

CYCLE FORUM

MONDAY, 11 JULY 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Malcolm Beer, Derek Wilson (Chairman) and Lynda Yong

Also in attendance: Councillor Phillip Bicknell and Harry Bodenhofer, Mark Powell, Steven Shepherd, Owen McQuaide, David Lambourne and Susy Shearer.

Officers: Feliciano Cirimele, Gordon Oliver and Karen Shepherd

APOLOGIES

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Lion

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2016 be approved, subject to the following amendment:

p.8 to read ‘ David Layzell recommended that the *cycle route* along Barry avenue, Windsor, be moved to the other side of the road.....’

AIR QUALITY PRESENTATION

The Forum received a presentation from the Environmental Protection Officer on Air Quality on the borough.

Members noted that there was wide recognition that air pollution was associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It affected the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. The Environment Act 1995 required local authorities to review, assess and manage air quality. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀) from vehicle emissions were the most common pollutants affecting local air quality.

Air quality was affected by a number of factors, including traffic volume, traffic congestion, vehicle types, localised conditions i.e. street canyons, weather conditions and pollution episodes and the background concentration of pollutants.

Air quality in the borough was generally good, but the annual mean air quality objective (AQO) for NO₂ was exceeded in some locations. Air quality management areas (AQMAs) were declared where pollutant concentrations exceeded the AQO. There were five AQMAs in the Royal Borough:

- Maidenhead town centre and the A4 to Maidenhead Bridge
- A308 in Bray around the M4 flyover
- Clarence Road roundabout and Arthur Road in Windsor

- Imperial Road / St Leonards Road in Windsor
- Wraysbury Road in Hythe End around the M25 flyover

Councillor Bicknell arrived at 6.48pm

It was noted that AQMAs were a material consideration in any planning application.

Members received details of the trends in annual mean NO₂ concentration levels at the various AQMA sites across the borough. It was noted that there was a noticeable dip in levels across all sites in the borough for the period 2014-15. Members were advised that there had also been a similar trend across the London area.

It was noted that the Air Quality Action Plan was part of the Local Transport Plan. Once an AQMA had been declared, a local authority had to develop and implement an Air Quality Action Plan setting out schemes and initiatives that would be delivered to achieve air quality objectives. Actions may include:

- Traffic management schemes (e.g. road widening and junction improvements)
- Traffic reduction schemes (e.g. congestion charging)
- Targeting the most polluting traffic (e.g. low emission zones and specifying low emission vehicles for bus contracts)
- Encouraging a shift to more sustainable forms of transport (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing)
- Schemes to contain pollution (e.g. barriers around motorway flyovers)

Councillor Mrs Yong arrived at 6.50pm

In relation to the Maidenhead AQMA it was noted that the Stafferton Link removed traffic from congested areas to the west and north of the town centre with a new crossing on the Green Way. Moorbridge Road gateway would reduce traffic passing through the police station roundabout and Bridge Road / Forlease Road junction. Maidenhead station interchange would improve access on foot, by bike and by bus, with more cycle parking. The Access and Movement Study would identify improvements to the town centre's road system, pedestrian, cycle and bus network. A bid was being submitted to the Local Enterprise Partnership to help improve walking and cycling access to / through the town centre. Car clubs were being pursued in connection with new development, which would reduce the need for car ownership and usage.

Travel plans were being sought for all new commercial and residential developments in the town centre.

In relation to the Bray AQMA it was noted that a road widening scheme was proposed around the A308 Windsor Road / B3028 Upper Bray Road junction which would help to prevent congestion caused by right-turning traffic blocking northbound traffic. Higher noise barriers were being sought as part of improvements to the M4. This would help to contain emissions from the motorway, which accounted for around 50% of pollutants in the AQMA.

In relation to the Clarence Road/Arthur Road AQMA it was noted that the new roundabout layout had significantly improved congestion / air quality. The A308 cycle route had recently been improved. LEGOLAND traffic signage had been improved on the M25 to take traffic off at J12 / J13 and through Windsor Great Park rather than Windsor. The council had worked with LEGOLAND to improve the advice to visitors

regarding routes and modes of travel (e.g. shuttle buses). Signage to LEGOLAND via Goslar Way had been installed instead of Imperial Road. Traffic exiting LEGOLAND was signed right to the motorway network. A site-wide travel plan had been secured for LEGOLAND.

The signal-controlled junctions on Arthur Road were under review, awaiting consultation results. A 20 mph speed limit across central Windsor was being investigated.

In relation to the Imperial Road / St Leonards Road AQMA, it was noted that the council had consulted on possible changes to the road layout at junctions. Improvements to the operation of signals at both junctions were being made, and also improvements in the link between the signals. The effect of the improvements would be monitored over the summer before deciding whether additional works were required.

In relation to the Hythe End AQMA, it was noted that the council was lobbying Highways England for enhanced noise barriers on the M25 to better contain air pollution around the flyover on Wraysbury Road. A new path would be provided on Staines Road between Wraysbury Village and Magna Carta Lane to provide a safe route to Wraysbury Primary School. There were also possible future enhancements to pedestrian / cycle routes between Wraysbury and Hythe End.

Councillor Bicknell left the meeting at 7.00pm

In response to questions it was confirmed that:

- The diffusion tubes were finger-sized and were changed monthly. The officer had to drive to each site to undertake this manual operation.
- Environmental Protection was a statutory consultee on planning applications. It had been a consultee on the Landing application and had requested the building be away from the traffic lane and gaps introduced to avoid a tunnel effect.
- The drop in pollution levels in 2015 was likely a result of weather conditions and more newer cars on the road that produced less emissions.
- As there were only hotspots in the borough rather than a widespread pollution issue, the focus was on specific junction improvements.
- Trees did not help resolve specific traffic problems but could be used as a screen between roads and buildings.
- Fresh planting of trees would take place as part of the Waterways project, as a number had had to be removed. Trees were also being reinstated on Bridge Avenue.

David Lambourne commented that there was a balancing act when traffic lights were replaced with roundabouts as this was more dangerous for cyclists but improved traffic flow and reduced pollution. Under civil law in Europe a driver was automatically assumed to be at fault if involved in an accident with a pedestrian or cyclist.

The clerk was requested to circulate the presentation so that members could consider the detailed figures and decide at the next meeting whether further improvements were required.

Action: The clerk to circulate the presentation to all attendees

CYCLING STRATEGY

Members received an update on the emerging Cycling Strategy.

Members recalled that a presentation had been given to a previous meeting of the Cycle Forum, setting out the Council's planned approach for developing a Cycling Strategy for the Borough. A draft strategy had been developed, with the following headings:

- Introduction
- Guiding principles
- Strategic framework
- The current situation
- Vision, aims and objectives
- Action plan:
 - Cycle routes
 - Wayfinding
 - Cycle parking
 - Interchanges
 - Working with schools
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Recreational / sports cycling
 - Practical support and training
 - Marketing and communications
- Funding
- Monitoring

The strategy also included a series of area profiles, which split the borough into 10 districts that were consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan areas. For the larger, more populous, urban areas of Maidenhead and Windsor, it was recommended that a more detailed audit be carried out using the Department for Transport's Propensity to Cycle Tool. This interactive web-based tool was designed to assist with prioritising where to invest to best realise uptake of cycling. The draft strategy was currently being consulted on with officer colleagues and would then go to the Chairman and Ward Members for review.

The Principal Transport Policy Officer agreed that the draft could be circulated to Forum attendees at the same time as Members, however all were asked to note that at this stage the draft was confidential.

Action: The Principal Transport Policy Officer to circulate the draft strategy to all attendees.

David Lambourne commented that driver education was sadly needed. The chairman commented that as funding was limited, he would not want to see the cycling budget being used to fund driver education, as it should be used to focus on cycling. David Lambourne commented that the Forum should look elsewhere for funding for education.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That members of the Cycle Forum note progress with developing the Cycling Strategy

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL TRANSITION FUND BID

Members received an update on the Sustainable Travel Transition Fund Bid. It was noted that, to cover the gap between the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and the Access Fund, the Department for Transport had made £20 million of revenue funding available for packages of sustainable transport initiatives that could be delivered in 2016/17

The Royal Borough had submitted a bid to the Sustainable Travel Transition Year Fund entitled 'Travel Wise Windsor and Maidenhead'. This was a coordinated package of measures designed to support the economic development and ongoing regeneration of Maidenhead and Windsor town centres. The bid's objectives were:

- To reduce the number of people travelling by car and increase in the proportion of trips made by walking, cycling and public transport; with the consequent benefits of easing traffic congestion on the local road networks. A number of potential partners had been identified, for example Maidenhead Cycle Hub.
- To improve accessibility to of the town centres and surrounding areas for employment and education.
- To promote and secure carbon reduction.
- To improve the health and quality of life of residents.
- To improve the attractiveness of Maidenhead and Windsor as locations for private sector investment, business and tourism; therefore, supporting local development and employment growth.
- To maximise the impact of the Local Growth Fund investment in local transport infrastructure.

The bid for revenue funding incorporated a range of complementary activities aimed at local people, business and schools including:

- Station travel plans for Maidenhead and Windsor and Eton Central.
- Travel training for children and adults who have difficulties in travelling independently.
- A Workplace Cycle Challenge to challenge teams and workplaces to compete to see who can get the most people cycling within a defined period.
- A programme of cycling skills / maintenance classes, improvements to cycling information and led bike rides.
- School travel planning activities, including Bike It, Walk to School Week events and development of formal kiss and drop schemes to tackle congestion outside schools.

Unfortunately, the bid had not been successful, because the Department for Transport (DfT) considered that it did not fit strongly enough with the fund's objectives. They

advised that while the bid had a clear strategic case, it would have benefitted from making a more measurable link between the planned interventions and carbon reduction and that the value for money case needed to be stronger.

The Forum noted that since the report had been written, guidance had been released on the Access Fund. Revenue funding of £60m would be available. The council was keen to work with local groups and businesses to generate ideas.

It was also noted that the Royal Borough had submitted a bid to the Local Growth fund for the 'Maidenhead Missing Links' project, which sought to deliver improvements to local walking and cycling routes and the public realm to ensure that the redeveloped opportunity sites were integrated with the wider town centre and surrounding areas.

It was explained that the Maidenhead Cycle Hub was a community interest company that recycled old bikes and provided training. Councillor Beer suggested the council should help publicise the organisation, for example in *Around the Royal Borough*.

Action: The Principal Transport Policy Officer be asked to liaise with Mark Powell about potential publicity opportunities for the Maidenhead Cycle Hub.

Susy Shearer asked if there were any proposals for Windsor. The Principal Transport Policy Officer responded that the previous bid had had a Maidenhead focus, but could be widened out to the borough linking to the Missing Links project and NCN422 in Windsor. He would be happy to discuss with Windsor organisations.

An analysis of successful transport bids had been undertaken, the details of which would be circulated to the group.

Action: The Principal Transport Policy Officer to circulate the analysis of successful transport bids.

Susy Shearer asked what links would be made to Slough, she understood Slough was planning a cycle storage facility at the station. The Principal Transport Policy Officer advised that the facility had already been constructed. There was a charge for use but users were not paying.

David Lambourne commented that there was no off road facility for adults wanting to learn to ride in the borough, unlike in Hillingdon. The Principal Transport Policy Officer responded that physical activity colleagues were working on adult cycle initiatives such as Learn to Ride. David Lambourne stated that he would be happy to host a visit to the Hillingdon facility outside of the meeting, for attendees of the Forum.

Action: The web link to the Hillingdon facility be circulated.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That members of the Cycle Forum note the outcome of the bid and identify possible measures for inclusion in a possible future bid to the access fund.

Councillor Beer left the meeting at 7.50pm

CYCLE ROUTE - A4 MAIDENHEAD

Members received an update on the proposed cycle route along the A4 between Maidenhead Bridge and the town centre.

Members recalled that at the Maidenhead Cycling Workshop on 6 November 2013, the need for a cycle route to connect the town centre to the Riverside area of Maidenhead was identified, with connections to Slough and South Bucks. The Forum had not liked the original two-way off-carriageway scheme put forward, therefore a separate workshop was held which developed a new scheme with single direction cycle lanes either side of the carriageway. A joint bid with Slough was then submitted; South Bucks was also working on their section.

Members noted that some LEP funding had been secured. However an internal bid for the borough's contribution had not been supported by Members, on the basis that the route had a number of problems at roundabouts and junctions highlighted by a road safety audit. The business case had also demonstrated low value for money.

It was noted that although the Royal Borough was not constructing the A4 Cycle Route scheme, there were other initiatives that were being progressed, which would deliver positive outcomes for cycling in Maidenhead.

The Council was in the process of developing an Access and Movement Strategy for Maidenhead Town Centre. This would consider cycle routes to and through the area in the context of regeneration of a number of key 'opportunity sites' and other major development sites in and around the town centre. One of these sites was the Reform Road Industrial Estate, which may provide an opportunity to improve cycle access from the east as an alternative to the A4 Cycle Route.

Also, the Royal Borough would be submitting a bid through the LEP to access Growth Deal 3 funding to deliver 'Maidenhead's Missing Links'. The bid sought to deliver improvements to local walking and cycling routes and the public realm to ensure that the redeveloped opportunity sites were integrated with the wider town centre and surrounding areas. If successful, it would provide funding to deliver many of the walking and cycling schemes identified in the emerging Access and Movement Study.

Owen McQuaide commented that it would be interesting to see more information on how the cost benefits were calculated.

The Forum noted that the LEP funding had had to be returned to the LEP as it had been linked to a specific scheme.

It was noted that a draft scheme for the South Bucks element of the scheme was expected imminently. The Forum discussed the crossing over the A4 that had been implemented through the Berkeley Homes development on the former Skindles site by Maidenhead Bridge. The Chairman commented that the crossing had been put in as direct result of the this development.

Action: The Principal Transport Policy Officer to circulate the business case document.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That members of the Cycle Forum note progress with the scheme.

ASCOT TO WINDSOR CYCLE ROUTE UPDATE

Members received an update on the Ascot to Windsor Cycle Route. Earlier in the year the Principal Transport Officer had met with the Crown Estate to discuss the proposal as the scheme required an element of their land. The Crown Estate was currently reviewing scheme drawings.

Councillor Mrs Yong commented that Windsor Great Park had lots of land. The cycle route would be beneficial to the Crown Estate as it would reduce traffic and provide safe cycling. The Principal Transport Policy Officer explained that the Crown Estate had been broadly supportive and was currently giving the plans careful consideration. However, they had concerns about the environmental impact of cycling in what was a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Councillor Yong commented a large new development was being built at Heatherwood. The Frimley Trust was looking at putting in a cycle path to the station. Susy Shearer highlighted that the Neighbourhood Plan Group had raised the idea of a cycle route on the southern side of Winkfield Road. She would be very interested to hear when updates were available. A route on the other side would be interrupted by a number of roads and driveways. The Principal Transport Policy Officer commented that the whole area was an SAC, which straddled the road. The highway went up to the roadside edge of the ditch. The cycle route would require the ditch to be culverted and would therefore require Crown Estate land.

AOB

Members noted that Great Western Railway had decided to develop four station Travel Plans for Twyford, Maidenhead, Windsor & Eton Central and Newbury. A workshop for the wide range of stakeholders had been held. Unfortunately the Cycle Forum representatives had not been able to attend at the last minute, however the Principal Transport Policy Officer had attended and it had been made clear that cycle access and parking needed to improve. The ongoing issue of cycle theft at Maidenhead station had been highlighted. Provisional funding from the LEP had been allocated for a multi-modal interchange, however Compulsory Purchase of land to the north of the site would be required.

A workshop on Access and Movement had recently been held with strategic town centre stakeholders including members, developers, Forum representatives and the Chamber of Commerce. The workshop identified key current issues, issues likely to arise as a result of development in the town and potential measures to be taken. The difficulties of cycling into Maidenhead were highlighted, including the one way system, the lack of cycle parking and access to the station. Proposals would be worked up in detail over the summer for a consultation later in the year. Pedestrianisation of the High Street would be one of the issues considered.

The Chairman highlighted that the draft Borough Local Plan was available on the website and would be presented to Full Council on 10 August 2016 before being submitted to the Inspector by the end of September 2016. An examination in public was then likely to take place in March/April 2017, with adoption by the summer of 2017. Residents could submit comments to the consultation.

Owen McQuaide asked whether cycle safety had been considered in relation to the slip road at Moorbridge, which was used by cyclists as a quietway. It was confirmed that a safety audit had been undertaken. There was no dedicated cycleway however it had been constructed in such a way that if one was needed in future then a cycleway could be put in alongside.

David Lambourne commented that he was appalled at the number of places where cyclists were expected to give way on the Stafferton Way Link. The Principal Transport Policy Officer commented that post-construction monitoring would look at this; there may be opportunities to rationalise the layout.

Susy Shearer commented that the following would be useful to note and discuss outside the meeting in relation to the pre-submission draft of the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Concerns re east-west connectivity
- Connectivity across the Clarence Road roundabout
- Restricted byways towards St Leonards hill
- Connections to West Windsor

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.32 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....