

WITNEY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 18 June 2024

At 2.30 pm in the Main Hall, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor A Coles (Chair)

Councillors:	M Brooker	J Robertshaw (In place of T Ashby)
	J Aitman	R Smith
	S Simpson	

Others:	C Hulme	A Bullock
	D Miles	

Officers:	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk

2 members of the public.

T26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Ashby and D Enright, T Bayliss from Stagecoach, K Hickman from Windrush Bike Project, and A Lyon from West Oxfordshire Community Transport. Town Councillor J Robertshaw was attending as a substitute for Cllr Ashby.

T27 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee received representation from residents of Richmond Village concerning Agenda Item 7a – Proposal for the extension of footpaths on Thorney Leys and Curbridge Road.

T28 RICHMOND VILLAGE

The Chair brought this agenda item forward in the meeting so residents from Richmond Village present could listen to the discussion.

The item had been supported by ward Councillors Ashby and J Doughty, but contact had only been made with County Councillor Fenton on speeding issues and not this request. Members heard the residents had encountered difficulty in ascertaining who was responsible for the area.

Images highlighted there was a well-trodden path through the grass at this location and there was agreement that a path was an obvious omission from infrastructure on this side of the town; it effectively cut the residents of Guild Close off from path and cycle connectivity.

The County Council officer advised the carriageway, pathways and verges were the County Council's responsibility. If the footpath was inside highway ownership it would make any

progress simpler. This item was not in the Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) but would be added in the next review of the document. It was noted by other officers that any improvements here should also include cycling improvements.

With regard to funding, County Council officers would explore any S106 developer funding opportunities but, if that was not identified, other means would need to be sought. A Member suggested contacting the Windrush Place industrial units to ask if they would contribute.

The Chair suggested the residents also approach Cllr Fenton so he could progress this through the County Council channels.

Resolved:

1. That, the request from Richmond Village residents be noted and,
2. That, the footpath be added in at the next review of the LCWIP and,
3. That, the possibility of S106 developer funding be sought.

T29 TO ADOPT AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2024 (COPY ENCLOSED)

The Committee received the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee meeting held on 26 March 2024.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Witney Traffic Advisory Committee held on 26 March 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair.

T30 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED IN THE ACTION PLAN OR SUBSEQUENT ITEMS

T22 – The Parish Transport Representative advised the introduction of countywide travel tickets had been delayed until 7 July.

Resolved:

That, the above matter be noted. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2024 which weren't covered under subsequent items.

Cllr R Smith joined the meeting at 15.05pm during the discussion on Witney High Street.

Cllr M Brooker left the meeting at 15.20pm during the discussion on Madley park improvements.

T31 REPORT OF THE PLACE PLANNING & CO-ORDINATION TEAM (WEST)

The Committee received and considered the Oxfordshire County Council reports which included updates on the Shores Green project, Witney High Street improvements, Bridge Street Area options, Fiveways roundabout, Windrush Place Active Travel Schemes and Madley Park improvements. In addition, witney road traffic accident data and parking enforcement figures were provided to the Committee for information.

Members welcomed the report and attached accident/parking enforcement data. With regard to the enforcement data, it was felt further information was required for the figures to be meaningful.

The accident data was welcomed as the figures were generally low and appeared to show a reduction during the previous year which potentially correlated with the introduction of lower speed limits. For information, the TVP representative noted that 300 parishes across Oxfordshire had now reduced speed limits to 20mph following the County Council's policy on lowering restrictions had been introduced three years ago. As with the enforcement data, further clarification on the nature of the accidents would be helpful.

The Committee was pleased the Shores Green project was progressing, but Members were concerned there may be a delay due any change of Secretary of State after the election.

There was frustration from the Committee on a further delay to the Witney High Street scheme with further public consultation being postponed until September. The Chamber of Commerce had published a position paper and felt the current scheme was neither a re-opening, nor a closure and something needed to happen. The consultation would be on a single design and communications would be sent out nearer the time.

There were questions on breakdown of costs, the project design brief, enforcement and on the compliance with the active travel grant which was funding the scheme which would be fed back to the County Council's project team.

In relation to Corn Street and the Fiveways roundabout, it was advised that Corn Street would be looked at separately in its entirety under the Feasibility design, Capability and Ambition Fund) as it was a clearly defined project.

Members welcomed updates on Windrush Place bridleway surfacing and on funding for Madley Park path improvements. At Windrush Place, Members agreed the work at Windrush Place was a huge improvement; it was confirmed it would be maintained by the County Council public access team until such time it was transferred to Highways.

The Committee also raised concerns regarding the other footway alongside Wood Green School and a footway behind Windrush Health Centre which were suffering from poor drainage and surfacing.

A further item in the report regarding keep clear markings at dropped crossing points on Harvest Way was raised by a Member. Lining had taken place in this area but only at one end of the road, and not at Lime Walk which was the worst area for cars impaired visibility. It was advised the area had been looked at again and the work would be completed within the next two months.

The report also informed the Committee of the County Council's current position on access protection markings and requests for mirrors on the highway.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the road traffic accident data and parking enforcement data be noted and,
3. That, clarification is provided by the County Council on the questions raised regarding Witney High Street improvements and,

4. That, County officers look at the footways alongside Wood Green School and Windrush Health Centre and,
5. That, County officer follow-up on lining at Lime Walk/Harvest Way.

T32 **WITNEY SCHOOL STREETS**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised this item had been requested at the last meeting due to a conversation on the safety of schoolchildren.

Members were advised there was originally one pilot scheme in Witney at Tower Hill which was led by sustrans. Once that finished there was insufficient volunteer support and there were currently a small cluster of schemes remaining in Oxford and Abingdon.

There was no funding available from Oxfordshire County Council for School Streets and if required, schools would need to make the request and take the lead.

Resolved:

That, the update be noted.

T33 **HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM**

The Committee received correspondence from the Oxfordshire County Council Highways Engagement Team, sent to Witney Town Council regarding a visit to discuss any highway related problems.

There were no regular highway-related problems noted at the meeting, but Members were invited to forward any to the Deputy Town Clerk before the visit was arranged.

Resolved:

That, any highway-related issues in Witney be forwarded to the Deputy Town Clerk.

T34 **OXON TRAVEL**

The Committee received an update from officers regarding this new communication tool on the platform X, promoted by Oxfordshire County Council, which had been created to help inform followers about road traffic delays, roadworks or incidents.

Resolved:

That, the update be noted.

T35 **COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk at Witney Town Council regarding Community Speedwatch.

Members were reminded the scheme was managed by this Committee but administered via the town council. A further site had been added since the last meeting which had been agreed when the scheme was set up earlier in the year.

Data from the first three sessions, and a verbal update from the fourth were provided to the Committee. They were pleased to hear the majority of vehicles were adhering to the speed restrictions. In the most recent session 460 vehicles had been monitored with 10% above the thresholds.

Members agreed it was good news that positive feedback was being received from residents, with only a small amount of negativity on social media.

There were currently a small number of volunteers which made it difficult to survey/monitor more sites; without them further locations could not be added.

Resolved:

That, the report and verbal update be noted.

T36 **PUBLIC TRANSPORT UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Independent Parish Transport Representative.

Members were advised there had been some teething problems with the new community buses which were in the process of being rectified. A change to the route of the town centre service was being proposed at the service road in Welch Way to be able to drop off for Windrush Health Centre.

The Chair added that a Witney Bus Users Feedback meeting hosted by the Committee and facilitated by the town Council was likely to be held in October. Details would be circulated in due course.

Resolved:

That, the verbal updates be noted.

T37 **NEWLAND SPEEDWATCH REQUEST**

The Committee received correspondence from a resident of Newland which had been forwarded by Cllr D Enright.

Members noted the comments on the speed limits but had already heard that Witney was akin to other parishes in having 20mph restrictions and that debate on their introduction had already been had. The accident data viewed earlier in the meeting had also shown encouraging signs that lower limits were making a difference.

Thames Valley Police did not have the resources to conduct enforcement of this scheme, so it fell to Community Speed watch to plug the gap. The Chair advised that he was willing to propose adding more sites for monitoring but without further volunteers he was reluctant to at this juncture, the Committee had pinpointed key areas for monitoring near schools, care homes and in known problem areas which were a priority with such a small group.

Resolved:

1. That, the correspondence be noted and,

2. That, Newland be added for Community Speedwatch monitoring when further volunteers come forward to allow expansion of the scheme.

T38 **MADLEY LINE PAINTING**

This item was covered in the discussion on lining in the Oxfordshire County Council report earlier in the meeting.

T39 **ITEMS RAISED AT THE MEETING**

Speedwatch Locations – The Thames Valley Police representative advised it was relatively simple to add a site, but it must be approved by the Speedwatch Officers.

Hailey Road White Lining – Cllr S Simpson raised the prospect of lining at the location of the primary school, crossing and service road which impaired visibility in the area.

Cogges Hill Road Traffic Calming – Cllr J Robertshaw raised concerns given to him by residents about speeds in this location and asked what was going to be done about it. Officers advised there were items in this location outlined in the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) but as yet, they were currently unfunded. The site had been approved for Community Speedwatch, but a survey could only be undertaken if more volunteers came forward for the scheme.

Oxford Traffic Filter Talk – The Deputy Town Clerk reminded Members they had been invited to attend and share details of a free talk on traffic filters being installed in Oxford, at the Corn Exchange on 27 June.

T40 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING(S)**

Members were advised the forthcoming meetings of the Committee would be held on 11 June, 24 September 2024, and 21 January, 18 March 2025, all at 2.30pm.

The meeting closed at: 4.02 pm

Chair