

**Meeting Minutes of: West Berkshire Cycle Forum**  
**held on: Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020**  
**(via Zoom conference call)**

**Present:** Chair: Jon Winstanley (JW) - Head of Environment Dept, WBC  
Cllr Steve Masters (SM) – Council Member for Speen  
Cllr Andy Moore (AM) – Council Member for Newbury Central  
Elaine Cox – WBC Rights Of Way Officer  
Claire Willsher (CW) - Climate Action Group  
Cheryl Evans (CE) - WBC Traffic & Road Safety Officer  
Caroline Lane (CL) – SPOKES Chair / WBC Cycling Co-ordinator  
Stuart Goerly (SG) - Newbury Velo Cycling Club  
Cllr Martha Vickers – Council member for Newbury  
Cllr Tony Vickers – Council member for Wash Common  
Angela McMahon (AMc) – SPOKES / SUSTRANS Ranger  
Josh Kerry (JK) - WBC Highways Officer (minutes of meeting)  
Glenn Knight (GK) - Chairman Newbury Velo Cycling Club  
Neil Taylor (NT) – Newbury Road Club  
Clive Tombs (CT) – SPOKES Secretary

**Apologies:** Gordon Oliver – SPOKES  
Cllr Stephen Ardagh-Walter (SAW) – Council Member for Thatcham

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**1. Apologies**

**2. Welcome, introductions**

**3. Notes of previous meeting & matters arising**

JK reviewed minutes of the last meeting – which were passed without comment.

**4. Emergency Active Travel Fund: Covid-19 Response**

JW introduced the Emergency Active Travel Scheme whereby DfT have provided funding of £124k for West Berks to install temporary measures to encourage cycling and walking post lockdown. JW explained the very tight timescale given to identify and approve these schemes via Transport Action Group (henceforth TAG) and elected members. West Berks were given a week from receiving the letter from DfT to submission of application and then must have started within 4 weeks of receiving funding. This limited the scope somewhat for what was achievable in the tight timescale. It was decided that schemes to be selected on the basis of five general principles:

**Action**

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- 1) The scheme should ideally help promote walking or cycling as a replacement for journeys previously made by public transport.
- 2) The scheme should be on routes to/from our Town Centres, employment areas or schools.
- 3) The scheme should involve the meaningful reallocation of road space for cycling and/or walking.
- 4) It must be possible for the scheme be designed, consulted upon and safety audited in order for work to start within 4 weeks of the receipt of the funding allocation (date to be confirmed).
- 5) It should be possible to deliver the measures quickly using temporary materials. Costly elaborate schemes will not be funded as part of this phase and will be reassessed as part of phase 2.

JK explained the types of infrastructure that we would be looking at implementing in Phase One (road closures, pop-up cycle lanes, contra-flow cycling, cycle parking) and Phase Two (more time to prepare permanent schemes and be creative). JW elaborated £465k available for WBC in Phase 2. Unable to disclose at this stage exact details of locations due to awaiting approval from members. NT requested phase 2 pick a route and be bold; for example a route to school. CL explained concept of "School Streets"; i.e. closing off roads at certain times outside schools to encourage walking and cycling.

Discussion ensued about Newbury town centre full pedestrianisation and the recent NWN poll inspired debate about whether cycling should be allowed through Northbrook St. CE cited studies into shared space behaviour and will circulate amongst group. Urban Limits have previously ran events in Market Place and were due to visit West Berks on 22<sup>nd</sup> June (now postponed).

**CE**

It was suggested that a pop-up stall to educate users was best way forward. Various clubs / organisations to work with Newbury Town Council to distribute "Share the Space" leaflets left over from previous campaign. CE to co-ordinate with support from Newbury BID town rangers.

**GK / NT /  
CE / MV**

EC added that a similar issue is occurring on Public Rights of Way with off-road MTB and to circulate written response.

**EC**

## **5. E-Scooter Trials**

JK explained that DfT had expedited its e-scooter rental trial and that West Berks had been approached by an American company called Spin ([www.spin.app](http://www.spin.app)) to gauge interest in taking part in a trial. Hence an agenda item to canvassing opinions of the Cycle Forum. The scooters are operated by an app and benefit from in-built technology to geo-fence areas to ensure that they have their speed capped or are

disabled which, for example, may be useful in pedestrianised zones.

CE cautioned that any trial of e-scooter rentals would have to be done in partnership with TVP and benefit from a campaign clarifying the legal position, safety issues and expected behaviour or else might have unintended negative consequences. CE to circulate link for current DfT consultation on microbilty.

EDIT: see here <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-transport-regulatory-review-call-for-evidence-on-micromobility-vehicles-flexible-bus-services-and-mobility-as-a-service>

There were mixed responses from the various forum members (e.g. not a bike and not active travel) but generally positive (conversely, not a car! Therefore zero emissions, reduce congestion and appeal to younger age cohort). SM asked why e-scooters and suggested also e-bikes. CT proposed focusing on a specific route for example up to Shaw to enable Vodafone employees or Hambridge Road Industrial Estate for Stryker (corridor for improvement - talk of sponsorship?).

JW clarified that after the imminent DfT announcement regarding legality / Ts&Cs for e-scooter use then West Berks would have to undergo an approval process via the TAG. When this time comes JW asked for Cycle Forum to articulate a position on the issue via letter.

## 6. Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

JK gave an update on West Berks Council initiative to enlist external consultants, WSP, to deliver a LCWIP. This will analyse existing levels of active travel, define network improvements and prioritise investment for a 10 year cycling & walking strategy. The LCWIP is a prerequisite for bringing in future funding for cycling and walking schemes, indeed the pro forma for the Emergency Active Travel Fund specifically requested if the applicant was developing or had written an LCWIP.

JK asked that the Cycle Forum to be involved in the LCWIP not just consultation at the end but via workshops to help route mapping throughout the process. The workshops were to be held in July but the time frame has slipped due to Coronavirus and awaiting details of how the format will work given current social distancing restrictions. JK meeting next week with revised timetable and update members.

**JK**

TV asked about inclusion of horse riders, as a vulnerable road user, in the LCWIP and cited example of Thatcham where it might be worth looking at conflict points. JK explained that the LCWIP would initially start with an exercise in data gathering and appraisal to establish where interventions were needed and where they would have most impact. Therefore the focus will be facilitating more utility journeys to be made by bike rather than on leisure routes. The example of

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commuter journeys to Harwell, South Oxfordshire, cropped up and this is to be covered by the LCWIP.

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**7. AOB**

JW requested the Cycle Forum terms of reference were updated to cover the scenario that happened this week; i.e. if the chair is unable to make the meeting then there should be an alternative plan of action. The terms of reference to be circulated prior to next meeting and added as an item on the agenda.

**JK / DV**

CW asked after the Hermitage to Hampstead Norreys railway path and whether there was an extension proposed either towards Newbury or Compton. CL added that it would be good to build on the momentum of the initial phase of works and CT suggested that there could be S106 available in Chilton, S. Oxon, that could be identified as a contribution. EC pointed to the bridleway from Shaw-cum-Donnington as a potential route. JK to enlist the help of Sustrans, who have experience dealing with landowners, to produce a feasibility report for the next stages.

**JK**

Next Meeting:

**Wednesday 19th August 2020**

- Time: 18:00 – 19:30
- Venue: TBC