



Luton Local Access Forum

Minutes, meeting 8

Date and time

Wednesday 17 June 2026, 6.30pm

Venue

Luton Town hall, first floor, committee room 4

Attendees

Shohel Amin (SA), Highway Development Control Manager (Planning), Luton Council [remote]

Russell Cartwright (RC)

Jo Colwell (JC), Head of Climate Change, Luton Council

Sara Farr (SF), Planning and Policy Team, Luton Council

Mamnun Khan (MK)

David Landau (DL)

John Mardle (JM) [remote]

Milena Mocarska (MM), Transport Planner, Luton Council

Cherry Newbery (CN)

Raheed Salam (RS)

Graham Simpson (GS) [remote]

Chris Thom (CT), Policy Team Manager, Luton Council

Louis Upton (LU)

Secretary

Sarah Smart (SS), Rights of Way Officer, Luton Council

Objectives

To agree the minutes.

To discuss on-going rights of way and access matters.

1. Welcome and apologies

MK welcomed everyone and the following members sent their apologies:

- Konni Deppe



- Rick Donnelly, Operations Manager (Facilities & Business Support), Luton Council
- Councillor Javeria Hussain
- Sam Mostyn-Willis
- David Oakley-Hill
- Antony Swift (AS), Head of Transport Services, Luton Council
- Claire Wainwright

2. Named priority or special area of interest

2.1 Local Plan

CT, Policy Team Manager, Luton Council, gave an update on the Local Plan. A new local plan will replace the old plan, which is now 8 years old. The government has made changes to the process, but work done prior to these changes can be incorporated. The current stage is a public scoping consultation and call for sites. Following this public consultation and evidence gathering exercise, a draft vision will be prepared and a public consultation will take place in May 2027. A proposed local plan will follow with consultation on that in November 2027.

Questions and discussion followed. Key points were:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) includes some items previously covered by the local plan; Development Control can now look directly at the NPPF
- Whether the housing requirement is achievable at just over 1000 dwellings a year for Luton
- The study of housing need
- The challenges of limited land availability in Luton
- Innovative design and impact on transport
- Applications to protect green spaces: the LAF can set out the difficulties in identifying green spaces, name them and say why they should be protected
- The justification of any use of green spaces
- The use of NPPF and local plan to refuse planning applications
- Health equity
- The lack of responses from individual residents
- Improving stakeholder engagement
- Comparison with similar Local Authorities

Action: LU to re-draft the LAF feedback on the Local Plan

CT and SF left the meeting.

2.2 Local Transport Plan

MM, Transport Planner, Luton Council, gave a presentation on the draft Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) and a post-consultation update. A consultation report sets



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out the findings and informs the refinements to the draft LTP5. There are no material changes to the vision, objectives or strategic direction. Additional wording, policy measures and illustrations have refined the plan. LAF comments have been addressed. The LTP is going through the adoption process.

Some discussion followed, including:

- Pavement parking, policy 17 covers parking and policy 17A has stronger wording on enforcement

Action: MM to check about pavement parking and LTP5 with AS

MM left the meeting.

2.3 Rights of Way Improvement Plan

SA, Highway Development Control Manager (Planning), Luton Council provided an update on the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). The Project Centre Limited (PCL) have carried out a review, have made recommendations and are now drafting an updated, but simplified, ROWIP in line with current Luton strategies, national requirements and local priorities, including looking at pavement parking.

The LAF requested sight of the draft when available.

2.4 Climate Change

JC, Head of Climate Change, Luton Council presented an overview of her work. With regards to the Council 2040 vision, the public 'want it to be easy to make good choices for the planet' and we need resilience. The Council have applied for funding to open up more of the River Lea. The Nature Towns and Cities: Roots to Healthy Places project is trying to build partnerships and engage with communities. It is an ambitious project with numerous workstreams. Rhiannon Buckley has been appointed to manage the implementation of the project.

A brief discussion followed, key points and questions included:

- What levers do we have to effect change? AS covers active travel including quality cycle infrastructure
- Is 2040 embedded across all council departments? 2040 is based on the whole Council working towards the goal of net zero emissions: officers want to do the right thing but must account to the public
- There is concern about preserving trees in Luton; there are two arboricultural Officers responsible for trees in the town

JC left the meeting.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Forum members agreed the minutes with a minor amendment to item 6.6, where the path was recorded as FP44 and should read FP43.



4. Matters arising

Actions not covered elsewhere on the agenda were discussed:

- RS to seek approval to share the report on young people's perspective: RS has not been given permission to share the report
- SS to arrange for a presentation on Wigmore Park: SS discussed this with LU/MK and agreed to postpone until September due to better fit with the Wigmore Park timetable
- SS investigated the Ramblers Don't Lose Your Way map of lost path: it is not accessible without a login

Actions carried forward to the next meeting:

- SA to review planning application for Gillam Court regarding the footpath through the development: SS to provide details to SA

5. Public path orders (PPOs)

SS reported that she visited FP43 while in the vicinity and the path is still blocked by brambles. WSP have requested that the contractor clear the path and will confirm when it is clear.

SS reported that FP25 requires an S119 (Highways Act) order for the diversion of this path, which SA will prepare. LU felt it needed further work to be acceptable.

6. Public spaces protection orders (PSPOs)

SS reported progress on Leyhill Drive. She visited the neighbouring properties and spoke to the owners/occupiers about the obstructions. Currently, they are unwilling to remove the obstructions voluntarily, so we plan to send an enforcement notice before going in to remove the obstructions and attempting to recover the costs.

7. Definitive map modification orders (DMMOs)

SS provided a brief presentation updating on progress on DMMOs. Key points were:

- The number of paths being considered in Central ward has increased from 14 to 26; 16 have been surveyed
- Paths in Kingsway Park are being used 'by right', not 'as of right', so will not be added as public rights of way
- An application for direction to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) was rejected and we need to carry out Land Registry searches on all routes
- A new application for direction has been made for Beech Hill ward, where some land is unregistered
- Land Registry searches are needed for all routes in Barnfield ward



- The determination report for Beech Hill ward has been prepared and is being review

8. Registers

SS reported that there has been no change in the register of landowner statements or in the register of highways statements and declarations.

9. Planning applications impacting on rights of way

SA reported that the planned development on the Hertfordshire-Luton border will have a significant impact on Luton roads and so an S106 agreement is being negotiated to find the best sustainable solution for Luton. Elsewhere the focus is on sustainable transport (car free developments and improving cycling and walking infrastructure) while also considering the impact of construction traffic.

SA is looking at developing a policy for highway development and a more structured way of looking at planning applications.

The members asked for an update at the next meeting.

GS mentioned his work at Be Active with Abigail Chapman on S106 agreements for sports facilities and active travel.

10. Ongoing projects and consultations

SS reported that the cycle map has reached final proof stage and is going to print next week. We will then be looking at making a digital version available online, if possible.

11. Pride in Place

SS wrote to Rachel Hopkins MP and Sarah Owen MP requesting a meeting to discuss Pride in Place. Rachel Hopkins' office replied stating that they are currently recruiting a Chair and board. It might be best to attend our September meeting along with the chair of the new board. Sarah Owen's office asked for our thoughts on Pride in Place and Sarah is happy to engage.

It was agreed to invite the MPs and board chairs to the next meeting.

Action: SS to liaise with MPs and Pride in Place board chairs about attending the LAF in September.

12. Any other business

MK mentioned that the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 247 application for the proposed stopping up of highway at Wandon Park adjacent to



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Wandon Close, Luton LU2 8DX will be decided upon by written representations instead of a Public Inquiry.

13. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 9 September 2026, 6:30pm, Luton Town Hall, committee room 4

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Actions

- LU to re-draft the LAF feedback on the Local Plan
- MM to check about pavement parking and LTP5 with AS
- SA to review planning application for Gillam Court regarding the footpath through the development: SS to provide details to SA
- SS to liaise with MPs and Pride in Place board chairs about attending the LAF in September