

Aberdeen Cycle Forum

Minutes of meeting

Townhouse, Broad St, Aberdeen, Tuesday 30th September 2014

Attending: Jyll Skinner (Chair) (JS), Gavin Clark (GC), Liz Lindsey (LL), Mike Nieman (MN), Clare Roberts (CR), Henri de Ruiten (HR), Ruth Wolfe (RW), Matt Helme (MH)

0. Apologies –none.

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Corrections - the heading at para 2 should have been 'Wellington Road' rather than 'Wellington Brae'

2. **ITWMC (In town without my car).** Stand had been operated by LL, HR, Radek and others. Numerous enquiries received, many from relatively inexperienced cyclists who would like to cycle in the city but are afraid of the traffic. However the event had not been as busy as last year, possibly because of the weather. Nevertheless 20 new names had been collected for addition to the membership mailing list.

Some other comments received:

- Why is Aberdeen so awful for cycling compared with other cities?
- ACF needs to keep working on raising its profile, including more use of social media. For future years we could also consider a stand at Fresher's Week.
- Also suggested that we try to contact workplace BUGs (bicycle user groups) or greening/sustainability committees. ACC might take more notice of cyclists if the lobbying was coming from employers, especially if we could get some of the larger oil companies on board. This could result in a BUG seminar, for example?
- Concerns about levels of traffic, quality of road surface, and parking in cycle lanes.
- Discussion of whether 'corridors' is the right approach. Do these only encourage already committed cyclists? To get a higher proportion of the population motivated to cycle, what is needed is a much more local network: a 'web'.

- MH had learned that there was a Sustrans event taking place in Edinburgh on 4th October. He was hoping to attend and would report back. MH also was enthusiastic about the Space for Cycling campaign. It was agreed that we would again promote this to the membership in the next email.

Fresh N Low – This event had taken place from Duthie Park with riders going out the Deeside Way and returning on the same route. It appeared that numbers had not been particularly high, possibly because the publicity ahead of the event seemed to have been almost non-existent. The idea of having 2-way traffic on the same route seemed misconceived especially as the Deeside Way was of course open to pedestrians & dog walkers at the same time.

3. Westhill cycle path

Now due to go to the relevant committee on 8th October. Still unclear what the possible outcomes from this were.

Post-meeting update: the correct date is 28th October.

4. Masterplan consultation

LL had attended. There was a strong feeling amongst those attending that planners working on the city centre need to put people first, not traffic. Generally positive feelings from the consultants running the event, but how much of that would make it into the final report or would eventually be implemented by ACC? The process after the current consultation wasn't very clear.

Active Travel Plan. This is a separate, but related, consultation. It is open on line and we should promote it to the membership to get as many cyclists as possible to respond.

5. Update from Police / Road safety

After the Q&A with Police earlier in the year, we had been contacted by them again. Firstly a reminder to report any incidents of concern to the non-emergency number – 101. Secondly, Police would shortly be launching a local campaign aimed at cyclists and visibility issues given the onset of autumn and shorter hours of daylight. They had requested whether we would also consider some publicity on the same topic.

The recent fatality on Anderson Drive was also discussed. As the exact circumstances were not known we should not speculate about cause of the incident, but it was felt that such a tragic event demanded that we should do something.

The current speed limit on Anderson Drive is 40mph, but personal observations suggest that traffic frequently travels faster. Should we be pushing for better speed enforcement, or for a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph? The latter had been raised at the July meeting with ACC and thought unlikely even after the AWPR because volumes of traffic were only predicted to fall by a small amount.

We had previously been consulted on an off-road route across Anderson Drive. At present there were too many places where a SUP (shared-use Path) was too difficult to implement, which made a route over the whole length of Anderson Drive unlikely. However there were sections (such as Broomhill Road to Bridge of Dee) where a route would be easy to implement and would still be of benefit. Again a possible off-road route / SUP had been discussed as a post-AWPR possibility at the July meeting with ACC.

There was no clear message about which of these options was preferable, or realistic. It was agreed that the topic – and the range of options – should be raised at our October meeting with Cllr Jenny Laing.

6. Meeting with Cllr Laing

There was little time left to discuss this, other than that a number of issues had been raised above. JS suggested that we organise a sub-group to meet (probably on Tues 14th Oct) to discuss topics.

Post-meeting update: Cllr Laing has cancelled for the October meeting and we are waiting to hear if she will attend in November instead.

JS also mentioned that Ross Thomson was likely to be stepping down as ACC's cycle champion. The new Champion is to be Cllr Ross Grant (Tillydrone, Seaton & Old Aberdeen) and both he and Cllr Ross Thomson would be invited along to the meeting with Cllr Laing.

7. AOBs

ASLs. It had been noticed that a number of ASLs had been taken out. Was this a deliberate policy of ACC? JS thought that although ACC does not have a policy of deliberately removing ASLs, it is true that a number have not been re-instated after road resurfacing or lane re-marking. Suggest we add this to the list for Cllr Laing.

Mass ride - MH asked about the possibility of a mass ride. JS summarised the previous discussion of this as the obstacle of liability or insurance, but that no one had really had time to bottom this out. MH agreed to look into this.

Aberdeen EcoCity Awards – GC mentioned that these awards were currently open for nominations, and wondered whether ACF would be eligible as a nominee? LL noted that ACF and CTC Grampian had jointly received an award several years ago for the 'Try Cycling' rides. MH agreed to look into the process for nomination.

8. Date of next meeting.

Proposed as Tuesday 30th October..