

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

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| TO:              | TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEE |              |   |
| DATE:            | 2 NOVEMBER 2017                  | AGENDA ITEM: | 14  |
| TITLE:           | CYCLE FORUM - MEETING NOTE       |              |   |
| LEAD COUNCILLOR: | TONY PAGE                        | PORTFOLIO:   | STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT |
| SERVICE:         | TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE      | WARDS:       | ALL   |
| LEAD OFFICER:    | EMMA BAKER                       | TEL:         | 0118 937 4881                               |
| JOB TITLE:       | SENIOR TRANSPORT PLANNER         | E-MAIL:      | emma.baker@reading.gov.uk                   |

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 October 2017.
- 1.2 The Cycle Forum meeting note from 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017 is appended.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub Committee notes the attached minutes from the Cycle Forum held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 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 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017 was chaired by Councillor Deborah Absolom and attended by Councillor Gittings, 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 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017, 6pm

Mayor's Parlour, Civic Offices, Reading

## Attendees

Cllr Deborah Absolom (Chair)  
John Lee (RCC)  
Adam Lewthwaite (Sustrans)  
Brian Morley (RCC)  
Tanya Rebel (GREN)  
Karen Richardson (Cycling UK/RCC)  
Summreen Sheikh (Green Park)  
Karen Stanbridge (University of Reading)  
Simon Beasley (RBC)  
Emma Baker (RBC)

## Apologies

Cllr Tony Page (RBC)  
Cllr Ed Hopper (RBC)  
Adrian Lawson (RCC)

## 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

The Forum was advised that recent improvements have been implemented near New Lane Hill, Morlands Avenue and Parkside Road and footway improvements are still planned to the west of New Lane Hill as well as traffic signal upgrades at Liebenrood Road, Southcote Road and Circuit Lane.

Officers informed the Forum that the Phase 2 programme was agreed at SEPT Committee in September and works are expected to commence in November, including on-carriageway cycle lanes on Berkeley Avenue. The Forum was also informed that designs for the Phase 3 scheme are expected to be available for comment before the meeting.

The Forum raised concerns about the placement of A-frames on shared-use paths, particularly those near Cemetery Junction.

#### **4. EMPOWER Update/Presentation**

Karen Richardson, who managed the EU-funded EMPOWER project on behalf of RBC, gave a presentation summarising the results of the six-month project, which ended in July. Almost 2,000 participants took part in the Bikesmart programme that consisted of an ICT-based workplace cycle challenge and rewards scheme as well as supporting initiatives, including cycle training.

#### **5. Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan - Update**

Officers informed the Forum that our request for technical support to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, in partnership with Wokingham and West Berkshire, has been successful and is covered in a separate Traffic Management Sub-Committee report.

#### **6. Thames Path - Update**

Officers updated the Forum on the next steps in submitting the Thames Path cycle track orders to the Secretary of State, including the preparation of a risk assessment.

Item 8f was also covered as part of the update with Officers reiterating that there is currently no funding available to upgrade the Thames Path from Scours Lane to the existing hard-surfaced path.

#### **7. Cycle Forum - Requested Schemes List**

Updates on requested schemes list were highlighted by Officers, including a number of items that will be delivered as part of the NCN Phase 2 programme, the installation of cycle parking on Caversham Road and at Tilehurst Library and the recommencement of Network Rail improvements at Cow Lane.

The Forum highlighted that a Cross Rail Cycle Liaison Officer has been appointed and asked whether any predictions for cycle growth have been calculated to justify town centre improvements included on the requested schemes list, including contra-flow cycle facilities.

SS informed Officers that the installation of 'Keep Clear' markings on the A33 have been positively received and requested that another marking is considered near Island Road to prevent vehicles from blocking the cycle path.

A discussion also took place on whether ReadyBike docking stations could be considered at Green Park Station and MereOak Park and Ride and whether they would consider sponsoring new docking stations in the vicinity of the park as Thames Valley Park have done. Officers informed the Forum that new sites are being

investigated as part of the new Contract with Hourbike, including West Reading and Green Park.

ACTION: Officers to update requested schemes list to reflect above requests.

ACTION: RBC to investigate whether the Taxi Association, Reading Buses and RBC offer driving awareness training.

ACTION: RBC to send Green Park details of costs associated with a new docking station for their consideration.

## 8. Items Raised by Forum Members

### a. **Driving around vulnerable road users (e.g. Operation Close Pass) and other driver education (Thames Valley Police were invited to the meeting)**

In addition to the discussion on driver awareness training a further discussion took place on the 'Close Pass' initiative launched by West-Midlands Police, which is now also delivered by Hampshire.

ACTION: RBC to investigate whether TVP secured close pass mats and to send a further request to TVP inviting them to attend the next Forum meeting.

### b. **Educating cyclists especially where they share space with pedestrians**

The Forum stressed the importance of making sure that shared paths are signed correctly to reduce conflicts with pedestrians and highlight where cycling is permitted. A discussion also took place on raising the awareness of the Highway Code in addition to what is already included on the Cycling Map.

ACTION: RBC to investigate an educational campaign highlighting cycling elements of the Highway Code.

ACTION: RBC to review signing on shared-use paths.

### c. **Access Points limiting access to adapted or unconventional bikes**

Officers informed the Forum that there are plans to review barriers across the parks network to improve accessibility for legitimate users and that Sustrans guidance on alternative options will be considered.

ACTION: Officers to provide a further update on timescales.

### d. **Watlington Street to Thames Path and Homebase development (including access to Napier Road underpass)**

BM circulated a handout suggesting off-carriageway improvements linking Watlington Street to Thames Path and supporting links via Forbury Road providing better connections to the Station and other local amenities.

ACTION: Officers to consider proposal and update requested schemes list.

### e. **Lower Henley Road cycle lane**

RCC representatives informed Officers that they have identified suggestions for how the existing cycle lanes on Lower Henley Road could be improved.

ACTION: RCC to send Officers details of suggested improvements for consideration.

**f. Thames Path Improvements**

Covered above

**g. Vastern Road Collisions - Update**

Attendees discussed accident data for the Vastern Road roundabout and opportunities to implement improvements as part of wider schemes. Officers informed the group that concept plans have been developed and invited suggestions for further improvements assuming existing kerb lines are fixed.

ACTION: Forum members to provide RBC with suggestions for improving safety at roundabout.

**9. Any Other Business**

None

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

To be confirmed.