

**WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Tuesday, 26 September 2023

At 2.30 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor A Coles (Chair)

Councillors:	M Brooker	T Bayliss
	D Enright	A Lyon
	J Aitman	D Miles
	S Simpson	J Doughty (In place of T Ashby)
	R Smith	Steere
	C Hulme	
Officers:	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Claire Green	Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	Two members of the public.	

T43 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair for the municipal year.

It was proposed and duly seconded that Cllr Andrew Coles be elected Chair. There being no other nominations it was:

Resolved:

That, Cllr Andrew Coles be elected Chair of the Committee for the municipal year.

T44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ted Fenton and Kevin Hickman from the Windrush Bike Project.

An apology for absence was also received from Councillor T Ashby, Councillor J Doughty attended as a substitute.

The Chair notified the Committee of the recent passing of fellow Member, David Gambier. Members were reminded of David's contributions to Witney, and in particular his meaningful representation at the Chamber of Commerce. The Chair advised that a fundraiser was being held in David's memory. Members stood for a minute silence to remember David.

The Chair introduced a representative from the Witney Chamber of Commerce, Rob Steere. The Chamber of Commerce will be electing a new representative to join the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee for the regular meetings.

T45 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Committee received representations from two residents. A resident from Wood Green came to propose a zebra crossing for West End. A resident from Burwell Meadow came to make comments about the Burwell Meadow ANPR data.

T46 **WEST END CROSSING**

This item was due to be discussed as part of agenda item 10b. However, with the permission of the Chair, this item was moved up the agenda so the member of the public could hear the discussion and outcome.

A resident from Wood Green addressed the Committee about the dangers for pedestrians when trying to cross from the Wood Green area, heading towards Witney. Crossing West End or Oxford Hill as a pedestrian was very difficult and all the roads around the double roundabout are busy. Drivers are concentrating on the tricky double roundabout and there just wasn't a safe place for pedestrians to cross. The resident suggested that a zebra crossing on West End could work well.

A discussion followed; A number of Members supported the idea of a zebra crossing and acknowledged that the suggestion had been raised previously at this Committee. A representative from the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Infrastructure Locality Team was present at the meeting and advised that her team were aware of the issues for pedestrians but that presently funding hadn't been made available. Further, Members were reminded that there is a longer-term plan for more radical changes in the Bridge Street area.

OCC Officers advised that there is an LCWIP proposal for a crossing on Wood Green, near the church. This is currently not funded and there are not currently any applicable government grant schemes. Opportunities for funding from Active Travel England were being explored.

Funding for a zebra crossing on West End could potentially be sought from S106 funding, or the OCC road safety budget.

Resolved:

That, OCC Officers would check the road safety budget for funding a zebra crossing on West End.

T47 **BURWELL MEADOW ANPR SURVEY ANALYSIS**

Following the update from the County Council a discussion was held, a number of opinions were expressed regarding the impact of the scheme in the area. It was advised the Community Speedwatch Scheme would hopefully be operating in the area soon.

Resolved:

1. That, Members are aware of this issue, the data and subsequent report be noted, and,
2. That, Community Speedwatch would be operating in Burwell Meadow.

T48 **TO ADOPT AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2023**

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 13 June 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair.

T49 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED IN SUBSEQUENT ITEMS**

A Witney Town Council Officer raised an outstanding item. The minutes of Witney Traffic Advisory Committee meeting 13th June 2023 refer to this issue of a parking permit scheme for Corn Street and a previous consultation with residents. (T41) OCC Officers had contacted the District Council for further details of an earlier study on this issue, a response is outstanding but will be followed up.

Resolved:

That, the information will be shared with this Committee at the next meeting.

T50 **COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received the report of the Witney Town Council Deputy Town Clerk and accompanying amended terms.

Changes included updates on public participation, future hybrid meeting technology and the remit to set up and run a Community Speedwatch scheme.

Resolved:

That, the amended terms of reference be approved.

T51 **WITNEY HIGH STREET & MARKET SQUARE ENHANCEMENTS**

Members were updated that public engagement on future improvements was well underway. This had included public exhibition events as well as an online survey. A workshop style event was also being held with members of the business community.

Once the consultation ended, the information would be collated and handed to designers. The design process would be carried on through to Spring 2024, when it was hoped that a design and plans would be available for people to see. Further consultation would then be carried out in the community and with stakeholders. Construction was expected to start in Autumn 2024.

Resolved:

That, the updated be noted.

T52 **INFRASTRUCTURE LOCALITY TEAM**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Oxfordshire County Council Area Infrastructure Locality Team concerning updates on several projects underway in Witney. Specific updates included:

7.1 Shores Green, Access to Witney, this project was progressing, key dates and further information were in the Officer report.

7.2 Burford Road Signal Crossing, some work had taken place and the electricity supply had now been installed, OCC would continue to follow up with developers.

7.3 Work to improve and replace bus shelters was scheduled for October. Locations as per the Officer report.

7.4 Work on the short-term measures for Witney High Street had been ordered, delivery of the measures was expected before Christmas.

Cllr R. Smith joined the meeting at 3:15pm

7.5 – This item was heard separately through Agenda Item 6.

7.6 Windrush Place S106 West Witney – Active Travel Schemes. Design work was expected in March 2024, there were no further updates on delivery timescales.

7.7 Bridge Street Area Options Appraisal Report – The report had been finalised but was not yet published. Engagement and publication was planned for after the Witney High Street engagement was finished in October.

7.8 This item was discussed through Agenda Item 3 (T47).

7.9 Traffic Lights on Woodford Way – Oxfordshire County Council Officers conducted a site visit in June. An overview of this was provided in the Agenda Pack. OCC advised that the lights should be retained in the interest of pedestrian safety. Observations had been noted by OCC Officers, to be considered ahead of the next replacement or refurbishment of this infrastructure. In the meantime, it was suggested that a junction count and review of the existing signal timings was conducted.

7.10 A study had been carried out to consider the issues caused by car parking on Harvest Way/Barleyfield Way. OCC Officers had suggested three possible solutions.

The Committee were advised the current setup was a design feature of Madley Park, and that 'Passive Traffic Calming' was designed to reduce vehicle speeds through the estate. There was a danger of increasing vehicle speeds if new measures created faster 'through routes', and one of the solutions came at a cost of losing on-road car parking spaces.

Solution 2 - 'Introduce Keep Clear markings at the dropped kerb crossing points.' was deemed the preferred option. The cost of this is the line marking, the budget for this year was already spent and therefore this would be taken forward for consideration in the next budget year. In the meantime, the Ward Councillor for the area would report back to the residents group that had originally raised this issue and seek feedback on the recommended solution.

7.11 OCC Officers advised that the terms of the 20mph transformation programme did not include traffic calming. A Speed Survey could be carried out, costs being passed to Witney Town Council. Traffic calming was not in the remit of the Town Council, however, given that the Town Council were supporting the Community Speedwatch Scheme, this area would be added to the list of sites where vehicle speeds would be monitored.

7.12 This item was discussed through Agenda Item 3 (T46).

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, Cllr. Smith would engage with Madley Park residents' association to seek feedback on enhanced road markings at crossing points on Harvest Way/Barleyfield Way and,
3. That, Officers would find a suitable location for a Community Speedwatch site on Cogges Hill Road.

T53 **TRAFFIC & ROAD SAFETY**

The Committee received and considered the Traffic & Road Safety Report from the County Council Area Operations Officer. The Committee were advised that budgets for this year had been allocated. Work had begun on plans for the coming year, Members were invited to put forward suggestions for future repair and lining works.

Members were advised that The Leys Traffic Calming project is currently out for pricing and procurement. It was acknowledged that delivery of this project would face logistical challenges since parking and access would be suspended at times. The Town Council will be informed of logistics as a strategy is developed.

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on other projects that would be happening in this vicinity, including the Skate Park and the Courtside development. Witney Town Council will work with stakeholders, including OCC to ensure that the projects are carried out in a logical order, and with the least disruption practicable.

Resolved:

That, WTC Officers host a meeting of stakeholders for the three major projects, for discussion of timelines and access requirements.

T54 **COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH**

The Committee received the report of the Deputy Town Clerk of Witney Town Council concerning the Community Speedwatch scheme for Witney.

A verbal update was given at the meeting and Members were advised that the scheme needed volunteers in order for sites to be operated. Volunteer recruitment was being advertised in notice boards and on social media. Members were invited to contact the Town Council for more information.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

T55 PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Public Transport Representative and representatives from the bus companies gave verbal updates. These included:

- Consultation was underway for the Rural Transport Grant and the Community Transport Grant. It was perceived that West Oxfordshire was served well by community transport and these monies were likely to be allocated to other areas in the County.
- Bus Service Improvement Plan indicated that a Swindon service will be returning for Witney, earmarked for November.
- The Oxford Tube would be offering a Monday to Friday service to London, this was a trial and residents were encouraged to use the service if it was to be kept. Services start on October 23rd 2023. Drivers were currently being route trained.
- The West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT) supermarket shuttle was now up and running, and residents were already depending on this service.
- The WOCT Kingfisher Meadows service was starting to see passengers, some timetable adjustments might be required in the future to keep services running to time.

Resolved:

1. That, the verbal updates above be noted.

T56 SPEED CAMERAS & SPEEDING ENFORCEMENT

The Committee received correspondence from Thames Valley Police regarding speeding, speed cameras and enforcement in response to a letter sent by the Chair of the Committee following the last meeting.

Resolved:

1. That, the communication from Thames Valley Police be noted.

T57 COGGES HILL ROAD - REQUEST FOR TRAFFIC CALMING

This item was previously discussed as part of the Infrastructure Locality Team update (T52).

Resolved:

That, Cogges Hill Road be added as a Community Speedwatch monitoring site.

T58 ITEMS RAISED AT THE MEETING

A representative from the Witney Chamber of Commerce expressed a desire from the Chamber to attract visitors and tourists to Witney. There had been a lot of discussion about coach parking; support from this Committee would be welcome and the Chamber invite members to contact them with information, ideas and any feedback.

Witney Town Partnership had been re-established - West Oxfordshire District Council had some funding available for 'Wayfinding', particularly to service visitors to the town; This would include heritage information as well as maps and parking details.

A Member suggested that an open-top bus tour should be started to encompass the many places of interest in Witney.

Witney Town Council were considering parking enforcement for the parking bays at The Leys. There was a feeling that some of the bays were being used by sixth-formers of Henry Box School, meaning vehicles were parked for long periods. Time-limited parking might be considered to make more spaces available for visitors using the recreational facilities and requiring the intended short-term parking.

T59 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING(S)**

Members were advised that the next scheduled meeting of this committee would be on Tuesday 16 January 2024.

The meeting closed at: 4.05 pm

Chair