

BANBURY TRAFFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Banbury Traffic Advisory Committee held at The Town Hall, Banbury on Wednesday, 28 August 2024 at 2.00pm.

Present: Cllr Kieron Mallon Oxfordshire County Council (Chairman)
Cllr Rebecca Biegel Banbury Town Council
Cllr Ian Harwood Banbury Town Council
Trevor Bayliss Stagecoach
Peter Monk Banbury Civic Society
Vicki Lewis Banbury BID
Robert Wingrove BADI
Sim Smith BCAG & Banbury Active Travel Supporters

Officers: Jacqui Cox Oxfordshire County Council
Colm McAllister Oxfordshire County Council
Andrew Bowe Cherwell District Council
Eben Shadbolt Cherwell District Council
Mark Recchia Banbury Town Council
Bob Duxbury Banbury Town Council

Also in attendance: Cllr Andrew Beere Banbury Town Council

07/24 Apologies: Chris Hulme Thames Valley Police

08/24 Declarations of Interest
None.

09/24 Minutes
IT WAS AGREED that the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 2024 be received.

10/24 Oxfordshire County Council – Combined Report on Transport Policy/Strategy & Area Operations

1. Tramway Road accessibility improvements

The legal work to complete the land acquisition for the Tramway Road accessibility scheme had been completed. There were some remaining planning conditions to be discharged, but the main works were set to start in October if the scheme got approved at Cabinet in September and the contract agreed at Cabinet Member Decisions.

There had been some confusion over vehicular movements with the scheme in place. Officers confirmed that vehicles would still be able to drop off/pick up from Bridge Street and the station forecourt as they did now and would be able to exit back onto Bridge Street.

There would be a public consultation and extensive communications about the construction phases, including pedestrian impacts, once the approvals were in place. The construction phase was expected to take twelve months to complete.

Following a request from the Civic Society officers undertook to make larger scale copies of the plans available.

2. Cherwell Street bus service improvement scheme

The bus service improvement scheme for Cherwell Street, Banbury was due to go to Cabinet Member Decision on 10 October following concerns about some aspects of the emerging scheme. The proposals formed part of the Oxfordshire BSIP programme of service and infrastructure improvements funded by Government. The Cherwell Street scheme aimed to speed up bus access into the town centre at peak times as part of measures to improve bus accessibility in the town.

The scheme would then move into preliminary and detailed design, which would look at all elements in more detail and include a formal consultation stage.

Timescales:

October 2024 – consultation report and feasibility design will be submitted to CMD for approval in principle to continue into the next stage

October – December 2024 – preliminary and detailed design

December 2024 – engagement and public consultation

January 2025 – seek approval to construct

February – December 2025 – construction period

The Chairman agreed that there were major concerns with the scheme as proposed. It was looking to tackle the busiest junction in north Oxfordshire and gave the impression of being a cost driven solution that was unlikely to deliver the lasting improvements sought. TB (Stagecoach) relayed the companies ongoing concern and frustration about the impact of delays in this location on the whole bus network in the area. The formal consultation stage was awaited.

3. LCWIP schemes

Eastern active travel corridor – a small amount of additional revenue funding was being identified to complete the feasibility drawings for this priority route in the LCWIP. The route would link from the county boundary by Overthorpe, using the existing bridge over the motorway, and then linking down Overthorpe Road and Causeway to link with the Bridge Street Park. This would feed into the regional active travel discussions with South Northants, Buckinghamshire and Sustrans and be put forward for capital funding to enable the design work to be completed and consulted on. A more detailed presentation could be given to the next meeting.

Western active travel corridor – additional revenue funding was also being sought to complete options and feasibility designs for the other priority route in the LCWIP, which would provide connectivity from the Banbury Cross Retail, travelling along Ruscote Avenue, Orchard Way, Queensway and linking to the two schools on Springfield Avenue. This would also incorporate the roundabouts at Warwick Road and the junctions on Bloxham Road.

4. Canal Towpath to Station Approach steps

Proposals to install steps as part of a Public Rights of Way scheme to replace the muddy tracks in the bank that led from the canal towpath to the station forecourt had been agreed in principle at the county council's Pipeline Board and an internal business case to release s106 funding to deliver the scheme was being progressed. Officers would then progress negotiations with the landowners, complete agreements with the Canal & River Trust and complete the design work ahead of construction.

5. Speed limits

Proposals for 20mph limits in Banbury were to go back to Cabinet Member Decisions on 5 September. The revisions would retain 30mph limits on the main link roads in the town, including the A361 and A4260. Officers welcomed any feedback from the TAC and welcomed people to apply to speak at the CMD meeting. The deadline to do so was Friday 30 August.

11/24 Matters Raised by Members

Cllr Kieron Mallon - Oxfordshire County Council

2. Bridge street / bus lane improvements – dealt with under preceding item on Cherwell Street.
3. Banbury Station - Amey Rail's Application - No R3.0001/22 - dealt with under preceding item.

Cllr Rebecca Biegel (Banbury Town Council) - New considerations

1. There has been an issue with a large HGV recovery vehicle parked on Bretch Hill opposite William Morris - enforcement is a problem and really in an area around the school double yellow lines should be an option.

Response – Officers would investigate what could be done.

2. When exiting Beaumont Road onto Ruscote Avenue there is no right turn. The problem is many drivers visiting Aldi and McDonalds come from the Warwick Road direction. To return home therefore they need to turn left and then perform a U turn at the next roundabout by Tesco extra. Are there options for a roundabout so drivers can turn right. Clearly traffic lights so near a supermarket would cause traffic backup.

Response – Officers agreed that this issue should be re-examined in the light of housing development in the locality. Some discussions with Tesco had been undertaken with a view to creating an additional exit from their car park across an OCC grass verge and onto Southam Rd.

3. The problem with multiple "unauthorized" traffic in the High Street, Parsons Street and Butchers Row has not abated, so again what can be done further.

Response – this issue was on Officers' radar as part of the Banbury 2050 discussions.

4. Bus stop markings on Rother Road - a resident with mobility issues faces problems boarding the bus because there are no markings for the bus stop and often vehicles are parked on it. Consequently, the bus can't stop at the right place and the height difference from the road to the bus is too much for the resident to navigate. What can be done to make sure the bus can stop in the correct place for a pavement pickup?

Response – Officers would investigate.

5. We talk a lot about potholes in roads but how is the schedule progressing for repairing very poor uneven or collapsed pavements?

Response – whilst OCC no longer provided a "defects" report as a matter of course or engineering officer input at meetings, it remained possible to obtain updates on specific issues. This could be taken back.

Rolling updates for existing items

1. Progress with funding for the work informed by the survey of Dukes Meadow Drive to provide more crossing points.
2. Progress with the weight limit or no access to Wildmere Rd industrial estate signs at intersection of Middleton Road/Banbury Road
3. Update on lower Cherwell Street bus service improvement scheme
4. Updates on feasibility study for a one-way traffic scheme on Queens Road
5. Progress on twice yearly schedule for storm drain clearance across Banbury
6. Progress on possibility for "restricted time# parking to be introduced on Overthorpe Road approaching the industrial estate.
7. Progress with analysis of parking on roads adjacent to Hightown Road

Response – the Chairman asked OCC Officers to provide a full written update on all of these issues, and also on Lambs Close/Kildare Crescent, to the next meeting.

Jasmine Gilhooly - Banbury Business Improvement District

1. Parking issues on Bridge Street path.

Response – Officers commented that the parking issues were largely associated with the Barbers. The PCSOs had been alerted to this. CDC Officers would take this back to see if there were any provisions under the Pedestrianisation TRO that could be used to tackle this.

2. Concerns around town centre deliveries and allocations

Response – it was accepted that businesses had to have deliveries but there were prescribed times for these under the Pedestrianisation Scheme TRO. However, there were a range of exemptions for certain types of deliveries, and there were also premises that always had access rights, which tended to complicate enforcement.

3. Concerns around accessibility to town for visitors.

Response – footfall remained an issue, and was an area of focus for Banbury 2050 discussions. The Thursday/Saturday Market in particular had seen a marked drop off in footfall. CDC Officers would take this issue back for further investigation, as the authority in charge of the Market and the lead body for economic development in the town.

12/24 Date of next meeting - Wednesday 27 November 2024 at 2pm.

The Meeting ended at 3:30pm