

CHESTER CYCLING CAMPAIGN

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held on Wednesday 4th November 2020

Present: Simon Brown (SB) (Chair), Caroline Gerrard (CG), John Holiday (JH), Roger Hones (RH), Eileen Morgan (EM), David Morris (DM), Stephen Perry (SP), Steve Pemberton (SLP), Monica Robinson (MR), Nic Siddle (NS), Ian Slater (IS), John Violet (JV), Arnold Wilkes (AW), Peter Williams (PW), Cathey Harrington (CH) (Minutes).

Apologies: Trevor Jenkins (TJ), Ashley McCraight (AM), Dave Smith (DS), Craig Steeland (CS), Sue Steeland (SS), Ken Thomas (KT).

SB reiterated the suggested Meeting Disciplines which were accepted by all.

1. **Introductions.** All present introduced themselves. Members attending for the first time (CG and DM) were welcomed.
2. **Minutes of the last meeting, held on 7th October.** The meeting minutes were approved.
Action: CS to post on website.
3. **Active Travel Forum update.** SP reported:
 - a. SP and RH were part of an ATF working group (via Zoom) which prepared responses to two Government Consultations:
 - the proposed Revisions to the Highway Code
 - the new proposed changes to the Pavement Parking Regulations.The responses have been submitted.
 - b. SP and CH have been invited to represent the Active Travel Forum on the newly appointed CWAC Sustainable Transport Task Force.
 - c. Points from SP's recent discussions with Sean Traynor (Senior Manager, Highways and Transport, Communities and Environment, CWAC):
 - i. SP asked whether we can have an update at the next ATF meeting on the following items:
 - Likely funding opportunities and CWAC budgets for Active Travel improvements in 2021/2022.
 - Monthly visibility of CWAC planned maintenance of vegetation etc along existing cycle routes
 - ii. SP expressed to Sean Traynor CCC's disappointment in the recent planning application approval (20/01823/FUL) for a new hotel on land off Queen's Road near the station. It stated that there was no need for a formal cycle path between the station and Charterhall Drive, despite this route being in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The approval stated that minor amendments to the proposed landscaping would be sufficient to allow pedestrian and cycle movements.
 - iii. Sean Traynor had hinted that Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 funding does not appear to be forthcoming from the Government.
 - d. CG reported that information about Tranche 2 funding had been mentioned at last night's Chester Sustainability Forum meeting. CG urged everyone to engage with CWAC's Budget Consultation 2020, where views are being collected on solutions to the funding gap of between £34 million and £43 million over the next four years. The consultation will be open until 3 December:
<https://participatenow.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/unprecedented-times>

Actions: SP to pursue responses from the ATF.

CG to forward any available budget information.
ALL to consider participation in CWAC budget consultation.

4. Clockwise Route on Ring Road During Drain Works. SP reported:

- a. SP and NS had very positive discussions with Andrew Arditti (Communications Manager, Northgate Programme, CWAC) on the implications for cyclists of the Clockwise initiative, which starts on 16th November.
- b. To help cyclists access the city centre, they also requested the possibility of formalising two way cycling options in Chester City centre, especially St John Street, Foregate Street and Watergate Street, as well as the idea of using the opportunity presented by the current ring road traffic re-routing to test out putting a safe cycle route on the ring road.
- c. NS has produced a map which will help both for Clockwise and for people who may be looking for routes to cycle into and across Chester:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?hl=en&mid=111sMHULNPmVD5FVsD2I2YA1NAG3-35rR&ll=53.19033979541255%2C-2.9096598019517272&z=15>

Action: ALL please review NS's map and send any comments to NS.

5. Five Parishes report on Active Travel ie Cycling Plan for South East Chester. JV reported:

- a. The Cycling Plan for South East Chester is now complete, has been agreed by the Parish Councils and sent to CWAC. No response from CWAC so far. It has been published on the CCC website.
- b. There was discussion over how CCC might expedite the spending of S106 funding from the Saighton Camp development. IS reported that Huntington Parish Council's view is that S106 money is not time-limited. It was decided that this needed clarifying. There was also lack of clarity over the purposes, generation, allocation and conditions relating to developer contributions (S106, Community Infrastructure Levy etc).

CG reported that the community group in Upton would like to map Upton in a similar way and her offer of putting them in touch with us was enthusiastically accepted.

Actions: CG to put the Upton community group in touch with Chester Cycling Campaign over mapping.

SP to ask for ATF agenda item about developer contributions.

6. Chester Sustainability Forum meeting held on 3rd November SB reported:

- a. About 20 people attended.
- b. Will Pearson, Strategy and Innovation Manager, CWAC, presented the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan for the next 4 years. It has 60 action points. The CSF view was that the actions in the plan are insufficient to achieve CWAC's objectives. The draft plan will be opened for public consultation on 16th November.
- c. The outcry over bus/cycle lanes from some motorists and residents was discussed. CSF is co-ordinating a response.
- d. The Sustainability Event in the Cathedral has a provisional date of May 2021.
- e. A suggestion was made by Alistair Jeffs (Director of Commissioning People, CWAC) that individuals could help communicate CWAC's ideas on actions which everyone can take to help achieve sustainability.

Actions: None.

7. Planning application reviews and update. NS reported:

- a. NS had commented on over 50 applications this year.
- b. In the past, CCC has presented most comments as 'neutral' rather than objections. NS queried whether CCC should object in future where there is a clear breach of CWAC's conditions, for example on cycle storage. MR noted that objections have to be to 'material planning considerations'
- c. CCC's core planning group has received useful input from members who are particularly familiar with certain areas, and would welcome additional input. If anyone is able to contribute, either to the whole output or for just a particular area, please advise NS, specifying the area.
- d. NS has posted his working spreadsheet on Google Drive:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YTyeWklg1qgfn-MYpfikVB00OEUvK6Zd22Jqq3dj-xw/edit?usp=sharing>

CG reported that there is a website which picks up planning applications early.

RH suggested requesting a meeting with CWAC's head of Planning.

Action: CG to forward details of a planning details website to NS.

NS to send details of Upton applications to CG for the Upton community group.

SP to raise with CWAC the issue of formalising the LCWIP route between Charterhall Drive and the station.

8. A51 update. RH reported:

- a. Nothing has changed - there has yet to be any hedge cutting or verge clearance carried out along the SUP even though Sean Traynor told us at the last ATF that it would be started about 3 weeks from the date of the last ATF. In contrast, the road bridge installation across the Gowy at Stamford Bridge is proceeding at a pace.
- b. Neither has there been any more news about the design and installation date of the Toucan crossing in Littleton despite us requesting that it be installed asap.
- c. After 3 requests to remove roadwork signs obstructing the SUP alongside the A51 the SUP has remained clear and uncluttered by signage.
- d. RH emailed David Saville last Friday asking for an update the above issues. No reply as yet.
- e. The developer's information boards on site say scheme completion is due summer 2021, whereas CWAC had said Spring 2021.
- f. In response to RH and SP's request for more air monitoring on the route, one diffusion tube has been added.
- g. RH noted that the success of the A51 scheme depends on the A55 roundabout being modified to improve traffic flow – a Highways England project. There is currently no indication of this project coming to fruition.

JV has requested that CWAC extend the 40 mph limit as far as the Gowy Bridge to assist cyclists crossing the A51 at the Cotton Lane junction and the Wicker Lane/Stamford Lane crossing.

Action: SP to pursue responses with the ATF.

9. Inclusive Cycling Update. EM reported:

- a. EM had noticed that the paths at The Narrows Park, Hoole were being renovated and requested that they be widened to improve accessibility. CWAC agreed – within 24 hours! – and the work is currently being done.

- b. EM suggested to Jason Lambert, Environmental Commissioning Officer, CWAC, that there is a need for a training area for adults who wish to learn to use mobility scooters, adapted cycles or trikes etc. This would be separate from the cycle project run by Live at the New Scene Centre in Newton, which is aimed at youths and people with advanced disabilities and only allows people to cycle on their track around the field. Jason agreed and is looking into it.
- c. EM also suggested to Jason that CWAC that run a hire scheme for adapted cycles, which would give people the chance to try them out. Jason was receptive.
- d. Barriers at each end of the segregated pedestrian and cycle path between Pentland Close and Hoole Lane: EM is working with CWAC and Great Boughton Parish Council to get the existing barriers removed or changed. They currently impede access for adapted cycles and mobility scooters, as well as being difficult for non-adapted cycles.
- e. EM had contributed to the consultation on Faulkner Street modifications to enable social distancing, raising issues pertinent to the needs of disabled people, but is very disappointed that when parking spaces at the bottom of the street were removed, no provision was made for disabled parking for those people who cannot walk from the Bishop Street car park.

Action: EM to raise concerns about Faulkner Street with Councillors for Hoole and Councillor Matt Bryan.

10. Presentation at Greenpeace Event CS reported by email prior to the meeting:

Chester Greenpeace put on an event entitled "A Green Recovery: the Future of Transport in Chester", held via Zoom on the evening of Wednesday, October 14th. It was open to the general public and about 12 people attended.

CS gave a presentation on Chester Cycling Campaign, one of several presentations on the evening. Many attendees were not aware of the extent of CCC's activity or of how active CCC has been during the pandemic. CS has circulated the presentation by email.

As expected, the audience was sympathetic to CCC's aims. Unfortunately some speakers were unable to attend, and Chester's MP, Chris Matheson, was not present as he was ill with Covid-19. So the event may not have been as successful as the organisers were hoping. Nevertheless, it was probably useful that the Campaign could be represented at the event, as it may help to spread the word about our work.

It was noted that Craig's presentation is a very useful resource for the Campaign.

Action: None.

11. Cycling Matters! CH reported that the Autumn issue has been produced in electronic format.

It is already on the website and is with Simon to be emailed to all members in a week or so (allowing about 2 weeks' gap after the Bulletin was issued). Members provided ideas for distribution: community groups, social media, HR departments of local employers, Parish Councils and to places we would normally leave paper copies eg Storyhouse.

Action: CH to pursue distribution.

12. Quality of Road Surfaces SLP reported:

- a. SLP had met with Sean Traynor about road surfaces which have become degraded along a significant length such that they are unsuitable for safe or comfortable cycling. This is a widespread problem throughout the borough and is quoted as one of the major reasons more people don't cycle. This is not the same as fixing potholes, which are small, defined and for which there is a system which does work to some degree.

- b. AM and NS are collating and mapping reports.
- c. Sean acknowledged that there is an issue, which will increase if the hierarchy of road users proposed in the current Highway Code review, is adopted. Current tools and methods used to collect data on road surface quality will no longer be suitable and will have to be changed.

Action: ALL send reports of poor quality road surfaces to AM and NS.

13. Review Objectives for 2020 – SP has circulated a report to the CCC Activists email group.

Action: Please check the report and act if relevant.

14. AOB

- a. Problem of vegetation blocking cycle paths. AW suggested that the Council may welcome volunteers working alongside Council workers on projects such as cutting back vegetation, as is done with Sustrans volunteers. NS reported a cycle path which is completely overgrown but CWAC says maintenance is the landowner's responsibility. PW pointed out that, if a landowner does not respond, CWAC can carry out the work and invoice the landowner. RH reported that the process takes too long – an example is the A51 where vegetation has still not been cleared one year after first request.
- b. SP emphasised that SP and CH's role at the Sustainable Transport Taskforce is to represent the ATF, so both cycling and walking, and encouraged members to submit comments about walking as well as cycling.

Action: ALL please send any contributions about cycling or walking for the STF to SP.

- c. SP reported that he and CH had observed the bus/cycle lanes in Boughton during the morning rush hour on Tuesday 3rd November. The main observation was that the bus/cycle lanes were not limiting traffic flow.
- d. IS has circulated A Matrix of People's Attitude to Active Travel, which looks a potentially useful tool. It was suggested CCC could offer it to CWAC for STF, and or to be put on CWAC's Walk, Ride, Thrive website.
Helen Southall (HS) had suggested that staff at the university might be interested in this for students' Work Based Learning projects for next spring and offered contacts.

Action: IS to pursue University contacts.

SP to note for ATF and STT.

Meeting closed at 21:50.

Date of next Meeting is 2nd December 2020 via Zoom. Craig has volunteered to chair. Please email Simon at simonwbrown@phonecoop.coop if wishing to attend.