

Minutes of the Local Committee (Woking)
Meeting held at 6.45pm on 2 September 2010
at
Woking Borough Civic Offices, Woking

Members present:

Surrey County Council

Mrs Liz Bowes (Pyrford)

Mrs Elizabeth Compton (St Johns and Brookwood)

Mr Will Forster (Woking South)

Mr Geoff Marlow (The Byfleets)

Mrs Diana Smith (Knaphill)

Woking Borough Council

Cllr John Kingsbury (St Johns and Hook Heath) – Vice Chairman

Cllr Ashley Bowes (Pyrford)

Cllr Rob Leach (Goldsworth East)

Cllr Liam Lyons (Mount Hermon West)

Cllr Derek McCrum (Kingfield and Westfield)

Cllr Richard Wilson (West Byfleet)

The meeting was preceded by a public engagement session. The notes of this session are set out in Annex 1 of these minutes.

Part One – In Public

[All references to items refer to the agenda for the meeting]

32/10 Apologies for absence [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Ben Carasco, Mr Mohammed Amin, Cllr Mohammed Bashir, Cllr Tony Branagan, Cllr Glynis Preshaw (Cllr Ashley Bowes substituted) and Cllr Bryan Cross (Cllr Rob Leach substituted). Cllr Derek McCrum had to leave part way through the meeting, Cllr Liam Lyons then acted as his substitute.

33/10 Minutes of last meeting held on 3 February 2010 [Item 2]

The minutes of the last meeting of the local committee (Woking) held on 7 July 2010 were agreed and signed.

34/10 Declarations of interests [Item 3]

There were no declarations of interest.

35/10 Petitions [Item 4]

There were no petitions received.

36/10 Written Public Questions [Item 5]

One written public question was received. A copy of this question and answer can be found in annex 2 of these minutes. There was no supplementary question.

37/10 Written Members' Questions [Item 6]

No questions were received.

Executive Items for decision

38/10 Additional Highways Funding for 2010/11 [Item 7]

Steve Child introduced the report which set out proposals for allocating the £73,000 capital budget for highways in Woking for 2010/11.

Cllr Leach expressed his support for the Lockfield Drive scheme as residents in Lowthorpe are kept awake at night from road noise.

RESOLVED:

The Local Committee (Woking) agreed:

- (i) to use the £73,000 capital funds for Woking as set out in Annexe A of the report as follows:
 - 1 Local structural repair – Lockfield Drive (junction with Bampton Way for 200m east)
 - 2 Parking review measures approved by committee
 - 3 A245 Parvis Road, Byfleet – speed limit reduction

- (ii) that the management of the above be vested with the Area Highway Manager in consultation with the Chairman should it be necessary to further review priorities.

39/10 Cycle Woking – Allowing Cycling in Woking Town Centre [Item 8]

Cllr Kingsbury reminded those present that in accordance with the rules of the local committee, only members of the committee were able to take part in this and subsequent items.

Cllr Melanie Whitehand, Woking Borough Councillor and portfolio holder for equalities protested as she wished to contribute to the discussions but was advised that in accordance with the rules, this was not possible.

Paul Fishwick introduced the report and within his presentation was asked to address the points raised during the open public question time. Mr Fishwick asked members to note an amendment to recommendation (iii) in the report, which should read "...this project." at the end.

The main objective of Cycle Woking is to increase cycling in the town centre. The town centre connects a number of radial routes and cycling through the town enables continuity of journey. Local Transport Note 2/05 assumes that for new pedestrian areas, cycling will be allowed unless an assessment of risk shows it is unsafe to do so. This assessment should also take into account alternative on road routes, which in this case would be the A320. The possible risk to pedestrians needs to be weighed up against the safety of cyclists on alternative routes. Accidents between pedestrians and cyclists are very rare, and cyclists tend to respond to pedestrian density by slowing down. Improvements to the cycling network have improved access for cyclists, pedestrians and disabled people and have increased cycle movements. It is envisaged that anti-social cycling by a few people could still be a problem even if cycling was not allowed. Mr Fishwick suggested that there were no real factors for not allowing cyclists in the town centre.

The experimental order currently in place cannot be extended beyond the 18 month period. A permanent order can be revoked at any time should the committee wish to do so. Mr Fishwick suggested that further work is done on areas of common interest with disabled groups and a report is brought back to committee in February 2011. It was further suggested that no on road cycle markings should be put down until after the February meeting.

[Cllr Derek McCrum left at 7.15pm. Cllr Liam Lyons took over as his substitute].

In response to some of the questions raised during the open public question session, Mr Fishwick made the following comments:

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Policing of the permanent order will require close working between the Police and Cycle Woking, and there will need to be a further education and awareness campaign.

The Cycle Woking promotion leaflet clearly states that cyclists need to be aware of the elderly and disabled and not to assume that people will be able to see or hear cyclists coming.

Members of the public report all sorts of issues to the borough and county council and cycling incidents should not be any different.

Mr Fishwick suggested that if the order was not made permanent, the cycle parking in the town centre would be isolated from a cycle route, cyclists may ignore the ban, the alternative route for cyclists would be along the A320, or people may go back to using their cars.

The Chairman invited comments from members of the committee.

Cllr Ashley Bowes was on the Woking Access Group for a year and a key aspect of that role was to remove barriers to enjoyment. There is a premise of shared use across the country. It is ill conceived to use the more vulnerable as a way to slow down traffic. Equality needs to be promoted and there needs to be a balance between the impact on cyclists and the impact on the disabled, elderly and vulnerable. Regarding pushing cyclists onto more dangerous routes, cyclists have a choice, pedestrians do not and the impact on the vulnerable is greater than it would be for cyclists. Cllr Bowes was not in favour of confirming the order.

Mr Will Forster explained that the purpose of the permanent review would be to address the concerns regarding lack of consultation and to develop a mechanism for complaints. At the moment there is a lack of evidence. Regarding the signage for no cycling, people think that the cyclist in the red circle means that cycling is allowed, resulting in people cycling along Church Path – this needs to be addressed. Regarding the proposal to move the entrance of the library onto Gloucester Walk, Mr Forster could not see that this would work with dual use. Mr Forster then asked what extra resources would be required for enforcement.

In response, Mr Fishwick explained that it was proposed that the review would be held in the February and October meetings of the committee. The no cycling sign is a standard sign and it is not possible to put a line through it to make the message clearer. Regarding the library proposals, Cycle Woking are aware of them and will work with relevant officers if this progresses. Regarding enforcement, a discussion will need to be held with the Police, but there is a neighbourhood team covering the town centre.

Mrs Diana Smith felt strongly that the scheme should be continued. There have been gains, but is aware that there are difficulties and a balance is required with regular reports back to committee. There is a need to make sure that incidents are reported and logged and properly managed – and asked whether there could there be a clear advertised number for reporting incidents. An assessment of the reported incidents needs to look at whether there is a particular part of the order which is causing problems.

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Mrs Liz Bowes felt that a focus on safety was needed and asked what the worst thing that could happen would be. For cyclists this would be that they would have to dismount and walk a short distance. For vulnerable people it may be an injury. The needs of all residents need to be listened to and therefore Mrs Bowes indicated she would vote against the order.

Mr Geoff Marlow explained that there was not the space or money to make all highways suitable for cyclists so creative solutions were needed. The town centre scheme has been a success and he will support it. However, Mr Marlow agreed that a procedure was needed to report incidents and the committee should review the scheme twice a year.

Cllr Liam Lyons would like to support the scheme but has misgivings. People would not report incidents to the Police. The cycle racks in the town centre are accessible to cyclists by a short walk from the highway and suggested that adding a few minutes to the journey would be better than adding fear to vulnerable people. Cllr Lyons suggested that the words 'Cycling Prohibited' should be placed under the no cycling sign on the ground. Cllr Lyons was against making the order permanent.

Cllr Rob Leach was broadly in favour and felt that the irresponsible behaviour of a few should not outweigh the many. He agreed that there needed to be greater awareness raising and an easy way to report incidents and supported the review in February.

Cllr Richard Wilson asked what the costs would be to remove the signage. Cllr Wilson did have some concerns around blind people with guide dogs. In towns in Sweden cyclists are encouraged to use segregated areas marked on the ground, and asked how these towns cope with blind people. He noted that Surrey County Council does good work with the schools on bikeability. Cllr Wilson was in favour of the scheme but he felt further consultation was required. He also asked about problems that had arisen in other towns, and what changes had been made as a result.

In response to points raised, Mr Fishwick explained that cyclists would not use the A320 so a drop in cyclists in the town centre would be seen. If further Cycle England funding was available in April 2011, not making the order permanent would go against the original Cycle Woking objectives. Regarding reporting, it was suggested that a reporting template would be put on the website, and also hard copies available in the library, Woking Borough and Surrey County Council offices. Dangerous cycling will not be tolerated and awareness campaigns and police enforcement is needed. The cost of removing the signage allowing cycling in the town centre would be £4,000. Segregated cycle lanes could be looked at in part of the town centre and reported on in February 2011. The Police have powers to deal with reckless cyclists and have warned people before. There could be a joint campaign to publicise those caught. Regarding issues in other shared use areas, Mr Fishwick was not aware of other incidents.

Regarding paragraph 8.1 of the report, Cllr Ashley Bowes was not satisfied that there were no equality implications.

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As a result of the discussion and members views, Cllr Kingsbury suggested an amendment to (ii) to take into account the issues raised. This was seconded by Mr Forster. A further addition to the amendment was put forward and seconded by Cllr Ashley Bowes. A final addition was put forward by Cllr Lyons. The changes to the amendment were agreed by Cllr Kingsbury and seconded by Mr Forster:

That a report is presented to this Committee at its meeting on 9 February 2011 reviewing the shared use scheme, including the results of a further detailed consultation undertaken with the public, disability and stakeholder groups, considering signing on the ground and reporting on the feasibility of segregated cycle lanes, indicating any reported incidents during the period, and that such opportunities to report cycle related incidents be publicised in the local press and media.

RESOLVED:

The Local Committee (Woking) agreed:

- i. That the experimental order is made permanent allowing cycling (dual use with pedestrians) within the town centre on designated streets as attached in Annex A of the report (agreed in a named vote of 6 for (Cllr Leach, Cllr Wilson, Mrs Smith, Mr Forster, Mrs Compton and Mr Marlow) and 3 against (Cllr Ashley Bowes. Mrs Liz Bowes and Cllr Lyons))
- ii. That a report is presented to this Committee at its meeting on 9 February 2011 reviewing the shared use scheme, including the results of a further detailed consultation undertaken with the public, disability and stakeholder groups, considering signing on the ground and reporting on the feasibility of segregated cycle lanes, indicating any reported incidents during the period, and that such opportunities to report cycle related incidents be publicised in the local press and media.
- iii. That the Local Committee delegate authority to the Cycle Woking Programme Manager in consultation with the Local Member and Chairman to proceed with traffic orders, advertisements and notices of intent in order to deliver this project.

[The committee took a break from 8.05pm to 8.15pm to enable members of the public who came for item 8 to leave.]

40/10 Cycle Woking – Victoria Arch Cycle Lanes and Toucan Crossing [Item 9]

A revised item 9 was tabled at the meeting.

Paul Fishwick introduced the report, noted that Members had a site visit to look at the proposal under the arch, and explained that i-v under recommendation (i) related to a-e on tabled amendment Annex A.

In response to issues raised by Mr Forster, Mr Fishwick confirmed that the lip south of the crossing island by Days yard will be constructed to stop vehicles going into Victoria Road towards the station, but this will be

Draft to be agreed on 20 October 2010

completed at a later date. The resurfacing work that has been done on the western side of the arch following utility works is satisfactory for green surfaces, however the eastern side needs patching first. The road safety audit was not available at committee. Regarding the link through the new development, further work for cyclists would be good along Guildford Road, but this would be subject to continuation of cycle town status or funding from further development. Regarding the cycle route outside the Centrium, cyclists could still cycle on the road, but the aim would be to encourage them off road. After crossing the road, the cyclists would then be put back on the road.

Cllr Lyons was concerned that the accident rate on Victoria Road towards the station would be made worse by the proposed scheme as cyclists would lose their right of way being on the pavement. In response, Mr Fishwick explained that the cycle route would bring cyclists to the crossing at 90 degrees to the road so they would have good sight lines. Cllr Lyons requested a stop sign at the crossing for cyclists. In response to a further question from Cllr Lyons, Mr Fishwick confirmed that the block paving outside the Centrium would be brought up to standard as part of the 278 agreement.

In response to Mr Marlow, Mr Fishwick confirmed that if two double decker buses went under the arch at the same time, then they would have to enter the cycle lane if it was 1.5 meters wide.

In response to Mrs Smith, Mr Fishwick confirmed that the white line down the middle of the arch would be put back when the new lines are put down.

Cllr Ashley Bowes proposed an amendment to strike out (ii). This was seconded by Mr Marlow, and opposed by Mrs Smith and Mr Forster as local county councillor.

Cllr Kingsbury took a vote on the amendment. The amendment was not supported in a vote of three for the amendment (Cllr A Bowes, Mrs Bowes and Mr Marlow) and six against (Cllr Lyons, Cllr Leach, Cllr Wilson, Mrs Smith, Mr Forster and Mrs Compton).

Cllr Ashley Bowes requested that he was minuted as being against recommendation (ii).

RESOLVED:

The Local Committee (Woking) agreed to:

- (i) That Victoria Arch scheme attached as Annex A is approved as follows:
 - (i) Goldsworth Road – introduce a 1.5m (broken line) cycle lane (Cycling England funded).
 - (ii) Victoria Way (under Victoria Arch) – widen the existing (broken line) cycle lanes on both sides to 1.5m (Cycling England funded) (agreed by a vote of 6 for (Cllr Lyons, Cllr Leach, Cllr Wilson, Mrs Smith, Mr Forster and Mrs Compton) and 4 against (Cllr Kingsbury, Cllr A Bowes, Mrs L Bowes and Mr Marlow)).

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- (iii) Guildford Road (south of Victoria Arch) – introduce a toucan crossing (S278 Development Agreement funded)
 - (iv) Victoria Road (outside of Centrium Development) – introduce an off road segregated cycle route (S278 Development Agreement funded).
 - (v) Victoria Road (Outside of Centrium Development) – removal of on road cycle lane (S278 Development Agreement funded).
- (ii) That the Local Committee delegate authority to the Cycle Woking Programme Manager in consultation with the Local Member and Local Committee Chairman to proceed with traffic orders, advertisements and notices of intent in order to deliver these projects.

41/10 Cycle Woking Forum [Item 10]

Cllr Kingsbury proposed Mrs Liz Bowes as the second County Councillor on the Cycle Woking Forum, and this was seconded by Mr Marlow.

RESOLVED:

The Local Committee (Woking) agreed:

- (i) That Liz Bowes is elected as the second County Councillor on the Woking Cycle Forum.

42/10 Allocating Local Committee Funding: Members Allocations [Item 11]

RESOLVED:

The Local Committee (Woking) agreed to:

- (i) The following allocation from the members allocation budget for 2010/11:
 - a. Surrey Fire and rescue Service provision of community safety and road traffic collision reduction equipment- £2565
- (ii) Noted that there were no allocations approved under delegated powers between the last local committee on 7 July 2010 and 2 September 2010.

43/10 Forward Programme

Members noted the forward programme as set out in the report, and noted that there would be a workshop in the autumn regarding the youth development plan, and it would come to the formal meeting on 9 February 2011 for agreement.

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44/10 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Chairman

[The meeting ended at 8.50pm]

Notes from Public Engagement Meeting

Public Open Questions

Question 1: Robert Shatwell (Westfield)

Mr Shatwell was concerned that the scheme allowing cycling in the town centre was being considered, and asked how it will be policed so the idiots on bikes behave responsibly.

Cllr Kingsbury stated that the scheme has been running for 17 months and it was a shame that Mr Shatwell had just heard about it, and asked Mr Fishwick to pick his point up in his presentation.

Question 2: Mr Marshall (Kingfield)

Mr Marshall asked why the SLOW sign on the Kingfield Road past Rosebury Crescent has not been repainted since it was resurfaced 2 years ago.

Mr Child agreed to get this progressed.

Question 3: Ian Wright (Cycle Users Group)

Mr Wright stated he was in favour of the permanent cycling order for the town centre and suggested that there would still be idiots on bikes regardless of the order. The experimental order has opened the town centre up to responsible cyclists. There is no evidence of problems increasing during the experimental order.

Question 4: Simon Doy (Visually and hearing impaired resident)

Mr Doy outlined the risk factors for someone like him in relation to the item on cycling through the town centre. He explained that being aware of cyclists relies on eye contact and hearing. So, it should be alright in 9 out of 10 cases, but not all. Visually impaired people often use a cane which goes outside the range of the body potentially into the path of cyclists. Cyclists would not be able to make people like Mr Doy aware of them, and that leads to an increase in fear for him. What has happened is not an indication of what could happen. He has been involved in incidents but has not reported them. He asked why people cannot just get off their bikes.

Mr Fishwick would address this in his presentation.

Question 5:

Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council have not consulted on the shared use scheme. The questioner asked how do you know it is not a problem if you have not consulted on it?

In response Mr Fishwick explained that there had been two public exhibitions in September 2008 and December 2008. It was also part of the original bid to Cycle England and was a key objective of Cycle Woking. An experimental order was made due to the concerns of some. During the period of the experimental order there has been an open consultation, and some comments have been made.

Question 6: Robert Shatwell (Westfield)

Mr Shatwell queried whether people would report an incident between a pedestrian and a cyclist, noted that recently he had observed three cyclists on the pavement under Victoria Arch who were not using the cycle lane, and asked if motorists have to park outside the town centre, why can't cyclists do the same?

Mr Fishwick would address this in his presentation.

Question 7: Mr Mir

Mr Mir asked what checks and balances are there to ensure reports are not one sided and gave the example of the new toucan crossing on Victoria Way and the impact on traffic.

In response, Mr Fishwick explained that proposed crossings go through the Traffic Systems team, and acknowledged that there is a fault on the signals on this stretch of road which are being worked on. It was confirmed that a notice was posted on site that the pelican was changing to a toucan.

Question 8: David Bynan (St Johns)

Mr Bynan is registered blind, and asked whether anyone from the council has volunteered to wear RNIB glasses that take most of your vision away and walk through the town centre, or if they have sat in a wheelchair? Sight impaired people cannot make eye contact. Mr Bynan invited Councillors to try it out before they voted.

Question 9: Simon Doy

Mr Doy asked about exhibitions and consultations before the pilot started, and asked whether the Woking Access Group had been consulted.

Mr Fishwick confirmed that there had been adverts in the paper and on the website. Comments were not invited from any particular groups. The Woking Access Group was informed about the experimental order in March 2009. At the time they confirmed that they had concerns and Mr Fishwick explained that it would be an experimental order and they could come back with comments at any time.

LOCAL COMMITTEE
(WOKING)

WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7 July 2010

1. Question from: Mr Clive Wood on behalf of members and those that the following organisation represent: Surrey Independent Living Council, Social Information on Disability, Action for Carers Surrey, Age Concern Surrey, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People, Surrey Disabled People's partnership, The Surrey Link, Surrey Association for Visual Impairment and Surrey Access Forum

Are members of the Committee aware that there are sincere concerns by disabled people and other vulnerable pedestrians that allowing Shared Use areas to continue in Woking will put them at risk of injury? Disabled and older people feel that Shared Use areas will result in town centres, such as Woking, becoming 'no go' areas for them. Do members of the Committee acknowledge that Surrey County Council has a duty of care to ALL citizens of Surrey and that allowing cyclist to use pedestrian areas will put some of the community's most vulnerable residents at risk of injury from colliding with cycles? With this in mind, does the Committee feel that it would be appropriate and fare to halt any current or planned shared surface/area schemes until a proper consultation process is carried out and until the Department of Transport has completed its current research on Shared Surfaces and they have produced the planned guidance for local authorities?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the local committee:

Members of the Local Committee are aware of such concerns. The use of an Experimental Order from 3 April 2009 provided a 'rehearsal' of making a Permanent Order and allows for any alterations to be made. If issues are reported, these can be investigated and possible solutions found or amendments made. The Experimental Order has now been in place for 17 months without any reported incidents and it has acted as a lengthy consultation period for people or representatives of groups to report issues and incidents. To date no incidents have been reported.

Access to the town centre from the west is via two Toucan crossings, which in effect are "shared space" crossings. These are the national standard type of crossing for pedestrians and cyclists, and they have been working satisfactorily all over the country for many years, including a number in Woking, and at these crossings pedestrians and cyclists tend to be concentrated together in confined spaces! Cyclists and pedestrians have been mixing happily together in Europe for decades. Why should Woking be any different?

Around the country many towns and cities allow cycling, such as Darlington, Exeter and Brighton and these areas have not become 'no-go' areas as

Annex 2 Draft to be agreed on 20 October 2010

pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people use the same space. New Road Brighton also allows vehicles similar to Commercial Way (western end) except for 24 hours a day.

Consultants MVA have been leading a research project to look at the wider issues of 'shared-space' schemes where all users including motor vehicles share a common surface. This also takes account of other DfT research such as the 'Mixed Priority Demonstration Project' and 'Manual for Streets' where the boundaries and segregation between different types of users are reduced or removed altogether.

The results of the research will be published in late 2010 and a new Local Transport Note on Shared Space, including pedestrian/cycle only routes, will be published in Spring 2011 and will supersede LTN 2-86 and draft LTN 2-04. The existing Experimental Order expires on the 2 October 2010, where the original 'No Cycling' Order would come back into force if a Permanent Order were not made allowing cycling. This would mean that all the existing shared-use signs would need to be removed and new 'No Cycling' signs installed. It would also be difficult to enforce, as many of the town centre cycle parking facilities would be 'isolated' from the cycle network.

A better solution would be to make a Permanent Order allowing cycling in the areas coloured YELLOW indicated in Annex A attached, and the town centre would be the subject of continued monitoring and a report submitted to the Local Committee twice a year, indicating any reported incidents and their findings. This would allow the Local Committee to be able to review the success of allowing cycling within the town centre and take appropriate action on any section that has any repeated incidents together with taking into account the planned new Local Transport Note on Shared Space, including pedestrian/cycle only routes.