

Aberdeen Cycle Forum

Minutes of meeting

Townhouse, Broad St, Aberdeen, Tuesday 4th October* 2016

*NB this was notionally the September meeting delayed by one week and the usual October meeting will still take place on the last Tuesday of the month – see 6 below.

Attending:

Jyll Skinner (Chair), Gavin Clark, Henri de Ruiter, Liz Lindsey, Bruce Cruickshank, Tito Casquahina, Patricia Melo, Michael de Barra

0. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies: John Tuckwood, Sheila Tuckwood, Mike Nieman, Richard Pelling. JS also welcomed Suzanne Forup and Sally Hinchcliffe from the 'Walk, Cycle, Vote' campaign who were present to discuss their work and how we can cooperate

1. Walk Cycle Vote

WCV is a collaboration of 28 cycling organisations which has grown out of the Edinburgh Pedal on Parliament structure, and is financially supported by Cycling UK. More info at <http://walkcyclevote.scot/>

They are conscious of the opportunity that the May 2017 Council elections offer and there will be a shift of emphasis to address that. The 'manifesto' will have 3 'asks' i) 10% of transport budget, ii) access for all abilities/ages, iii) infrastructure including an effort to map local demands.

There was an interesting discussion over our respective experiences of organising PoP rides and the contrasting approaches of the city councils in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and the Police.

There will be a series of training events aimed at local campaigners, to try to maximise effectiveness. PoP will also run again – probably on 22 April – and is ideally timed ahead of the elections.

'Candidate rides' (inviting prospective Councillors out on an accompanied ride in the city) had worked well elsewhere and is something we should aim to try.

2. Minutes of last meeting (August) and matters arising

The minutes were noted. Most of the actions are covered elsewhere below.

3. Report from recent events

i) ITWMC had taken place on 25 Sept and we had had a stand on Belmont St. Thanks to LL and Torc Torrance for their help in operating the stand along with GC.

Views were that it had been quieter than last year overall (not just our stand). Also noted that the focus seems to be moving - whether deliberately or not – towards a ‘family fun’ day in the city centre with less emphasis on sustainable transport. An increasing number of the activities (e.g a water slide and a climbing wall) had nothing to do with transport. PM had been surveying attendees and it was obvious that most people still drove in. Thus it appeared that the event was not really meeting its purpose. There is a marked contrast with how other cities in Europe organise a day like this – typically they would close the entire city centre to private cars for the whole day – which only goes to show how car-dominated Aberdeen is and hopelessly backward in terms of public or sustainable transport.

ii) The Pedal for Scotland ‘Wee Jaunt’ ride had taken place the previous Sunday. No one present had taken part. We had had some comments from members ahead of the event that the route was very disappointing and probably inappropriate. Second-hand feedback from PfS was that ACC had not been willing to operate road closures similar to last year. It was also noted that in 4 years of PfS rides we have never been directly involved or consulted by the organisers over the arrangements. It was agreed that it might be helpful to let them have our thoughts and SH gave contact details for Cycling Scotland.

4. Report from recent meetings

i) BC had attended the meeting on Kingsford (new football stadium proposal for Kingswells). This is still at a pre-planning application stage, and some details are still scant. The suggested number of parking spaces is now 1,600 but there is still the proposal to use the P&R at Westhill which would be likely to have a significant impact on the cycle route, which is already sub-standard in places. There was also a suggestion of making use of parking at Arnhall but again details seemed lacking as to how this would operate in practice.

ii) JS and MdB had attended Nestrans and given a presentation followed by Q&A. They have put emphasis on our previously-submitted QCCs “quality cycle corridors” especially King St and Westhill. Asked that plans be worked up for these, even if no cash to implement currently available, so that they could be delivered at short notice at a later date. Noted that the Cllr Ross Grant – our ‘cycle champion’ hadn’t been present. We had also reiterated our request for a champion at officer level.

The Regional Transport Strategy monitoring report had been presented. It is heavy on statistics although some targets are poorly defined. It shows the extent of car ownership - which is still increasing.

There was an invite to return and speak to them again. Noted too that a new Cycling Development Officer has just been appointed, so it was suggested that we invite them to a meeting – perhaps January.

5. Any other business

- i) We have an invite from a reporter at the Evening Express who wants to write a week-long series of items on cycling. Agreed that we would take him on a ride to experience cycling in the city.
- ii) A96 Dualling team had been in touch but current work all relates to sections in Moray.
- iii) Is the Active Travel Action Plan consultation still open? There was some doubt over which is the current version. BC subsequently provided the following link and it appears that the survey remains open until 11 November. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/AberdeenAcTrAP>
- iv) Note that the 'Big Bike Revival' is currently underway, promoted by Cycling UK.
- v) RP had sent a number of points along with his apologies but we ran out of time to discuss these in any detail

6. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 25 October. 7.30pm in the Townhouse.