includes a map where you can mark up with request(s) for changes in your area:

<https://surreycovidtransportmap.commonplace.is/comment>

Here is the link to the latest plans for Mole Valley: <https://surreycovidsoutheast.commonplace.is/overview>

In Leatherhead the plans extend to pedestrianising the High Street on Sundays plus permitting cyclists to use the pedestrianised area (in the same direction as the existing one-way only). On the very edge of Mole Valley, around Hookwood, there are proposals to provide a shared route alongside the A217 (more above). Elsewhere in Mole Valley (Dorking, Ashted, Great Bookham) the plans simply involve additional cycle parking!

It would be helpful if you would comment on all these proposals.

RS noted that the Tranche 2 bid is now in – the Government have been looking for schemes that will have a major impact. He also commented that the Active Travel funding is primarily for large projects, small scale improvements are actually quite difficult to fund. CIL should be used to help integrate new (housing etc) developments. RS suggested that a meaningful Waterway Road proposal would make a good future active travel bid. RT asked JA if any of his group might have the skills to be able to come up with ideas as to how a cycle route alongside Waterway Road might be tackled. (Significant issues include existing limitations on the highway width, adjacent railway embankments and a river crossing.) **JA** to discuss with his colleagues.

RB offered his MVCF Powerpoint template (see <https://mvcf.org.uk/assets/documents/mvcf-ppt-template>)

RS also suggested that it might be useful if MVCF together with Dorking RATS were to make a joint approach to Surrey Highways (via Zena Curry) to hold some form of workshop with their engineers to look at some of the issues holding back safer cycling opportunities.

JD asked about revenue funding for Bikeability. AB explained that the scheme now falls under the DfT. They are not currently covering Level 3. Instructors will be making approaches to schools to discuss this.

AB to find out more for JD as to whether there might be scope to provide Bikeability L3 training for groups of people in work, to give them confidence.

5. Police Issues; Road Casualties

JD pointed out that issues with cycling on pavements would likely move to Local Authority enforcement teams. Concerns were also raised about e-scooters.

6. Cycling Issues: Road Racing/Sportives/Off-Road; Road Closures

RT had received an email from Paul Ansell (British Cycling) with details of their plans to restart road events, although he personally did not think that cycle racing would start in Surrey before mid-August at the earliest.

7. Dates and Venues for Future Meetings

The next formal meeting of the Forum which will incorporate the AGM will be at **7pm on Thursday 12th November**. It is likely that it will need to be held online again. RB indicated that he would not be standing again as Chair and invited others to consider standing.

Given the popularity of the recent informal meeting held outside at Denbies, it was suggested we hold a similar informal meeting on Thurs 1st October (although sunset at 18.38 may preclude this). Details will be sent out closer to the time.

8. AOB

MVCF Constitution: RT has resent a draft *for review* by **RB**.

Via email, EP raised a couple of issues. One was regarding vehicles parking on the cycle path/access road near the NT Stepping Stones car park. RB commented that whilst unfortunate, these people had to park somewhere at present, and that there was always the cycle path on the other side of the A24.

Another point EP raised referred to blind corners on cycle paths (eg. Ashcombe Road & nr Givons Grove). Where these are vegetation related, the first step is to log these via the SCC website, eg.

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/report-a-highway-problem/tell-us-about-a-tree,-hedge,-grass-or-weed-issue> (quite reasonable as if they aren't notified about the issues they can't start to address them). The sites will be inspected and appropriate action taken – if private vegetation owners will be asked to cut it back or if highway vegetation it would be prioritised for cut back by their very limited resource.

RT wondered if the issues with lack of resources to address vegetation cutbacks could be addressed by volunteers (there is an existing scheme for footpaths and bridleways). RS indicated that there was a scheme, and has subsequently provided details here: <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/surrey-matters/getting-around/highways-community-volunteering>

JD asked for comments on their Bookham Greenways proposal - see

<https://mvcf.org.uk/assets/documents/bookham-greenways>

Reference was also made to the Surrey Strategic Greenways proposal - see

<https://mk0surreyhillsnif4k.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Item-4-Annex-Surrey-Strategic-Greenways.pdf> which was recently presented to the Surrey Hills Board.

RS said he would see if he could find out contact details for the author, Kieran Foster.

RT to include a copy of the Dorking RATS report on Revitalising Cycling & Walking in Dorking with the minutes provided by JA.

RT pointed out our Cycle Route Priorities (<https://mvcf.org.uk/assets/documents/cyclepriorities2018>) were last reviewed in 2018 and we need to consider whether it is time these should be looked at again.