

CYCLE FORUM

TUESDAY, 11 APRIL 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Malcolm Beer, Paul Lion, Derek Wilson (Chairman) and Lynda Yong (Vice-Chairman)

Also in attendance: Luke McCarthy, Ian Taplin, Andrew Payne, Steven Shepherd and Harry Bodenhofer.

Officers: Gordon Oliver and Karen Shepherd

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Susy Shearer

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2017 be approved, subject to the inclusion of Susy Shearer in the attendance.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Forum received an update on initial proposals to be put forward for inclusion in the proposed 2017/18 capital programme. Full council on 21 February 2017 had agreed the council budget, including £75,000 for cycling. In addition to the slippage from the previous year, this totalled £122,200, and an additional £30,000 for school cycle parking.

The Forum noted the individual proposals:

- Maidenhead 'Missing Links' business case – A bid had been made to the LEP to connect the opportunity areas around the town centre in relation to walking, cycling and public realm. A joint venture partner had been appointed to progress four of the sites. £25,000 was proposed to pay for consultants to develop the business case.. Benefits needed to offset costs by a factor of 2:1 to secure the funding.
- Cherwell Close bridge, Maidenhead - The proposal was to replace the existing narrow pedestrian bridge behind the Magnet leisure centre to Town Moor. As a main river, EA approval was required therefore a design was needed early on in the process.
- A329 Ascot High Street – this was a legacy scheme from the previous year.
- Thames Path, Eton Wick - £15,000 would be required for much-needed maintenance. It was confirmed that although cycling was actively discouraged on some parts of the Thames Path, this stretch formed part of National Cycle Network Route 4.

- Bradenham Lane, Bisham – the scheme focussed on existing cycle routes to the north west of Maidenhead. £10,000 would be a contribution to Highways England works for a new cycle lane between Hurley Lane and Bradenham Lane. The Highways England fund was to address severance issues caused by Highways England roads. It was commented that the permitted bridleway link between Dungleve Hill Lane and Hurley Lane was poorly surfaced and should be improved as part of the scheme.
- Brocas Street, Eton – the council was working with the Eton Neighbourhood Planning Group to remove the current cycle parking that was causing an obstruction, and replace it with a new larger facility. The £5,000 was a top up to the Participatory Budget scheme. It was confirmed that the new facilities would be secured before the old one was removed.
- Osgood Park, Windsor and Victoria Park – the council had a manifesto commitment to provide cycle parking in local parks. Stephen Shepherd commented that there may be little demand, particularly as children using the parks often chose to lay their bikes on the ground rather than use cycle parking facilities. He was advised to discuss this with Councillor E. Wilson who had put in the request for Osgood Park.
- Thames Street, Windsor – additional cycle parking between Windsor Bridge and Datchet Road.
- Lower Road, Cookham Rise – cycle parking to be provided by the local shops.
- Three schools were proposed for additional cycle parking facilities – Churchmead School, Datchet, Wessex Primary School, Cox Green and St Edward's First School, Windsor. A consultation had been undertaken with all schools the previous year to identify those with no or poor cycle parking facilities.

It was confirmed that the budget of £75,000 comprised council funding and developer contributions. The Forum requested details of the split, in comparison to the previous year. The Principal Transport Policy Officer agreed to circulate the details to Members.

It was confirmed that consultation with ward councillors and parish councils would take place on all proposals before being presented to Cabinet.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the cycling schemes to be taken to Cabinet for approval be noted, and that details of the budget split between local authority funding and developer contributions be circulated to all Forum attendees.

PROPENSITY TO CYCLE TOOL

The Forum received a presentation on the Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT), which was an online tool designed to help predict which areas had the greatest potential for increasing cycling. It showed where the greatest health and environmental benefits could be delivered by people choosing to cycle to work rather than driving, and what could happen if significant investment meant Dutch standard infrastructure was in place. The tool was free to use, with open access at www.pct.bike. The tool was funded by the Department for Transport and had been developed by a consortium of academic partners led by CEDAR at the University of Cambridge. The tool had been refined with input from a range of transport professionals and stakeholders from across England; Rachel Aldridge of the University of Westminster had been involved. A series of workshops had been held across England.

The Forum noted that conventional transport planning tools considered motor traffic and public transport. There were few professional tools available to inform the planning and development of cycling infrastructure. The new tool would help transport planners to spend money more effectively and to make the business case for cycling. It would also help government to prioritise where to direct funding for cycling.

The PCT covered the whole of England and data could be analysed at county level. Counties were further divided into Middle Super Output Areas (MSOA). MSOAs were determined by the number of residents, so rural areas were much larger than urban areas. The tool used 2011 Census data to look at where people lived and which cycled to work. It looked at factors such as trip distance and hilliness to work out which trips could most readily be cycled.

The tool considered considers four scenarios:

- Government targets
- Gender equality
- Go Dutch
- E-bikes

It showed the cycling potential between areas with outputs shown as straight lines. It could also show the cycling potential along specific routes, mapping cycling potential onto the existing network, using CycleStreets journey planner. It showed the change in cycling and driver numbers, health benefits in terms of reduced deaths per year and reductions in carbon emissions. In terms of limitations, the Forum noted that the tool only considered commuting journeys that were 100% made by bike and did not handle cross-boundary trips very well. Medium Super Output Areas were quite large and centroids may differ from actual destination points. Route mapping for 'fast' options used the fastest legally cycleable route and may therefore include roads that the council would not encourage cyclists to use. It was also noted that the PCT only looked at commuting trips, therefore did not take into account cycling trips by children travelling to school.

The tool demonstrated that the highest levels of cycle commuting were in Windsor, Eton & Eton Wick (5% of trips). The lowest levels of cycle commuting in Ascot, Sunninghill & Sunningdale (1% of trips). In rural areas, cycling typically accounted for 2% of commuting trips. If the Go Dutch scenario was input, the highest levels of cycle commuting would be in Windsor, Eton, Eton Wick & parts of Maidenhead (20-24% of trips). The lowest levels of cycle commuting would still be in Ascot, Sunninghill & Sunningdale (11-12% of trips). In rural areas, cycling would increase to 15-19% of commuting trips. The trips with greatest potential were noted as:

Maidenhead:

- Riverside to town centre
- St Marks to town centre
- Boyn Hill to town centre
- Furze Platt East to town centre
- Cox Green to town centre

Windsor:

- Clewer Village & Clewer Within to Windsor Town Centre & Eton
- Spital & Clewer Green to Windsor Town Centre & Eton

- Clewer New Town & Dedworth East to Windsor Town Centre & Eton
- Dedworth West to Clewer Village & Clewer Within
- Clewer New Town and Dedworth East to Clewer Village & Clewer Within

In conclusion, the PCT was useful to show where growth in cycling trips was likely to come from, and where investment was likely to have the greatest benefit. However, the size and shape of the MSOAs made it difficult to pick out key routes. The urban areas of Maidenhead and Windsor had the most potential for increased cycling trips. 'Maidenhead Missing Links' would improve links to the town centre from the east and north, which was where some of the greatest potential existed. Improving access to Maidenhead town centre from the west should also be a priority, including the crossing of Frascati Way. In Windsor, the greatest potential would come from improving the Dedworth Road / Clarence Road corridor. Improving the A308 / Parsonage Lane / Mill Lane roundabout could also have significant potential for improving cycling trips.

Forum attendees were encouraged to go online and use the tool, and provide any feedback to officers.

Luke McCarthy commented that in relation to the Missing Links project, Maidenhead would be starting from a lower base according to the tool, therefore would potentially have a stronger case for funding. It was noted that, despite its limitations, the PCT was the best tool available without undertaking hundreds of cycle counts across the country. Ian Taplin commented that a lot of the outputs were common sense, as routes were often popular because cycling infrastructure was already in place.

The Chairman commented that the data could be fed into the planning department to guide development in principle.

CYCLING SAFETY REVIEW

The Forum received a presentation on the Cycling Safety Review, based on an analysis cycling casualties contained in the STATS19 database, which:

- Only included incidents where the police were in attendance, or where the crash was subsequently reported to the police.
- Significantly under-reported cyclist casualties. A 2011 study showed that hospital episodes were 3x higher than STATS19 statistics.
- A small number of incidents did not involve a collision (e.g. one party reports near miss / road rage incident after the event).

The analysis period was 2012 to 2016 (5 years). The total number of crashes was 291, with a total of 299 casualties. The Forum considered a number of statistics relating to casualty numbers, including by severity, over time, by age, by gender, time of day, area, junction type, speed limit, crossing type, road and lighting conditions. The Forum noted that there was a significant increase in slight casualties reported in 2016 compared to previous years, however there was no obvious explanation for this. The two urban areas of Maidenhead and Windsor had the most casualties. In relation to junction type, Luke McCarthy commented that the council's policy to replace traffic lights with roundabouts may have a negative effect as the majority of casualties were at normal and mini-roundabouts. It was noted however that some of the junction types listed such as crossroads may include traffic lights. The Chairman commented that he

had raised the issue of cars giving cyclists necessary space when overtaking with the Chief Constable, who had been very receptive and was keen to take the enforcement approach across the Thames Valley. Andrew Payne commented that there was also an issue when cyclists undertook cars on left hand cycle lanes, as cyclists would be closer than 1.5 metres to the cars.

The STATS19 form allowed for up to four contributory factors to be recorded. These were recorded by the officer attending and were based on their judgement. For crashes involving cyclists in the Royal Borough, the three most commonly recorded contributory factors were:

1. Failed to look properly (177)
2. Failed to judge the other person's path / speed (61)
3. Careless / reckless / in a hurry (56)

The Forum considered details of accidents at cluster sites around the borough.

In terms of mitigation, cyclists were vulnerable at roundabouts, therefore the best treatment was to avoid the roundabout altogether, by provision of an alternative route or grade-separation. For smaller roundabouts, a segregated peripheral cycle route was an option with cyclist given priority over entries and exits. Many roundabouts already had alternative routes (e.g. Heatherwood, Braywick, Clarence Road, Kings Road and Maidenhead Road roundabouts), but they were less direct or suffered from a lack of priority over side-roads and accesses. Forum attendees commented that telling cyclists to avoid roundabouts was not setting a good precedent and could discourage cycling. Ian Taplin suggested that on-carriageway peripheral routes was an easy solution as it simply required the painting of white lines. The Principal Transport Policy Officer commented that such measures did not reflect current Dutch best practice, where they were being removed. Segregated peripheral cycle routes could only be used on single lane entry roundabouts which were not common in the UK. The Chairman agreed to discuss the idea with the Lead Member for Highways and Transport. Andrew Payne suggested an alternative was to paint cycle images in the middle lane to encourage cyclists to move into the middle or better visibility.

Ian Taplin suggested warning signs on large roundabouts such as Castle Hill and Hibbert Road, which would support prosecution attempts. Where there was a history of accidents on a roundabout, he felt signs would be justified. The Chairman commented that the location of signage was important, so as not to obstruct sightlines.

The Forum noted proposed mitigation measures for specific sites:

Heatherwood roundabout – no mitigation had been identified as there was no clear trend

Drift Road / Fifield Lane – signing improvements were planned.

Braywick roundabout – no mitigation had been identified but the area would be looked at as part of the Local Plan. The A308(M) was a Highways England route so the

council had no powers to put up signs. It was suggested that rumble strips would be an option to slow cars.

London Road / Horton Road / The Green – no mitigation had been identified as there was no clear trend.

Majors Farm Road / Ditton Road – tighten radius on south-east corner to reduce vehicle speeds

Castle Hill, Cookham Road and Forlease Road roundabouts – the council is assessing options to help cyclists get between North Maidenhead and the town centre as part of the Missing Links project (i.e. bridge, surface crossings and subway enhancements).

Shoppenhangers Road and Shoppenhangers Road / Cox Green Road roundabout – no mitigation identified. The golf course development may affect traffic on Shoppenhangers Road therefore access arrangements were key. In relation to taxi issues in the area, the Chairman commented that numerous discussions with operators had taken place. The development of the station area was part of the wider regeneration proposals.

Ray Mead Road roundabout – no mitigation had been identified

Cookham Road – no mitigation had been identified as there was no clear trend

Mill Lane roundabout – assessing options including a parallel cycle crossing and junction signalisation

Kings Road roundabout – this has been the subject of a recent safety scheme designed to reduce vehicle speeds at the north-west corner

Thames Street / Datchet Road – assessing options including provision of advanced stop lines and re-design of 'Theatre Island' road network. Steven Shepherd suggested cyclist 'go first' lights or an extended cycle path. The Principal Transport Policy Officer commented that the narrow road meant options were limited.

Maidenhead Road / Vale Road – no mitigation had been identified as there was no clear trend

Dedworth Road – no mitigation had been identified as there was no clear trend.

Luke McCarthy highlighted that according to the statistics, just 16% (13 of 82) casualties were the fault of cyclists. Councillor Beer suggested that Project Centre should be asked for their views on schemes being put in place elsewhere in the country. He also commented that many cyclists wore black, the colours of Team Sky, which did not help in terms of visibility.

The Principal Transport Policy Officer commented that officers had looked at the Maidenhead Gateway but it had been difficult to identify what improvements could be added to help cyclists.

In relation to Hibbert Road, it was confirmed that signs would be going up soon. A new contractor had just been appointed who was working through the backlog of schemes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Cyclist fatality Winkfield Road

The only information provided by the police was that the incident, when a van had driven into the back of a cyclist, had taken place early in the morning and that distraction had been a possible contributory factor. The council would not be informed if there was a prosecution.

b) Cycle Parking

The police had not reported any significant issue with bike thefts. Four racks had been installed at Windsor & Eton Riverside, others were detailed in the capital programme. The council was proactively working to increase capacity at Maidenhead station to 300. Councillor Beer suggested there should be no reduction in CCTV coverage in problem areas.

c) Bikeability programme

It was noted that all training (levels 1-3) was provided by Cycle Experience. Courses were funded via a bid to the DfT each year. In 2016/17 1006 places had been funded, with 28 schools participating (mainly junior and primary). Cycle Experience had contacted all schools, including local private schools, to encourage participation. In 2017/18, funding would allow for 915 places. The cost was £40 per place. The reduction in funding was a national trend. Councillor Beer expressed concern that the government was trying to promote cycling but was also cutting funding for such schemes. It was noted that there was no funding for adult Bikeability. Forum attendees commented that if £3m was being spent on infrastructure, it would also be sensible for the council to provide training to encourage adults to cycle.

d) Stafferton Way Crossing

At the last meeting the Forum had agreed a staggered crossing would be appropriate, with raised tables for cyclists to cross. The scheme would cost £25,000 but was currently not funded but was on the reserve list. Unfortunately the traffic management budget had been reduced for 2017/18. Ian Taplin commented that the junction remained a very dangerous place to cycle across, particularly at night. He had been involved in and witnessed several near misses. It was noted that a number of flatted developments were anticipated in the area, therefore the council could seek developer contributions for improvements to the junction close by.

e) Heathrow

Councillor Yong informed the Forum that a group had recently met with the Surface Access Manager at Heathrow. If the third runway went ahead, the airport had committed to no increase in vehicular movements therefore they were looking at other ways to increase the use of public transport and cycling. It was noted that 75% of those travelling to the airport did so by public transport, but the majority came from London; public transport links from the borough were limited. She suggested the Surface Area Manager be invited to the next Forum meeting to discuss opportunities for cycleways into the airport.

f) Event signs

Councillor Beer suggested the council's policy on event signs should be tightened up to ensure they did not obstruct road users.

g) Next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 13 July 2017 in Maidenhead.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.35 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....