

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE		
DATE:	13 SEPTEMBER 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	17
TITLE:	CYCLE FORUM - MEETING NOTE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the discussions and actions from the Cycle Forum held in July 2017.
- 1.2 The Cycle Forum meeting note from 12th July 2017 is appended.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub Committee notes the attached minutes from the Cycle Forum held on 12 July 2017.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Reading's Cycling Strategy: Bridging Gaps, Overcoming Barriers & Promoting Safer Cycling, was adopted by the Council on 19 March 2014 as a sub-strategy to the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The strategy includes detailed policies regarding the design principles for delivering infrastructure and route improvements for cyclists on the public highway, as well as policies to encourage and promote cycling to different demographics.
- 3.2 The Cycling Strategy is aligned with wider local policy documents such as the Sustainable Community Strategy and Climate Change Strategy, contributing towards wider public health and air quality objectives.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The meeting of the Cycle Forum held on 12th July 2017 was chaired by Councillor Deborah Absolom. The Forum was also attended by Councillors Page, Gittings and Hopper as well as Reading Borough Council officers and representatives of various local cycling groups. The notes of the meeting are attached.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The delivery of the cycle schemes outlined in this report help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.
 - Providing infrastructure to support the economy.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 As described above.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None at present.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Cycle Forum - Meeting Note, Traffic Management Sub-Committee reports from January 2016 onwards.

READING CYCLE FORUM - MEETING NOTE

Wednesday 12th July 2017, 6pm

Mayor's Parlour, Civic Offices, Reading

Attendees

Cllr Deborah Absolom (Chair)
John Lee (RCC)
Karen Stanbridge (University of Reading)
Karen Richardson (RCC)
Adam Lewthwaite (Sustrans)
Cllr Tony Page (RBC)
Cllr Paul Gittings (RBC)
Cllr Ed Hopper (RBC)
Simon Beasley (RBC)
Emma Baker (RBC)

Apologies

Richard Pearson (Reading CTC)
Tanya Rebel (GREN)
Adrian Lawson (RCC)
Cllr Ricky Duveen (RBC)

1. Introductions

Cllr Absolom welcomed attendees to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Note of the Last Meeting

The note of the last meeting was agreed.

3. NCN Route 422 Update

An update was given on progress of the NCN422 Phase 1 scheme and next steps for Phase 2 and 3, including the circulation of Phase 2 plans over the summer in advance of works commencing in October, subject to Committee approval.

Key points highlighted included:

- Traffic signal upgrades are expected to take place on Bath Road over the summer.
- Provisional agreement from the Oracle to improve signing highlighting the presence of other users that will be complemented by improvements along the alternative route via Mill Lane.
- The planned delivery of signing improvements, some of which are included in the requested schemes list, will be taken forward under NCN 422.

ACTION - RBC to circulate Phase 2 plans following briefing with Ward Councillors (July/August)

4. Thames Path - Update

Forum members were advised of the outcome of the consultation and next steps in preparation for submitting the Cycle Tracks Orders to the Secretary of State. A discussion also took place around the need for traffic calming measures to deter illegal activity by motorcyclists and encourage considerate cycle use. Sustrans highlighted their experience of developing such measures for Watford and other London boroughs and agreed to circulate details after the meeting.

Action - Sustrans to circulate details of off-carriageway traffic calming measures for consideration.

5. EMPOWER Project - Update

The Forum was given an update on progress of the EU project - EMPOWER aimed at breaking down the barriers to cycling, particularly amongst those undertaking journeys to work by private car. Over 1000 people signed up to initiatives delivered under the BikeSmart umbrella, helping to expand the GPS dataset that will be used to inform future planning of cycle improvements/routes.

The Project Officer highlighted positive media coverage and feedback from participants, who are reporting increases in the number of journeys being undertaken by bike. One of the project partners, Avanti Cycling, will be continuing to offer led-rides after the programme has ended to further encourage participants to undertake local journeys by bike.

A discussion also took place on feedback from participants using ReadyBike, who highlighted access to the bicycles as being a potential barrier to use. Reading Cycle Campaign highlighted that they may be willing to support the scheme's relaunch when the new Contractor is announced to encourage use and show potential users how to use the scheme.

ACTION - RBC to share ReadyBike contact details with Reading Cycle Campaign.

6. Cycle Forum - Requested Schemes List

A discussion took place on the latest requested schemes list, including the need to clarify routes through the town centre (Item 15/16). Officers highlighted that a number of requests would be integrated into the NCN programme, including some signing improvements through the Oracle, as well as decluttering and road marking refreshes along Kennet Side.

7. Items Raised by Forum Members

- a. **Oxford Road study updates (JL)** -
Reading Cycle Campaign requested to see any revised plans.

b. Town Centre signing and improvements (JL) -

Town centre signing and improvements was covered under item 6.

c. Vastern Road / Reading Bridge cycle collisions (JL) -

A discussion took place on the number, type and location of cycle collisions occurring at Vastern Road/George Street roundabout, including inconsistent road markings in the left-turn lane on approach to the roundabout from Vastern Road and potential solutions, such as spiral markings.

Officers highlighted initial discussions with nearby businesses regarding possible pedestrian improvements and agreed to update the Forum at the next meeting. JL advised that he would recirculate previous comments on roundabout for consideration when developing proposals.

ACTION - RBC to review accident data to identify likely cause of collisions and potential solutions.

ACTION - RBC to send JL safety audit for changes on or near Vastern Road roundabout delivered as part of redevelopment of Reading Station.

ACTION - RBC to amend lane markings on approach to the roundabout from Vastern Road.

d. Yellow lines on Henley Road (JL) -

JL highlighted issues with the current advisory cycle lanes and welcomed the proposed changes.

e. Lower Henley Road cycle lane changes -

JL also suggested the installation of double yellow lines on the bend on approach to the traffic signals to improve the facility.

A subsequent discussion took place on the installation of advisory cycle lanes on Lower Henley Road and the subsequent decision to remove them based on feedback from Reading Cycle Campaign. Officers asked for clarification on the position of the Campaign in relation to the current road layout to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Action - RCC to clarify their position on the current road layout on Lower Henley Road.

f. Completed & comprehensive cycle network by 2020, including dedicated budget (TR) -

The Forum was advised that the Cycling Strategy Implementation Plan was reported to Traffic Management Sub-Committee in June and is available in the [Committee Library](#).

Officers also informed the Forum that an expression of interest had been submitted to the Department for Transport for technical support in developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for the Reading urban area.

- g. **A systematic change, where priority is given to pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, private cars (TR) -**

This item was covered under item 7g when the Forum was advised of the Council's intention to develop a long-term cycling and walking strategy.

8. Any Other Business

The Forum asked whether the Council was aware of Thames Valley Police securing close pass mats from Cycling UK to expand the reach of the West Midlands Police initiative 'Too Close for Comfort'.

Action: RBC to investigate whether Thames Valley Police secured the equipment and invite them to attend the next Cycle Forum.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 25th October 2017