

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Minutes of the Traffic Advisory Committee held on Wednesday 19th June 2019 at 7.00pm in the Roysse Room, the Guildhall, Abingdon-on-Thames

Present:

Cllr Jim Halliday	Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council (Substitute and Chair for meeting)
Cllr Cheryl Briggs	Vale of White Horse District Council (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Andy Foulsham	Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council
Cllr Eric de la Harpe	Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council
Cllr Pat Lonergan	Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council
Cllr Alison Rooke	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Mike Pighills	Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Max Thompson	Vale of White Horse District Council
Mr Chris Hulme	Thames Valley Police
Mr Paul Townsend	Abingdon-on-Thames Chamber of Commerce

In Attendance:

Cllr Charlie Birks	Mayor of Abingdon
Mrs Jo Blackmore	Administrative Assistant (Clerk to the meeting)
Mr Lee Turner	Principal Officer, Traffic Schemes – Area Operations South
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk

T1 Election of Chair

The Town Clerk stated that under the Committee's Terms of Reference this position should be held by a councillor from Abingdon Town Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Alison Rooke, seconded by Cllr Mike Pighills and **resolved** that Cllr Jim Halliday be elected Chair for the meeting.

T2 Election of Vice-Chair

The meeting noted that under the Committee's Terms of Reference, that this position could be undertaken by any member of the committee.

It was proposed by Cllr Cheryl Briggs, seconded by Cllr Pat Lonergan and **resolved** that Cllr Alison Rooke be elected Vice-Chair of the Abingdon Traffic Advisory Committee for the council year 2019/20.

T3 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jeanette Halliday (Abingdon Town Council). Cllr Jim Halliday was attending this meeting as her substitute.

Cllr Jim Halliday requested that all present at the meeting introduced themselves.

T4 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

T5 **Public Participation**

James Wigmore introduced himself as the representative of Abibike. Abibike had been created as a result of the Abingdon Community Led Plan process, to encourage cycling in Abingdon and help reduce traffic congestion in the town. James Wigmore was at the meeting to publicise the group and handed out leaflets to all present requesting that they were placed around town.

Cllr Alison Rooke suggested that a link to Abibike was put onto the town website.

T6 **Minutes and Matters Arising**

Chris Hulme enquired why names were listed under "Present" or under "In Attendance". He was informed that under the committee's Terms of Reference, that anyone listed under "Present" are members of the committee and able to vote. Chris Hulme responded that as he attended a number of Traffic Advisory committees and this was the only one where he was permitted to vote; therefore he would exercise his right not to vote.

The Committee received and considered the draft minutes of the meeting of 6th March 2019, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved: That the draft minutes of the meeting of 6th March 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

Minute T15/3 – The Sustrans Route 5

Cllr Alison Rooke reported back to the committee that the road at the Wharf was too narrow for a cycle lane and that Oxfordshire County Council were performing a traffic survey to consider making that area a 20-mph zone. She would enquire about the current status of this.

Minute T23 – Report from the Principal Officer, Traffic Scheme South Team, Oxfordshire County Council

- Junction of Bridge Street, High Street and Stert Street the road markings have been repainted however no resurfacing work has occurred.
- East St Helen Street and Stratton Way did not “make the cut” for extra road surfacing work. Lee Turner stated that Stratton Way was beyond patching requiring a full resurface. This wouldn’t happen in the next 12 months but has been flagged for the five-year plan.

Minute T22/3 – Parking

- Bridge Street: Cllr Pat Lonergan brought up the issue of illegal parking outside shops in Bridge Street causing traffic problems Chris Hulme responded that the police are aware of this issue but illegal parking has become less of a priority for the police. To which Cllr Pat Lonergan replied that as Abingdon Town Council pay for 50% of the costs of the town centre PCSO and the council set the priorities for some of the PCSO’s time he proposed that in the immediate future the council set a priority to enforce parking restrictions in Bridge Street.
The Town Clerk was asked to pass the request that a higher priority is taken to enforcing illegal parking on Bridge Street to PCSO Ali Blood.
- Loading Bays: Paul Townsend raised the misuse of Loading Bays in the town centre, which are being used for parking. Also loading bays currently have mixed lengths of stay (20 minutes, 1 hour and 2 hour).

Paul Townsend proposed that all loading bays were set at a maximum stay of 20 minutes and that the Chamber of Commerce would pay for the new signage which had previously been estimated at £500 plus administrative charges. Cllr Pat Lonergan agreed. However, it was noted that to change the loading time requires a Traffic Order which costs about £3,200 (processing and consultation costs). It was suggested that developer funding may be available for this and should be looked into. Cllr Mike Pighills raised the concern that parking and traffic issues were a problem all over the town and was concerned that it was all being considered on an ad hoc basis. Cllr Mike Pighills then suggested that the whole town was looked at and it was established where all the areas with issues are. Cllr Jim Halliday asked if issues regarding parking were a problem in all towns to which Chris Hulme answered in the affirmative and that enforcement of parking was less of a police priority everywhere.

Cllr Jim Halliday stated that there were two issues here:

- Enforcing parking regulations.
- Changing length of permitted stay in loading bays.

Cllr Alison Rooke stated that Abingdon Town Centre had been looked at in the past and that there was no date set for when civil parking enforcement would come into force. Lee Turner said that Oxfordshire County Council, Vale and South and Cherwell District Councils were working towards civil enforcement but it was a number of years off yet. A feasibility study into it has been commissioned.

Chris Hulme said that it would be good to have consistency in the length of stay in loading bays and 20 minutes was the minimum amount of time allowed for the length of stay provided that active loading was being undertaken, not shopping, which is different.

Cllr Max Thompson asked what the cost to conduct a survey is. Cllr Jim Halliday stated that councillors can conduct surveys in their own area which will cost their time only, or a formal survey would cost more, and that a Traffic Order costs the same for one street or lots of streets. Therefore it is easier to justify if all areas are surveyed and all changes requested are put forward at the same time.

All councillors were asked to look at all parts of Abingdon and report all problem areas to the Town Clerk to collate and bring to the next meeting.

Minute T22/7 – Safety for cyclists and pedestrians on Wootton Road

Cllr Andy Foulsham asked for the update on this item.

Lee Turner to look into whether the safety budget could assist in undertaking improvements. Update carried forward to the next meeting.

Minute T22/7b – Concerns that vehicles often go against the one-way direction of traffic in Edward Street and Exbourne Road

Lee Turner reported that this is on the list and he will bring the results of road markings and signage review to the next meeting.

Minute T22/1 – Traffic issues in relation to schools and, in particular, buses

From March 2019 meeting. Cllr Emily Smith is to speak to the school and the relevant officer at Oxfordshire County Council in relation to this matter.

Minute T22/3 Parking in Harding Road

Lee Turner had met with two residents to advise them. They had knocked on local residents' doors and visited the school. They were looking for further guidance which has yet to be provided.

The report requested on this matter was not available and was carried forward to

the next meeting.

Cllr Pat Lonergan noted that a planning application had been submitted by the school.

Cllr Alison Rooke requested that a list of actions from both the last meeting, 6th March 2019 and this meeting, 19th June 2019 was created and emailed out to everyone on the committee and each action made an agenda item for the next meeting.

Minute T16 – Report from the Principal Officer – Road Patching

At the March 2019 meeting, Cllr Emily Smith had stated that she would follow up whether Oxford Road was to be fully resurfaced rather than repeatedly patched.

Minute T23/3 – Report from the Principal Officer, Traffic Scheme South Team, Oxfordshire County Council

- Thames Street signage “No Motor Vehicles except for access”. Lee Turner did not think that a second sign was required. The current signs need replacing and new ones have been ordered. If the signs are obscured by hanging baskets these need to be moved.

It was felt that sat nav’s were directing lorries down Thames Street when going to Cosener’s House.

T7 **Traffic Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference**

The committee noted the “Traffic Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference” attached to the agenda.

Lee Turner added that he would report back items to Oxfordshire County Council, but only those of a traffic related nature and not maintenance issues. The latter should be reported through “Fix my street.”

T8 **Items submitted to the Town Clerk by members or residents ahead of the meeting (in alphabetical surname order)**

Members

- Cllr Jeanette Halliday raised the issue of the Roundabout by Hilton Hotel (Monks roundabout) and possible sponsorship. It was noted that just before the meeting the foliage had been cutback, but felt it would benefit from regular attention.

The Hilton Hotel have lodged a request with Oxfordshire County Council to

sponsor the roundabout. Paul Fermer (Assistant Director, Oxfordshire County Council) is discussing the planning process the Hilton needs to follow to sponsor the roundabout and advertise on it. **The meeting requested a progress update on this.**

It was noted that South Oxfordshire District Council had come to an agreement with Oxfordshire County Council regarding sponsorship of roundabouts. The Vale of White Horse District Council are currently in discussions about creating a sponsorship agreement with Oxfordshire County Council. Paul Fermer is a contact for this.

Cllr Eric de la Harpe informed the committee that Miele had tried to sponsor a roundabout in the past but had given up on this due to the amount of time it had taken. **He requested that Miele be informed about any sponsorship deal / process agreed.**

Cllr Jim Halliday requested that the A34 roundabout be included in any lists of roundabouts available to sponsor. **Lee Turner to look into who is responsible for the A34 roundabout to see if this is possible.**

Paul Townsend requested that the Chamber of Commerce be informed of who potential sponsors should contact. Lee Turner said that currently requests for sponsorship should go through him. **Lee Turner is to update the next meeting with the contact details for businesses interested in sponsorship.**

- Cllr Alison Rooke, on behalf of Cllr Jim Halliday raised the feasibility of connecting an in-road vehicle detector in West St Helen Street due to long queues that can occur if the pedestrian lights are not triggered on High Street and the pollution created from engines running.

Lee Turner has contacted the signals team and currently there is a link at the stop line – West St Helen Street with High Street. The signals team can see no benefit in moving it, as the priority should be given to the A road. **The meeting requested that the signals team check that the detector is working. Lee Turner to action.**

Requests from Residents

- Cllr Charlie Birks requested that the committee review the issues in relation to the Sustrans cycle route in the town centre and cycling in general. He is concerned that it seems that cycling is at the bottom of the remit for this committee and the town in general. With concerns over climate change and pollution and to promote healthy a life style more effort should go into encouraging cycling. To clarify the issue he passed around pictures showing: a) a junction in Marston Road, Oxford with good road

markings, b) the junction with the recent Drayton Road development where there was no consideration made for cyclists, and c) pictures showing the lack of road markings for cyclists at junctions on the Abingdon cycle routes and pictures showing the lack of maintenance on cycle paths making them unusable in places. He stated that another example of the lack of understanding of cycling was the route chosen for the Sustrans 5 route between Lombard Street and Bridge Street where the easy option was taken to make cyclists walk. He felt that the planners did not understand the needs of cyclists and that a number would have difficulty in walking and pushing their bicycles. We should be encouraging cycling and not hindering it. Cllr Birks also felt that encouraging a change to cycling would reduce pollution, noting that changing to electric cars does not completely cut pollution. He also suggested speed limits should be reduced to 20mph in the town making cycling safer.

Cllr Jim Halliday asked if Oxfordshire County Council still had a cycling officer. Cllr Alison Rooke informed him that this position no longer existed.

Developers pay for the cycle paths as part of a development but there was no budget for the cycle paths to be maintained and generally the “fair weather” cyclists were out when the hedges were at their worst. Sherwood Avenue to Daisy Bank: the three local schools had been asked to contribute towards cycle path maintenance but they are also short of money. Cllr Pat Lonergan pointed out that developers planted hedges around properties and then left to councils to look after them. Cllr Cheryl Briggs agreed that hedges were a problem but they could be owned by private landowners. Cllr Charlie Birks also pointed out that council owned greenery was also not cut back properly.

Cllr Eric de la Harpe informed the meeting that he was the Vale cycling champion.

Cllr Mike Pighills agreed that Abingdon was not a cycle friendly town and that cycle parking was not good in the town centre and not safe.

Cllr Charlie Birks asked Chris Hulme how many road users knew what cycle lanes marked by broken lines meant, and if they knew the difference between these and cycle lanes marked by solid lines. Chris Hulme responded that people did not read the Highway Code after they had passed their driving test and that the road markings for cyclists were not being enforced. Cllr Alison Rooke stated that it was unavoidable not to stray into the cycle lanes at the Stratton Way junction with the Vineyard because of the width of the road.

Cllr Jim Halliday summarised;

- When the cycle lanes cross road junctions the road markings are

not as good as some in Oxford.

- Vegetation blocking cycle paths. This vegetation could be the responsibility of the Town, District or Oxfordshire County Councils or the responsibility of private households. In the case of vegetation owned by private households a notice could be served on the household to cut back the vegetation.
- Cycle lanes being encroached by cars.

Lee Turner stated:

- Road junctions
 - That once a road junction was designed it would not normally be changed, however road markings can be refreshed.
 - The Drayton Road junction was designed and signalled for cars not cyclists.
 - Lessons from this need to be taken forward into the next development at the planning stage so junctions are made safer for cyclists.

It was agreed Abingdon Town Council should look carefully at cycle routes and road junctions when reviewing plans for new estates and building developments ensuring that better cycle facilities are included.

- Vegetation

Report all problems with overgrown vegetation on 'Fix my Street'. Oxfordshire County Council will look at all reports and action those areas within their ownership. Lee Turner noted that Oxfordshire County Council is also able to raise a letter to a private household instructing them to cut back vegetation, or issue a bill for the cutting of the vegetation.
- SUSTRANS

The SUSTRANS route from West St Helen Street, up Lombard Street to the Museum involves cyclists having to dismount and push their bicycles as the route takes them against the one-way system in East St. Helen Street. This route was discussed in 2010. Included below is the Town Clerk's comments on this matter at the Traffic Advisory Committee meeting on 6th March 2019

"In referencing the Town Council records, the Town Clerk stated that the introduction of a contra-flow route in East St Helen Street had been part of the AbITS (Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy) proposals in the 2000s and that there had been considerable debate in this regard. The matter had eventually gone to public consultation early in 2010 but due to the rather short consultation "window" the Town Council had not expressed a corporate view; instead the

Planning & Highways Committee, as it was known at the time, had outlined what it saw to be the advantages and disadvantages of introducing the proposed contra-flow route. In June 2010 a decision was made by the Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Transport to remove the contra-flow proposal from the AbITS implementation scheme, consequently the route had remained as detailed above”

Cllr Charlie Birks felt that this had complete disregard of knowing who cyclists were and what the type of bicycles used.

Cllr Alison Rooke queried why people would want to cycle up East St Helen Street against the one-way flow, due to the dangers on this road and the junction.

Cllr Charlie Birks proposed that this was reviewed in the next meeting; there was no seconder so the proposal did not go forward.

James Wigmore from Abibike was asked to comment: he felt that although that it was unfortunate that this route had been chosen, it was now well-established.

T9 **Report from the Principal Officer, Traffic Scheme South Team, Oxfordshire County Council**

Mr Lee Turner updated the meeting as follows:

- Lodge Hill Diamond Interchange.

No material change since March 2019 report, having been delayed. The land negotiation is going well and aiming for a summer 2021 delivery.

- Air Quality Readings

Cllr Jeanette Halliday had previously requested monitoring along the peripheral roads before the North Abingdon estate is built, readings are required before the estate is built so comparisons can be made with readings taken after building.

Cllr Pat Lonergan queried where new diffusion tubes should be placed, to which Cllr Alison Rooke suggested two on Dunmore Road and one a third of the way along Twelve Ache Drive (from the Oxford Road).

This matter has also been raised at the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee. Please refer to Appendix 1 of these minutes for the response received from the District Council regarding long term air

quality readings from Copenhagen Drive and an offer to place more diffusion tubes.

T10 **Items raised by Members at the meeting**

Cllr Andy Foulsham expressed concern about cycling provision on new estates. There have been five accidents on the Wootton Road - Dunmore Road junction. He pointed out that this was a route to school and wanted to know what could be done to make it safer. Lee Turner stated that all provisions for cycle routes needed to be agreed before a planning application was passed as it was not possible to make subsequent provision. He suggested that discussions were held with the appropriate County Officer before they issue their comments on a planning application.

T11 **Calendar of meetings for 2019 / 20**

The calendar of meetings for the Council year 2019/20 is:

- Wednesday 13th November 2019
- Wednesday 18th March 2020

The meeting rose at 8.35pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Appendix 1 – Air Quality

Taken from the Planning, Highways & Consultations Committee 24th June 2019

Updates in relation to questions raised at the meeting of 3rd June 2019 regarding Application P19/V0169/RM – Land North West of Dunmore Road

With regards to the Air Quality readings, the Town Council had requested these before and after the houses were built and the Committee asked that the District Council lets us know when we can expect the first reading.

Liz Hayden (South & Vale Head of Housing and Environment) provided the following response:

“Please see the response below that has been provided to me by Simon Hill, Environmental Services Team Leader, who is responsible for the day to day management of the Environmental Services team.

Response to Abingdon Town Council:

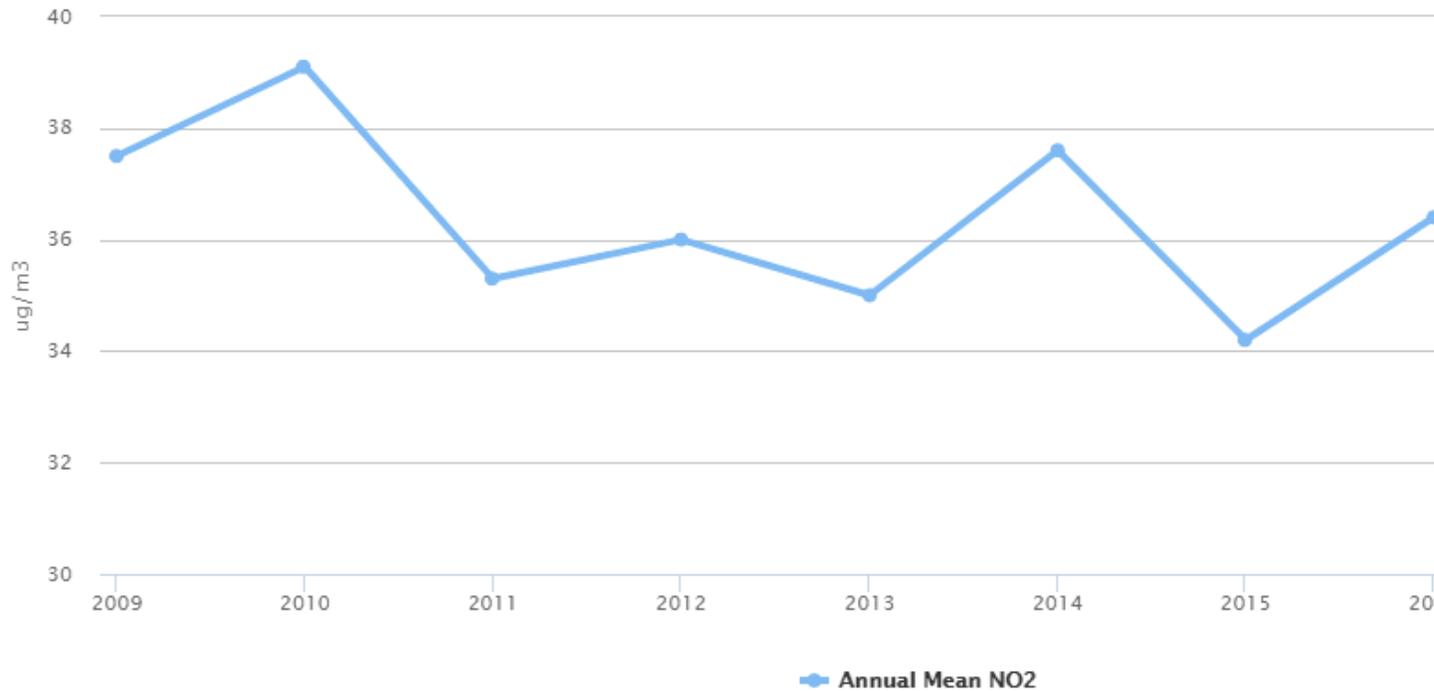
We have a long-standing diffusion tube in Copenhagen Drive, close to the A34, which consistently records annual averages below the Nitrogen dioxide air quality objective (AQO) of 40ug/m³ (graph below). We are able to place additional diffusion tubes in Wootton Road and/or Dunmore Road. Officers do not anticipate that the air quality measured will exceed the AQO in these locations, however providing measurements that can be viewed on our air quality website may act to ease resident’s concerns. (<https://oxfordshire.air-quality.info/>)

Copenhagen Drive diffusion tube site



Several new housing developments are planned off the Dunmore Road, which may impact on the local traffic flows. Full development of the larger site (North of Tilsley Park) is linked to the opening of the southbound slips on the A34 at Lodge Hill. When the southbound slips are completed, this is likely to reduce the volume of traffic cutting through the local roads to access the A34 at Marcham interchange.

Copenhagen Drive diff tube averages



Please do contact Simon Hill, Environmental Protection Team Leader (simon.hill@southandvale.gov.uk) if you require further clarification or would like us to engage with the concerned residents to ascertain where they think the diffusion tubes would be best located and inform them about local air quality.”

Simon Hill, Environmental Protection Team Leader (SODC &VWHDC) also responded:

“I have passed your email over to Tim Williams, our officer responsible for managing our diffusion tube network.

We’ll order two more diffusion tubes and then decided on the best locations to monitor from an air quality viewpoint taking into account the future developments occurring in the area.”