

Abingdon for All Community Led Plan Meeting 5th March 2018

Introduction

Cllr. Alice Badcock thanked everyone for coming and continued to explain how the Community Plan will move forward.

- There would be a series of meetings on topics considered to be most important by Abingdon's residents, taken from the Launch Survey. It was considered too difficult to tackle everything at once. At these meetings representatives from the Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council plus any other agencies/authorities relevant to the meeting will be invited.
- At the meetings the invited representatives will outline the current position both for the whole area and for Abingdon and respond to questions/comments from the survey.
- Groups will then consider the evening's topic and put forward three positive suggestions that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound for Abingdon's residents to perform. Some Support for the project may be available from the relevant Council. These suggestions will be considered and those to be progressed further will be selected. At which point a volunteer will be chosen to lead the project forward.

Transport

Invited representatives: Cllr Yvonne Constance OCC - Cabinet Member for Environment

Cllr Matthew Barber – Leader, Vale of White Horse District Council

Will Pedley – OCC Senior Transport Planner

Cllr Yvonne Constance OCC - Cabinet Member for Environment

- Oxfordshire County Council makes all decisions on transport.
- They maintain about 3000 miles of highway and about 2000 miles of footways.
- Currently they have no budget available for new projects.
- The budget has been cut by 49% since 2010.
- Other than the A34 junction there are no new projects planned for Abingdon.
- However there is some funding for maintenance. To get all roads up to standard is estimated to cost £150 million.
- The government have granted £1 million extra to fix pot holes this year. The Council does its best to keep up with fixing pot holes and has a legal obligation to fix pot holes more than three centimetres deep. However if they

fix all the other pot holes around the deep pot hole they will be unable to complete the filling in of all the pot holes that must legally be fixed.

- Complaints about the county's roads have risen from 2000 a month to 7000 this January and they are expecting more in February after the snow and ice. Snow, ice and salt do nothing for the state of the roads.
- The Local Plan and local views are good to know for future decisions and we will assist where we can but there is no budget.

Cllr Matthew Barber – Leader, Vale of White Horse District Council

- Vale funding is also short.
- The Vale consider the Community Led Plan as good to hear the views of local residents and to raise new ideas.
- When and if money becomes available they can make a more informed decision on where to spend it.
- There are various methods of traffic calming e.g. chicanes which are expensive to build and light, or planters, possibly sponsored could be used. Oxfordshire County Council's approval must be gained.
- The new Oxford to Cambridge highway may help alleviate some of the traffic issues depending on its route. The Vale are looking into whether funding could be available to extend it to Newbury.

Cllr Alice Badcock – Chairman of the Abingdon for All Community Led Plan

- Significant savings have had to be found so there is very limited funding available.
 - County Councils are capped requiring a referendum to raise taxes above the capped amount. The cost of a referendum is considered too expensive to make it worthwhile.
 - Large town (councils) are currently not capped but are likely to be in the future.
- New developments bring in additional council tax revenue
 - Council tax is forecast and already included in the budgets. However the council's costs also increase e.g. services such as bin collections, and taxes received from householders don't cover the full amount of service costs so the overall funding availability will not increase.
 - New homes bonus / Developer Funding. This is received from the developer and is available to make some improvements.
- Community run speed checks could be performed in hot spots. Devices can be obtained from the Police. The community must be willing to man these.

A member of the audience announced that the litter pick of Saturday 3rd March for Gainsborough Green had been rescheduled for this Saturday 10th March from 10:00 to 12:00 meeting at Reynolds Way Shops.

Cllr Yvonne Constance

- Developer Funding is not the same as Council funding as is for specific projects related to the new development.

Will Pedley – OCC Senior Transport Planner

Developer funding from the new estate in the North of Abingdon

Secured:

- Improvements to the Oxford Road roundabout
- New cycle links from the new estate to Abingdon
- Improved walking and cycle path to Radley

Not finalised:

- Improvements to the Wootton Road roundabout
- Cycle path along the Wootton Road
- Funding towards a bus service along the Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive

Points raised in the meeting:

- The percentage increase in traffic flow and its estimated impact were requested. The meeting was informed that this is publicly available.
- Could footpaths and cycle paths be lit by solar energy?
- Have the councils considered plastic roads, made from recycled bottles. The meeting was informed that this was currently being trialled in London.

Feedback from the Group discussions:

Group 1 – Cllr David Pope

- Sponsorship of bus shelters and town noticeboards which the sponsor maintains.
 - The Councils are already trying to do this.
- Charging points for electric vehicles.
 - Street lighting could be used for the charging point, installing them as the street lighting is being replaced.
 - Oxfordshire County Council is considering but they are still a long way off.
 - Electric points will not be able to be retro fitted into street lighting.
 - Possibly they could be fitted in car parks. Companies such as Tesco's might be persuaded to install them.
- Remove the two-hour free parking to increase the use of buses.
 - There was general disagreement as it was considered that free parking increases the number of people coming into the town centre and removing the two-hour free period would discourage people from coming in.

Group 2 – James Wigmore

- Clearing cycle paths of undergrowth.
 - The Vale has a budget to help residents' clear undergrowth and hedges. They may be able to provide equipment and knowledge.
- Improve signage of cycle and footpaths.
 - Use cycling charities both local and national.
- Walking bus – where groups of children walk to/from school accompanied by a couple of appointed adults picking up and dropping off on the way.
 - This will take a lot of setting up
 - Appointed adults will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (formerly known as the Criminal Records Bureau check).
 - This requires partnership between schools and parents.
 - This was considered to be achievable if set up correctly.
 - Walk to school week is 21st to 25th May.
 - The school run creates a huge impact on the town's traffic.
- Utilise unused parking spaces.
 - Use pub carparks during the day e.g. at the Midget
 - Business carparks in the evening
 - Parking around Albert Park.

Group 3 – Hester Hand

- New build parking (small/infill developments) – developers should be required to provide adequate parking. At least one space per house.
 - Create parking underground or on top of development.
 - Needs support from planning.
 - The number of car parking spaces required for a development has changed from a minimum number to a maximum number allowed and it is difficult to refuse an application on parking spaces.
- Encourage an alternative to car ownership.
 - Investigate car sharing or carpooling – interest needs gauging to see if viable.
 - Cllr Matthew Barber stated that there are companies that already run carpooling schemes and that it would be best if it was arranged through them. It could be possible to allocate car parking spaces for car pool cars.
 - Alter perception that the cost of a car journey is just seen as the fuel cost without including depreciation or maintenance costs. Lower mileage users may find it cheaper to hire a taxi for each journey.
- Expressway/A415/A34 discussion
 - A415 to Culham. The new development at Culham will cause major traffic problems without improvements to the road network.

- Discussion required on the new Expressway route and its effect on Abingdon.
 - Cllr Matt Barber stated that some of the routes suggested could benefit South Abingdon and there was no harm in lobbying.
 - Cllr Yvonne Constance stated that Highway England was currently in discussion with stakeholders. Which of the possible three corridors would be decided this summer. The final route is planned to be decided next year.
- Open the slip road at Drayton
- Illegally parked cars in the town centre. Parking on the yellow lines cannot be enforced by local parking attendants. Decriminalise them so they can be.
 - Police are responsible for parking enforcement on the highway but they have limited resource.
 - Oxfordshire County Council are responsible for residents parking bays, which they subcontract to the Town Council to patrol.
 - Vale of the White Horse manage the car parks.
 - Reduce loading bay times to stop shoppers using them.
 - Cllr Matt Barber stated that decriminalisation of yellow lines is possible but is very costly.
 - Cllr Yvonne Constance stated that the process to enable civil enforcement was long but was being considered as a good idea for all towns/villages.
- Set a weight limit on Abingdon Bridge
 - Cllr Yvonne Constance stated that this just pushes lorries onto B roads and through villages which are less able to cope with it and causes real problems.
 - Cllr Matthew Barber stated that weight limits helped a little but not a lot and the lorry park is over the bridge. A better location for the lorry park would be by the A34 weigh bridge.

Agreed actions going forward.

1 Clearing of Footpaths and Cycle paths

Volunteer to lead - James Wigmore

- Locate paths
- Establish how to manage
- Liaise with Matt Barber

Use Facebook and other Social media to advertise. The Town Council cannot advertise any personal details due to data protection but the leaders are able to publicise their own details. It could be possible to arrange for an email address to be created on the Town Councils system.

2 Walking Bus

Volunteer to lead – Cllr Angela Lawrence (email angela.lawrence@abingdon.gov.uk)

3 Unused Parking Spaces

Volunteer to lead – Cllr David Pope (email david.pope@abingdon.gov.uk)

- Find
- Compose a list of pubs/community centres that may be available for school drop off etc.