

CYCLISTS TOURING CLUB, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH & ABERDEEN CITY

MINUTE

Tuesday, 30th September, 2003, Carlton Bar, Castlegate

Present:

Derek Williams, CTC (Chair)
Jeremy Rushton, Friends of the Earth
Chris Yuill, RGU
Dihte Fisher, Greenpeace
Warren Murphy, Aberdeen City Council
Dave Lindsey, CTC
Louise Napier, Aberdeen City Council
Sonia Element, BP
Jackie Wilkins, CTC

Apologies:

Andrew Harrington, Deeside Thistle
Saville Gunn, Aberdeen Wheelers
Helen Keron, BP
Helen Adamson, Shell
Sheila Rusbridge, CTC

Item	Action By
<p>1. Welcome</p> <p>DW welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Andrew Harrington, Saville Gunn, Helen Keron, Helen Adamson and Sheila Rusbridge.</p>	
<p>2. Background to today's meeting</p> <p>DW explained that the Cyclists Touring Club were frustrated because cycling facilities kept appearing and there seemed to be no effective mechanism for consulting with users about facilities. In parallel Aberdeen City Council were keen to improve communication with cyclist users and met with CTC and Friends of the Earth. CTC, Friends of the Earth and ACC then took the idea of a Forum forward. It is felt that cyclists and pedestrians are generally at the bottom of the hierarchy of transport users and without an effective voice it is hard to get progress and improvements. A Forum will be able to take forward cyclists interests.</p>	
<p>3. Possible roles for a Forum</p> <p>CY pointed out that for a Forum to be effective there has to be a conduit to the people planning cycling facilities. WM explained that Environment and Infrastructure are the 'implementers' and that they were happy for any future Forum to be a statutory consultee. He also felt there was a need for any future Forum to not only be reactive, but also proactive. Plans should be made for future cycling facilities and given to E&I. Representatives from E&I could also be invited to meetings and could be engaged directly. DW thought a balance has to be reached; a Forum has to be seen as independent, but at the same time it has to have a good working relationship with the people holding the funding and doing any decision-making.</p> <p>It was decided that the organisation of other Forum's had to be looked at for best practice – and the Cycle Campaigns in the Highlands and Edinburgh (Spokes) might be good examples. WM asked whether Spokes had the support of Edinburgh City Council and what kind of support they</p>	

<p>gave. JR believed that Spokes did have ECC support but was independent at the same time. DW added that the Forum could help the Council to meet targets set in the Transport Strategy, etc. WM thought that the Forum could be involved in the review of the current cycling strategy. Council would approve the strategy and the Forum would be driving best practice for the City. DW thought that a Forum should campaign, not just with the Council but also with the local media. It was suggested that a Forum could alert members of any negative publicity or possible anti-cycle plans (such as the suggestion that bus lanes be made open to HOVs and motorbikes) and people could write letters, etc.</p> <p>SE suggested that a role of a Forum might be to educate cyclists as well. Members of the group acknowledged this but there was a feeling that motorists were usually the worst offenders on the road – and a Forum could be involved in educating them as well.</p> <p>SW discussed the suggestion that a Forum could operate as an umbrella body with working groups of it in order to get things done. Issues such as educating both cyclists and motorists, or producing maps, or a cycling strategy could be organised by separate groups who could then report back to the Forum. JW also thought that it might be possible to run articles in the Press and the ‘What’s On’ section in the papers. This would then encourage people to come along to meetings and contribute to issues that interested them. JR commented that a Cycle Forum would have more recognition if it had a formal structure and a constitution. People need to be able to be elected or removed. The group agreed there was a need to produce something.</p>	
<p>4. Membership of Forum</p> <p>The group discussed whether members would be picked, or whether it would be an open invitation to any cyclist. WM stated that the Forum would have to be seen as open and accessible to all – otherwise the Council would not support it. DW and DL to speak to Spokes and Highland Cycle Campaign to find out membership and structure of Forum.</p> <p>There is a lack of student representation within the Forum. DL suggested contacting the Shared Planet society at Aberdeen University. There were some concerns from Members of the group that they would be unsuitable. LN to contact the University Principal and see if there is a group/representative for students cycling at Aberdeen University. DF suggested that if no one was forthcoming then stickers could be posted on bikes around the Campus asking for volunteers.</p>	<p>DL, DW</p> <p>LN</p>
<p>5. What are the key issues facing cyclists in Aberdeen?</p> <p>The group felt that there were various issues facing cyclists in Aberdeen. WM thought that it was necessary to pick two or three and have groups working on these. It was decided to concentrate on the production of routes and maps to see what is currently available for cyclists in Aberdeen. LN to lead this group and produce maps for Members. It will then be possible to assess what impact the WPR might have on these routes. LN and WM to also find out what details of the WPR have been made public and timetables for consultation and report back to the Forum.</p> <p>JR and WM will also look at best practice ideas with the aim of producing some documents for use by Environment and Infrastructure. DW also suggested asking E&I what the best way of consulting with them might be. WM to facilitate a meeting with E&I.</p>	<p>LN</p> <p>LN,WM</p> <p>JR, WM</p> <p>WM</p>
<p>6. Way forward?</p> <p>To invite any interested cyclists along to the next meeting. The next meeting will be made more public and the venue will also be reconsidered.</p> <p>The group also discussed the lack of funds for the Forum. WM explained that both he and LN as Council Officers would be able to provide ‘in kind’ support and limited funds if needed. LN also pointed out that NESTRANS had set aside £20 million for the next 10 years for cycling and walking and it may be possible to tap into this money. A Travel Awareness Co-ordinator was also being set in place by NESTRANS and they could be involved in the Cycle Forum as well.</p>	

7. Next meeting

Tuesday, 4th November, Carlton Bar, Castlegate, 7.30 p.m. A small buffet will be provided.

<p>7. Next meeting</p> <p>Tuesday, 4th November, Carlton Bar, Castlegate, 7.30 p.m. A small buffet will be provided.</p>	