

Minutes of Mole Valley Cycling Forum Meeting/AGM, Thursday November 12th 2020 Held Online using Zoom

Present: Ron Billard (RB) [Chair], Colin Brewer (CB) [Treasurer], Roger Troughton (RT) [Secretary], Andy Tanner [Dorking], Peter Mayor (PM) [Leatherhead], Eric Palmer (EP) [Leatherhead], John Arnold (JA) [Dorking], A Rod Shaw (RS) [MVDC], Julia Dickinson (JD) [Bookham/Effingham], Andrew Matthews (AM) [Bookham/Effingham], Kevin Stroud (KS) [Dorking], Nigel Burke (NB) [Guildford G-BUG observer], Michael Bourke (MB) [Buckland]

Apologies:

Aldith Bruty (AB) [Fetcham]

1. Previous Minutes

Agreed (although later in the meeting EP asked to point out that in the item he had raised via email under AOB, it had been implied that his concern was about vegetation causing visibility issues at corners at Ashcombe Road and Givons Grove, whereas what he meant was that he felt that suitable warning signs were needed at those locations).

2. Matters Arising, Outstanding Actions not covered elsewhere

Unless mentioned below, the actions from the previous meeting have been cleared.

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

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

EP noted that demolition of buildings has started in the HoE area with more cars parked in the road.

AM reported that JD (who joined later) was in the final stages of putting her paper together with the aim of submitting it when Tranche 3 funding for Active Travel is announced (there was insufficient time to submit it for Tranche 2).

Leatherhead/Ashted Area

JA reported that he had approached the Dorking RATS group to see if they could come up with any suggestions to create a safe cycling route along Waterway Road, but they didn't feel they were able to assist.

Waterway Road is considered a "missing link". Whilst it might be possible to create a shared route on the pavement, there is a width issue at the bridge crossing over the river. Any solutions are likely to need funding outside the SCCs ability. Redevelopment of the sorting office site might yield opportunities, although it is really on the wrong side of the road. RB suggested that MVCF take this on as scheme to campaign for.

RS reported that the changes in the High Street as part of the Covid Active Travel initiative were to remain for at least 3 months. Feedback indicates that the changes have been successful and positively received, except by the few people against anything that keeps cars away from the High St. There is some opposition to cycling through the area, although this is thought to be more perception than genuine issues. There will be discussions about the long term future of this initiative.

Dorking Southbound

It has been noticed that the footway alongside the A24 towards N Holmwood (on MVCF's list for upgrading to shared use) has been "sided-out" to regain width. Currently leaf drop is covering much of the width. JA reported that whilst it is OK on a MTB, the surface is not really suitable for road bikes. JA had spoken with the contractors carrying out the work, and they said Highways would be looking at top-dressing, where necessary, when the leaves have cleared. He also noted tricky junction at Chart Lane South and that the N Holmwood roundabout is dangerous. RS reported that County had spent £22K on this work, noting that unless the scheme hasn't been completed, they didn't get much for the money. JA commented that, in comparison, the surface (funded by SCC Rights of Way) on Wolvens Lane (a byway) was now lovely.

Dorking centre – Meadowbank links:

RS provided an update on the possible provision of a route around the football ground. The north-side should be fairly easy, although there is additional planting planned to screen the ground from nearby residents. The issue is after that. The footpath to Station Road is too narrow. They are currently looking at a grant application (funded by CIL money) for environmental improvements in the Archway Place area. Also the issue of current designation of these routes as footpaths would have to be addressed. RS has spoken with Claire Saunders (SCC RoW).

4. Active Travel Initiatives

Following the suggestion at the last meeting that it might be useful if an approach were to be made to Surrey Highways to hold a workshop with their engineers to look at some of the issues holding back safer cycling opportunities, the following response had been received "...thank you once again for your suggestion for a round table discussion with planners/engineers to develop ideas for cycling infrastructure within the Mole Valley District, should funding come forward for the development of additional cycling infrastructure in the future we would be happy to attend such a meeting."

This indicates there is no money available at present. Apparently without a Cycling/Walking strategy Mole Valley is not going to be successful with any bids for government funding, yet it is County's responsibility to produce Cycling & Walking Strategies. It was suggested that our response to Highways should be to ask what the proposals are to produce a strategy, and wouldn't it be sensible to have a workshop to help develop this.

Previous work on the Mole Valley Cycling Plan (<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/cycling-and-walking/plans/mole-valley>) hasn't really led anywhere, as no responsibility had been allocated for implementing it. However, it would be a good basis for progressing a Cycling Plan rather than starting again from scratch.

RS to talk to MVDC's Lucy O'Connell, who helped develop the 2014 plan, with regard to its current status.

At the last meeting, JD had asked about revenue funding for Bikeability. **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.(c/f)

5. Police Issues; Road Casualties

Regarding the Highway Code Consultation EP queried when the changes would take effect. The website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-highway-code-to-improve-road-safety-for-cyclists-pedestrians-and-horse-riders> currently states: "We are analysing your feedback - Visit this page again soon to download the outcome to this public feedback."

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

RT had received an email from Paul Ansell (British Cycling) in September when he advised that cycle racing on the roads of Surrey would not re-start this year.

At SCC's Cabinet meeting: <https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=120&MId=7264&Ver=4> item 165/20, the decision was taken not to support Ride London from 2021, despite the majority view (even of Surrey residents) in favour of retaining it. SCC will work with the organisers to maximise the benefits to Surrey and mitigate any potential negative impacts of the shorter sportive/inspiration ride event scheduled for May 2021; and after 2021 they will remain open-minded to and explore opportunities for smaller, less disruptive events that might inspire cycling for everyday journeys, rather than events focussed primarily on sports cycling. (Events subject to Covid etc.)

7. Dates and Venues for Future Meetings

The next formal meeting of the Forum will be at **7pm on Thursday 4th February 2021**, most likely online again. The provisional date set for the next informal meeting was Thursday January 7th 2021. Details will be sent out nearer to the time.

8. Financial Statement and Approval of Accounts

CB presented the accounts which were then approved – Proposer: RT / PM

The current balance is £25.82, with an outstanding amount of £14.38 due (to cover domain name costs).

RB offered to approach local County Councillors, as £50 would fund several more years of the MVCF domain name.

9. Voting in of Officers / appointment of committee

RB tendered his resignation as Chair, so a replacement was sought. JA offered his services and was voted in.

Chair – John Arnold Proposer: RT / RB

The other officers were voted in to continue for a further year:

Treasurer – Colin Brewer, Proposer: KS / AT

Secretary - Roger Troughton. Proposer: KS / AT

10. AOB

MVCF Constitution

Both the current and proposed versions were issued with the agenda. RT explained that it was last updated in 2007 and was in need of revision to tidy things up. The meeting approved the revised Constitution.

An A-level student in Dorking has been carrying out a set of cycling surveys as part of his coursework, and has offered to share the results, which could prove very useful. RT suggested that he be approached with a view to presenting his findings at a future meeting.

RT had previously pointed out that the last review of our Cycle Route Priorities had been in 2018.

(<https://mvcf.org.uk/assets/documents/cyclepriorities2018>) It was suggested that this be deferred for the time being.

NCN22 Review: RT (as a Sustrans Volunteer Ranger for this route) noted that a review is currently underway to contribute towards a Network Development Plan which aims to improve the route.

NB, as an observer, asked if there was any interaction with similar campaigning groups in adjacent areas and offered to send details of the next G-BUG meeting to RT (RT to forward to JD as the HoE school is in the Guildford Borough).

JD asked whether it would be a good idea to set up a Facebook page. **RB** offered to help set one up with the assistance of JD.

There was also discussion about setting up a WhatsApp group. MB offered to set this up (Post Meeting Note: The WhatsApp group is now set up). MB provided details of his mobile number during the meeting. Anyone else interested in joining this group should contact the Secretary to be provided with further details.