

## CYCLE FORUM

MONDAY, 14 JANUARY 2019

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

Also in attendance: Mark Powell, Luke McCarthy, Matt Gordon-Smith, Peter Wilkinson, Owen McQuaid, David Lambourne, Susy Shearer, Paul Baker

Officers: Gordon Oliver and Nabihah Hassan-Farooq

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and asked that each member introduces themselves.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Michael Gammage and Harold Bodenhofer.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

### MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

**AGREED UNANIMOUSLY THAT; The minutes of the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were agreed as an accurate and true record.**

**ACTION- That Cllr Wilson to invite Cllr Bicknell as Lead Member for Highways and Transport to the next meeting of the Cycle Forum.**

**ACTION- For Gordon Oliver to draft articles on the Cycling Action Plan and Close Pass initiative for Around the Royal Borough.**

### CYCLING ACTION PLAN

Gordon Oliver introduced the above titled item. It was highlighted that the Task and Finish Group had reviewed and amended the Cycling Action Plan and that this would be considered for adoption at the 31 January Cabinet meeting. At Cabinet Briefing, members had requested an appendix to the report summarising the priorities for investment and the impacts of the strategy, so a map showing the high priority schemes has been included together with some accompanying graphics. Members were informed that the Cycling Action plan had been well received at Cabinet Briefing and had much support from members. The plan would be considered at Highways and Transport Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 23 January. Members of the Cycle Forum discussed ways in which they could express their support and opinions and it was noted that David Lambourne had registered his right to address the Cabinet in respect of this item. Cycle Forum members were encouraged to be vocal about their support and register to speak in support of the plan. Councillor Yong highlighted that Councillors are in post to represent the needs of their residents and that members should lobby their local councillors to ensure that the cycling agenda is advanced accordingly and expressed the importance of their vocal representation in the political arena.

The Chair also highlighted that it was good to show support and that cabinet members had been very supportive of the plan. Luke McCarthy stated that he was concerned with the level

of allocated funding which had been given and that he felt wider lobbying to the administration was needed. David Lambourne stated that he had previously felt little support for cycling from the previous administration and that he felt other boroughs had been more supportive of cycling by implementing schemes, cycle clubs and cycle circuits. Luke McCarthy stated that a significant infrastructure investment across the borough was needed as part of new development and stated that the Leader had recently published an online statement to this effect. Members felt that a small budget for cycling schemes had been deployed by the Council and felt dissatisfied with the profile of the cycling agenda in the borough. Matthew Gordon-Smith asked how cyclists' needs were taken into account in junction improvement schemes, such as at Hatch Lane / Clarence Road. He stated that he felt that as a cyclist in Windsor that multiple junction improvements were needed to aid the safety of cyclists against high levels of traffic. Susy Shearer confirmed that there were notable improvements needed and agreed that advanced cycle stop lines were needed at Vansittart Road / Clarence Road and the road layout around the Tesco Express at Hatch Lane was in need of an urgent review. It was also highlighted that on the national cycle route on Thames Street that cyclists were often not detected by the traffic lights when coming from the bridge.

Members were reminded that the plan had been finalised in June 2018. The Forum discussed that the Cycle Action Plan was designed for a life span of ten years and that it was also linked to the Borough Local Plan. Members were keen to know details surrounding investment and how quickly funds would be allocated to advance the proposals as set out in the Cycle Action plan. Gordon Oliver informed the Forum that Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funding had been secured for improvements at Maidenhead Train Station and for the Maidenhead Missing Links scheme and that this was a significant investment for the borough. Susy Shearer highlighted that the Cycling Action Plan was an evidence based document and that throughout the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (a supporting document for the Borough Local Plan) reference had been made to the plan. Members discussed whether there had been a cultural shift towards the importance of cycling by cabinet members and the chair stated that the Cycling Action Plan had been well prepared and that members were thankful for the significant work and contributions made in creating the plan. A vote of thanks was placed on record for all those who had contributed to the creation of the Cycling Action Plan, with special dedication to members of the Cycling Action Plan Task and Finish Group for their contributions and dedication.

## FUTURE OF THE CYCLE FORUM

The Chair introduced the above titled item. The Forum were told that there had been an independent boundary review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and that as a result there had been a recommendation to reduce the number of councillors from 57 to 41. The Forum were told that in conjunction with the boundary review that the Constitutional review had also taken account of the number of committees, forums and panels that the Council serviced and that it was notably higher than other comparable local authorities. Gordon Oliver informed the Forum that it had been agreed at the main Council debate in June 2018 that a number of panels/forums had been agreed for deletion / restructuring and circulated a list accompanied by the rationale for all of the proposals. It had been proposed that the Cycle Forum would be subsumed by the newly-created Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Panel, Windsor Town Forum and Maidenhead Town Forum. It was highlighted that dependant on the subject matter that the proposal for any items discussed at Cycle Forum would be raised and considered at the new Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Panel or either Maidenhead/Windsor Town Forum as appropriate. It was confirmed that the new structure with the deleted Forums/Panes/Committees and the reduction of members would take effect from May 2019. It was noted that there would be no further servicing of the Forum by Democratic Services as it would not exist within the council committee structure.

David Lambourne felt the focus of the Cycle Forum would be lost within the overarching Overview & Scrutiny panel and that this had been a cost saving exercise. He also said that he felt the changes would limit the valuable input from residents and that he felt councillors had been treated badly as their workloads would increase without an added financial imbursement.

Councillor Lion stated that the recommendation to reduce the number of councillors had come from the LGBCE who was independent of the Council and that Councillors had the opportunity to vote in relation to the recommendations independently of the party whip. Councillor Beer stated that there had been approximately 10-11 members who had opposed or abstained from voting on the recommendations and that he had voted against the recommendation. Councillor Beer felt that the new proposed structure would not take into account the values and views of Cycle Forum attendees.

The Chair reminded the Forum that each ward was reviewed by their population demographic and that the number of councillor representation had been assessed independently by the LGBCE. Susy Shearer stated that there would be limitations to the way in which Cycle Forum attendees could interact with the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panels and that there would be no opportunity to engage in detailed and wide ranging issues. She also felt current attendees of the Cycle Forum had the opportunity to have engaged discussions with no time limitations and that with restricted times to address Overview & Scrutiny Panel / Town Forums in future that it would be impossible to make use of the valuable experience of Cycle Forum members to progress the cycling agenda. Mark Powell thought that having cycling considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel would allow cycling to be considered in a more integrated manner. The Chair stated that the group could meet independently of the council as a consultative group. Susy Shearer stated that she had been looking at alternative models for local cycling groups to engage with the council, citing West Berkshire Spokes which had taken on the administration of the Cycle Forum in West Berkshire and the London Cycling Campaign which had a formal constitution and was a key consultee on cycling issues. Members felt that democratic representation and support was vital and that there would be difficulty in communicating, noting key decisions and administering minutes without the dedicated clerking support. The Democratic Services officer clarified that at present there was no planned additional resource that could support the Forum moving forward as resourcing had been based on the revised council committee structure from May 2019. However, if councillors were to attend then meeting rooms could be made available.

Members were unsure how the new forum would work within the new proposed structure and were hesitant to support the proposal. Members queried whether there could be a review and felt that there was a lack of support for the Forum by Councillors. Members discussed ways of working such as use of online tools and whether Gordon Oliver could continue supporting an external consultative group. Gordon confirmed that he could be able to provide support to the group in his capacity as Principal Transport Planner.

Members discussed their dissatisfaction in the decision to delete the Forum without consultation from the Forum attendees.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: THAT: The Cycle Forum is resolved to express its grave concerns at the council's decision to disband the forum as this would result in a loss of specialist knowledge and therefore request the continuation of the Cycle Forum from May 2019 as a sub-committee of the relevant Overview & Scrutiny panel.**

*(The motion was jointly proposed by Councillors Beer & D Wilson and resolved unanimously)*

### CYCLING IN WINDSOR GREAT PARK

Gordon Oliver, Principal Transport Planner, outlined the above titled item. The Cycle Forum was reminded that the council had previously looked at the potential for a dedicated cycle route between Ascot and Windsor. This area is covered by Windsor Great Park which is a private park and part of the Crown Estate. Members were told that it is home to several endangered species with large areas protected by Special Areas of Conservation / Sites of Special Scientific Interest which limited options for a cycle route.. Cyclists are allowed to use certain estate roads within the Great Park to travel between Ascot and Windsor and the Crown Estate had previously agreed that cyclists could use these roads during night time hours, which helped to improve safety for those who commuted through the dark winter months.

However, it was noted that a Bracknell resident had been in contact to advise that they had faced challenge when cycling through the Great Park at night. After investigations it was found that the rights to cycle through the park during night time hours had now been rescinded. There was a proposal for a 40 mph speed limit supported by average speed cameras on Winkfield Road / Mounts Hill through the Great Park and that Crown Estate were supportive of this. However, it was recognised that this was inferior to a segregated cycle route and it was questioned if there would be sufficient benefit to justify the cost of the cameras and ongoing enforcement. Any enforcement action would be undertaken by Thames Valley Police, but they had not indicated if they would support the proposal.

Members of the forum expressed their disappointment at the decision to rescind permission for cyclists to cut through the Great park at night. A member of the Forum highlighted that the closest similar route was located by Legoland and that this had proved incredibly dangerous for cyclists. It was noted that two cyclists had lost their lives on this road. The Chair highlighted that previous interaction with the deputy park ranger had proved difficult with little resolution. Councillor Yong expressed surprise that cars were preferred to cycles considering the Great Park was considered as an area of specific scientific interest and that there was significant importance placed upon conservation across the specific area. She went on to highlight other areas where cycling was permitted in forests that could be a template for the Crown Estate. However, she did concede that the Great Park was a victim of its own success with walkers / dog-walkers / cyclists often in conflict. Members discussed the encumbrances faced by the deputy park ranger and felt that a dedicated cycle route would be very well received by cyclists in the area.

*(Councillor Beer declared that he had a personal interest, but that he had served as a ward and parish councillor of the area in relation to this item. Councillor Beer stated that he has a working relationship with the Deputy Park Ranger but that this did not prejudice his ability to contribute to the discussion.)*

## SECURE BIKE STORAGE

Gordon Oliver, Principal Transport Planner, updated the Forum on the above titled item. The Forum had discussed on-street cycle storage in residential areas at the last meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018. It was outlined that as part of ongoing research into this area, that Lambeth, Southwark, Hackney Councils had been looked at. Lambeth Council had distributed a questionnaire to all householders regarding their views on cycle storage. The questionnaire responses had been positive and that most residents supported on-street cycle storage, however, when posed with the reality of the cycle storage outside of their own homes, positive responses were reduced by 11%.

After collation of information, it was noted that the main concerns surrounding cycle storage included;

- Aesthetics
- Proximity to property
- High cost of rental space

It was highlighted that some of the researched Councils offered limited times to for residents to apply for new sites. Some areas had waiting lists, with spaces allocated on a first come first served basis. Some local authorities had limited the cycle storage to two residents per household to ensure fairness in their approach. Other considerations included:

- Support from ward members
- Whether surrounding properties had space for cycles
- The need for residents to use stairs
- Number of cycle thefts
- Car parking pressures

It was noted that this would be a good piece of work to consider, but that this could be looked at in the future in more detail.

Members of the forum discussed the issues with older properties across Windsor and Maidenhead and that there was limited possibility to provide adequate cycle storage in certain areas. It was also stated that there was a rigid need for planning to be involved with this, and Councillor Beer stated that he would like for all new developments to have consideration to cycle storage. Gordon Oliver highlighted that most new developments were required to provide cycle storage and that the council was about to review its Parking Standards and would incorporate best practice for cycle parking provision. Councillor D Wilson informed members that the Council was currently working jointly with Countryside developers to deliver a significant number of homes across Maidenhead town centre and that he had visited a scheme that they had recently developed in Ealing which had innovative cycle storage ideas.

A forum member stated that he felt that more importance should be placed on the modal shift from driving to cycling and that when this had been addressed, that this project should be revisited. Matt Gordon-Smith stated that he felt more secure cycling storage was needed in the town centres where there was an existing problem with bike thefts. He highlighted the lack of capacity in Windsor town centre in particular and suggested secure cycle storage in car parks. David Lambourne suggested that a survey could be carried out with large and flatted developments to better understand the demand of their cycling storage needs. Maidenhead Station was highlighted as a location that needed more cycle parking, Gordon Oliver informed the Forum that there was to be 300 secure cycle spaces provided at Maidenhead Station shortly. Councillor Yong highlighted that there was also work being carried out by the Sustainability Panel to introduce electric charging vehicle points and that there would be a competing use of space.

on Oliver, Principal Transport Planner, updated the Forum on the above titled item. The Forum had discussed cycle storage at the last meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018. It was outlined that as part of ongoing research into this area, that Lambeth, Southwark, Hackney Councils had been looked at. Lambeth Council had distributed a questionnaire to all householders regarding their views on cycle storage. The questionnaire responses had been positive and that the findings were indicative of onsite cycle storage, however, when posed with the reality of the cycle storage outside of their own homes, positive responses were reduced by 11%.

After collation of information, it was noted that the main concerns surrounding cycle storage included;

- Aesthetics
- Proximity to property
- High cost of rental space

It was highlighted that some of the researched Councils had existing cycle storage schemes such as offering limited times to apply, application for spots in specific areas with waiting lists, first come first serve basis. Some local authorities had limited the cycle storage to two residents per household to ensure fairness in their approach. It was noted that this would be a good piece of work to consider, but that this could be looked at in the future in more detail.

Members of the forum discussed the issues with older properties across Windsor and Maidenhead and that there was limited possibility to provide adequate cycle storage in certain areas. It was also stated that there was a rigid need for planning to be involved with this, and Councillor Beer stated that he would like for all new developments to have consideration to cycle storage. Gordon Oliver highlighted that most new developments had cycle storage in mind and that most new developments had more flexibility to include cycle storage in their designs. Councillor D Wilson informed members that the Council was currently working jointly with Countryside developers to deliver a significant number of homes across the borough and

that he had visited a scheme that they had recently developed in Ealing which had innovative cycle storage ideas.

A forum member stated that he felt that more importance should be placed on the modal shift from driving to cycling and that when this had been addressed, that this project should be revisited. Matt Gordon- Smith stated that he felt more secure cycling storage was needed in the town centres and that by offering this, it would boost the popularity and confidence of those wishing to cycle by offering security. David Lambourne suggested that a survey could be carried out with large and flatted developments to better understand the demand of their cycling storage needs. David Gordon felt that this would be a good future piece of work, and informed the Forum that there was to be 300 secure cycle spaces in the town centre and that this would be delivered by the Cycle Hub. Councillor Yong highlighted that there was also work being carried out by the Sustainability Panel to introduce electric charging vehicle points and that there would be a competing use of space.

A.O.B

Luke McCarthy informed the Forum that the Cycle Hub lease was ending and that they would need to find new premises over the upcoming months. Members were asked to contact him directly if they were aware of any suitable premises.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as follows:

- 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 6.30pm, Chamber, Guildhall, Windsor.

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.34 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....