

# **Aberdeen Cycle Forum**

## **Minutes of meeting**

**Townhouse, Broad St, Aberdeen, Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

Attending:

Jyll Skinner (Chair), Gavin Clark, Mike Nieman, Tito Casquinha, Patricia Melo, Colin Allanach, Michael de Barra, Richard Pelling, Clare Roberts, Liz Lindsey, Mike Nieman, John Tuckwood, Sheila Tuckwood, Henri de Ruiter, Kathryn Mackay (Nestrans)

### **0. Welcome & Apologies**

JS welcomed Kathryn Mackay who is the Cycling Development Officer employed jointly by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, supported by Sustrans and based at Nestrans.

### **1. Minutes of last meeting (Nov) and matters arising**

Safety meetings – a date has now been set (15 Feb) and it has been confirmed that the Police will attend. JS, CR, LL, JT, MdB have all volunteered to attend for ACF.

Hustings or other election-related event. No update from MH who had put forward this idea. GC said that although it was a good idea it might take a lot of resources to organise, chances of getting the candidates in one place at the same time might not be good, and would we in any case get a big enough turn out? Another idea was trying to get candidates out on a bike, either individually or together.

Westhill gala – JS had attended and gave a short update on the club forming there and what they are hoping to achieve.

### **2. Q&A with Kathryn Mackay**

See summary below.

### **3. Policing Priorities**

GC had come across this and thought it was a good opportunity for us to feed in some of the frustrations we have had in our dealings with Police recently. Their response (based on national policy) to our Pedal on Parliament ride last year had been a flat objection. We would also like to see better enforcement of traffic laws in the city centre and more officers out on bikes, as examples.

See: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/policies/police-fire-rescue/policescotland/StrategicPolicePriorities>

#### **4. National Transport Strategy re-fresh**

Another opportunity for us to feed in to national strategy.

See: <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/strategy/national-transport-strategy>

#### **5. Stoneywood**

After the last meeting we had contacted all 4 ward Councillors and had a response from 2. In short they were already aware and are waiting for officers to respond.

This is not satisfactory given the inherent danger of the road layout as it is. However it is not clear what else we can do to expedite matters. It should be raised at the forthcoming cycle safety meeting.

#### **6. Air quality**

GC had posted a link to a BBC news item regarding air quality on our Facebook page and it had significantly more 'reach' than anything we have ever posted before – almost 20,000. This was a sign that lots of people care about city centre air quality, not just cyclists.

It was agreed that we should raise this with ACC and some discussion of how best to do this. It may be that we can link up with Friends of the Earth (FoE) and use some data from their website. JS is about to try and set up a meeting with Jenny Laing and this was something for that agenda.

#### **7. Pedal on Parliament 2016**

A sub-group is proposed to take forward the details of this. It will comprise JS, GC, RW, DS, MH, HdR, (who had all been involved last year ) and MdB. First meeting to be organised within the next 2 weeks.

#### **8. AOB**

- i) Westhill cycle path: it was now over 12 months since this had gone to Committee and they had agreed to look at it again if there was no progress, so we should press for this to happen. JS to follow up with Cllr Yuill.
- ii) CTC and/or Walk, Cycle, Vote are organising a training day for campaigners in Glasgow on 5 March. We are invited if anyone is available to go?.
- iii) RP gave an update on the traffic closure of Broad St. He was pursuing this with ACC and had uncovered that the TTRO had never been approved by Committee. He is pursuing further using Fol.

- iv) FoE petition. LL had pointed this out and it was suggested that we promote it in our next email to the membership

## Q & A with Kathryn Mackay, Cycling Development Officer

ACF: Your post was for an initial 2 year period. Is it set to continue beyond that?

KM: We hope so, but there is no confirmation of extension yet.

ACF: Is progress being made – does the role work?

KM: It has the usual frustrations and takes time to build relationships with all the necessary contacts in both Councils. Having established a presence – yes – it feels like it is beginning to show benefits.

ACF: Give us some examples of what has been achieved.

KM: There have been improvements on the Formartine & Buchan way, surface is improved with tarmac on the approach to Dyce. Using funds from *Smarter Choices, Smarter Places* a study has been done looking at connections into Dyce. Works are planned to an underpass (improved lighting) and a more formalised link onto the F&B.

ACF: Still potential for a lot of conflict between pedestrians and cyclists coming into Dyce station. Lighting improvements onto F&B are also good & worth noting that so far the AWPR works have been pretty well managed.

ACF: Maintenance of routes seems poor throughout the city.

KM: Maintenance is definitely an issue – often funds is available for new routes but don't include maintenance so it is usually left to the relevant Councils.

ACF: This is a big issue: a couple of our main routes (Deeside Way, Westhill path) are badly affected by leaves, ice, currently a collapsed wall – no one seems to give these any priority (by comparison with how roads are treated). We have raised winterising with ACC in the past on numerous occasions and have had a range of excuses over trials of new techniques, broken machinery etc. There is a particular issue with poor drainage on sections of the Westhill route, which then freezes.

KM: probably best to report such issues using the reporting tool on ACC website.

ACF: Is the ITT (Integrated Travel Towns) report due out soon?

KM: Yes, expected to go to Committee in Feb or March.

ACF: Are advisory cycle lanes a good idea? There are numerous places around the city where these are in very short sections so as to be pretty useless. In other places they are so badly maintained that they are unusable. And last but not least, because in many of them car parking is permitted, they are obstructed.

KM: Sustrans generally looks for shared-use paths as a minimum and preferably segregated cycle paths. They would not financially support advisory cycle lanes.

ACF: There are one or two good examples (Dyce) but another issue is that they often come to an end approaching a junction which is where they are most needed. They are - in effect – a sub-standard approach to cycle routes and we should resist the tendency amongst infrastructure providers to put these in: we risk “sub-standard lock-in”.

ACF: Any news on the signalling of junctions (part of the supposed “locking in the benefits of the AWPR”)

KM: Feasibility studies are to be carried out looking at the practicalities of taking out roundabouts at 3 locations, prior to any detailed design work being done.

ACF: We want to avoid Toucans as part of the solution– why should cyclists have to stop, press a button, then wait (sometimes twice) just to cross the road: car drivers don't have to get out of their vehicle and press a button do they? We should also look for 'default green' for cyclists – example cited of junction at Lang Stracht / Westhill where cyclists currently have to press the button and wait even when the light is red for traffic.

ACF: Any news on the City Deal or what it might mean for funding of projects? The 'sports' side of cycling are already thinking about what projects they could look for e.g. a velodrome.

KM: Discussions all at a very high level so no indications yet.

**Note:** the questions put in the Q&A above were posed by individuals present and do not necessarily represent the agreed position of ACF as a whole.