

WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 21 March 2023

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

Present:

Councillor A Coles (Chair)

Councillors:	A Prosser J Aitman	L Duncan R Smith
Other Members:	M Brooker C Hulme A Lyon D Miles D Gambier	West Oxfordshire District Council Thames Valley Police West Oxfordshire Community Transport Parish Transport Representative Witney Chamber of Commerce
Officers:	Adam Clapton Claire Green	Deputy Town Clerk Administration Support - Planning & Stronger Communities
Others:	2 members of the public.	

T16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Duncan Enright, Cllr Ted Fenton, Cllr Thomas Ashby, Trevor Baylis from Stagecoach and Kevin Hickman from Windrush Bike Project.

T17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident from Corn Street asked about implications for local residents following changes to parking enforcement in Witney and West Oxfordshire.

The Oxfordshire County Council Parking Manager was present at the meeting and addressed the Committee. Members were advised that the County Council were meeting with the District Council, residents, councillors and other stakeholders, initially to maintain the status quo, while also considering areas to be reviewed, and over time to develop strategy to address problem areas and highlight hotspots. The Parking Manager expressed the importance of a consistent approach across the town and advised that Oxfordshire County Council were being requested to provide more enforcement in problem areas like Corn Street. A team from County Council would be doing site visits to scope problem areas that have been raised so far.

A discussion followed; Members had the opportunity to raise questions about resident parking permit schemes. There was currently no funding available for such a scheme and additional enforcement would be needed for any such scheme to be successful.

Resolved:

That, the Oxfordshire County Council Parking Manager would forward more information to Witney Town Council about the parking enforcement changes, that could be shared to Witney residents.

Natalie Moore arrived at 2:38pm

Andrew Lyons left at 2:55pm

James Whiting left at 2:58pm

T18 TO ADOPT AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2023 (COPY ENCLOSED)

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee meeting held on 10 January 2023 be approved and signed by the chair.

T19 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED IN THE ACTION PLAN OR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS

There were no matters arising from the minutes of 10 January 2023.

T20 TRAFFIC SCHEMES AREA OPERATIONS - OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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:

Windrush Bike Project Barriers Report – Work on the Barriers Report was currently on hold; a Countywide approach was being developed and would supersede the former plan. Members of this Committee could continue to report specific issues to Natalie Moore, these issues would then be forwarded to the team.

Windrush Place S106 West Witney Active Travel Schemes – Multiple schemes were submitted and the overall cost of these was higher than the funds available. Discussions were ongoing with the developers to find further funding, or to explore the possibility of the developers carrying out some of the works.

Witney Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan – Consultation has been completed and it was expected to be adopted by Oxfordshire County Council at a meeting on 23rd March. Following adoption, work would take place to secure funding for some of the schemes.

A40/B4022 Shores Green, Access to Witney – Compulsory land purchase works were taking place, further discussions were expected at a Cabinet meeting in May. Planned completion for this project was Summer 2026.

High Street and Market Square Active Travel 3 – There was lots happening in the background, including feasibility studies. Consultations were being planned for this summer, including workshops, in-person events and online opportunities.

High Street and Market Square, Short Term Measures – The Oxfordshire County Council Officer asked Members to consider two options for temporary physical changes to the layout of the current road restrictions on High Street and Market Square. Members expressed concerns that any interim or temporary scheme would be deemed a waste of money and could further exacerbate the frustration being felt by residents and businesses and potentially further delay the start to the final scheme. Members were advised that separate funding is available for the temporary measures, any costs will not be deducted from the budget for the final scheme. Enforcement was discussed, there was a lack of confidence in any schemes without some level of enforcement. Thames Valley Police would expect enforcement to be technology based and funded by County Council.

There was mixed opinion for the schemes on offer, a vote was taken which resulted in ‘Option One’ being favoured. The scheme included the removal of traffic islands and a change in priority, for which a TRO is required. The expected timescale for the interim scheme was 3-5 months, implementation by Autumn 2023.

David Gambier left the meeting at 3:55pm

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That Option One be the preferred option for interim changes to High Street and Market Square.

T21 TRAFFIC & ROAD SAFETY - OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Committee received and considered the Traffic & Road Safety Report from the County Council Area Operations Officer. Following the report, Members were invited to raise any comments.

Resolved:

That, the report be noted.

T22 PARKING ENFORCEMENT CHANGES ACROSS WEST OXFORDSHIRE

The Oxfordshire County Council Parking Manager had provided an update under Public Participation; there was nothing further to add.

T23 COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

The Committee received a Community Speedwatch update from the Deputy Town Clerk.

Previous attempts for a scheme had failed, due to a lack of volunteers and no point of administration.

Members discussed the appetite for launching Community Speedwatch in Witney. Despite the new speed restrictions there were still areas of concern, and the Committee were broadly in favour of a scheme in Witney.

Ideas were put forward for potential volunteer recruitment. A member informed the Committee that there was a lack of school crossing patrol staff in Witney – schools could be approached to invite parent volunteers. Other suggestions included writing to Witney Land Army as a volunteer source.

Resolved:

1. That, Community Speed Watch for Witney would be initiated by this Committee, with administration support from Witney Town Council, and
2. That, Community Speed Watch would be added as an agenda item for further discussion at the June meeting of Witney Traffic Advisory Committee, and
3. That, Witney Town Council would write to Witney Land Army about potential volunteers.

T24 **MADLEY PARK BUS STOPS**

Following a complaint from a member of the public about the Madley Park bus stop being in poor condition at the last meeting, the Deputy Town Clerk updated the committee as Witney Town Council had assessed the condition and considered the items that were raised.

The bus stop was reported as being dirty, muddy underfoot and with overgrown vegetation. The bus stop had been put on a more regular cleaning routine and the vegetation would be cut back. There was a wider issue where the road joins the pavement, a puddle was regularly forming due to the unevenness of the surface, this would be reported to Oxfordshire County Council.

Resolved:

That, the resident will be updated by their Councillor.

T25 **PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE**

Members were advised that residents were concerned about the forthcoming closure of the Botley Road in Oxford and the implications of this on bus routes by the Public transport Representative. There was a lack of information from the rail company and bus companies at this point. There were however alternative services which would be available.

Members were updated that the government funded £2 capped bus fare scheme had been extended until the end of June.

Resolved:

That, the verbal update be noted.

T26 **SCHOOL ROAD SAFETY**

The Committee received road safety information which was provided to schools in Witney and Oxfordshire from the Fire & Rescue Services Road Safety Officer.

Resolved:

That, the response be noted.

T27 **BRIDGE STREET AREA APPRAISAL**

Members were advised further updates from Oxfordshire County Council were not available at this time as it was dependent on the West Oxfordshire Local Plan and future housing.

There were a range of options available which would be picked up with local stakeholders; it had been left out of the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan until clarification was received.

Resolved:

That, Oxfordshire County Council clarify the current position at the next meeting of this Committee.

T28 **NEW PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON WEST END**

Councillor M Brooker had requested that a pedestrian crossing be considered for West End, to be positioned near to 'The Cake Bakerie', 14 West End. After discussion by Members, it was agreed that this would offer enhanced safety for pedestrians, particularly for school children using this route to Wood Green.

Resolved:

That, the OCC Officer present at the meeting will make a request to the County Council and it may be added to the LCWIP.

T29 **TRAFFIC LIGHTS AT WELCH WAY/WOODFORD WAY**

Councillor M Brooker addressed the committee with his observations of the ineffectiveness of the traffic lights at Welch Way/Woodford Way. Rather than helping with the traffic, the lights caused traffic issues. Cllr Brooker provided first-hand accounts of the issues caused by the traffic lights and the driver difficulties that he had witnessed. After a brief discussion it was agreed that a request be made for Oxfordshire County Council to review the efficiency of the lights and whether there might be a case for them to be removed.

Resolved:

That, the OCC Officer present at the meeting would request a review of the traffic lights in this location.

T30 **ITEMS RAISED AT THE MEETING**

The Committee were updated about a new electric car sharing scheme that was being launched from Woodford Way Car Park and a signalised crossing on Burford Road which would be made live on 4th April.

T31 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING(S)**

Members were advised that due to holiday commitments, the scheduled meeting of 6th June would need to be re-arranged.

Resolved:

That, the revised date for the next meeting of this Committee would be notified by email.

The meeting closed at: 4.30 pm

Chair