

Transport Plan Working Group

Upper Chamber, Town Hall

Tuesday 8 March 2022, 4pm

Present:

Officers

Mandy Sturdy, Town Clerk

Cassie Pinnells, Community Services Manager

Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

Lizzie Fuller, Committee Services Officer

Becky Reid, Market Town Co-Ordinator

Dave Harrison (Oxfordshire County Council)

Councillors

Helena Richards (Chair)

Nigel Champken-Woods

Bob Austin

David Bretherton

Helena Fickling

1. Review Terms of Reference

- Discussion as to whether this working group should come under the remit of P&E or NPCC – agreed that this would form part of the wider strategy review which the Town Clerk was coordinating.
- Suggested amendments to ToRs:
 - Add 'and active travel' into point 1. under 'Activities'
 - Add reference to working with stakeholders (including neighbouring parishes) under 'Scope'
 - Remove reference to only working on 'TNP projects', and change to 'Town Council adopted policies and strategies' under 'Scope'
 - Remove 'Guidance from the Council / Parent Committee' section

2. Hopper Bus – Funding, S106 etc.

- BA provided an update on project so far to date. There was around £820,000 in S106 monies held by OCC for public transport in Thame, with more money on the way, but the need for Thame had been difficult to establish. The existing S106 money had a time limit and would start to expire in 4 years' time.
- A copy of the interim report from the needs survey held in Jan/Feb 2022 was circulated (data from surrounding villages extracted). Highlights were noted:
 - Overall a good response (10% of demographic) – low response from west of Thame (perhaps due to already being well serviced)
 - Clear need from the older age demographic

- 30% of respondents use mobility aids (ETRA had undertaken a study of access issues to town centre which had highlighted a range of issues but resolving these holistically was a challenge).
- Most access around Thame was on foot, with health centre being a key location to access. Driving was the more common mode of transport for work.
- Hopper Bus preferences: mornings (daytime generally), bus stop within a 5-minute walk, hail and ride service, every 15 minutes, and serving the Town Hall & Health Centre.
- Preference is to use an existing service provider and focus on the ‘hubs and spokes’ approach (currently only some areas can access train station easily on public transport).
- Noted that response from Moreton was low. DH advised that it might be a stretch to include Moreton (and/or Towersey) if aiming for 2 buses an hour.
- Option to purchase bus but would need a second bus (could be borrowed from another provider whilst one is being serviced). Need to consider accessibility / weight / cost, as well as expected use / capacity. DH to see if S106 can be used for capital projects – possibility that OCC could transfer money to TTC.
- DH advised OCC were looking to fund a commercially viable service, noting that S106 funds were not indefinite, but were willing to work with people looking to develop a service (as had been done in Henley, Witney, Enysham and Princes Risborough/surrounding villages through Community Interest Companies / Community Benefit Societies – DH to provide contact of providers). Henley’s bus started as an ambitious 7-day service but was cut back to 5 days a week to ensure viability.
- Suggestion for the hopper bus to serve LWS teachers commuting between the two sites which could provide a guaranteed income, but this would be tied to timings – MS to speak to LWS.
- BA advised he was formally stepping down from TPWG but will continue to contribute on this issue.

3. Withdrawal of Bus Service Thame Park Road / Wenman Road

- DH reported that Arriva will stop serving Thame Park Road from mid-April, and OCC intends to terminate the Redline 120 contract early (was due to finish in December) so that it can create a new contract for Redline to service the existing 120 route and the Thame Park area which would increase the number of journeys (see proposed route below). The service would ideally use a small bus and be on a short-term basis (perhaps until August) whilst OCC work out a longer-term solution.



- Arriva looking to increase number of buses to Oxford to 4 an hour and decrease Aylesbury to 2 an hour, meaning that there would be 2 buses terminating in Thame. Redline looking to invest in X20 rather than 120, and there is strong competition between Redline and Arriva as Redline seek to compete directly with routes departing Aylesbury served by Arriva.
- It was suggested that the route should include the health centre on East Street. DH agreed to look into this but noted that the route had to go clockwise due to bus stops only being on one side of Wenman Road.
- The funding would come from S106 monies, with some leftover funds from the early termination of the 120 service.
- DH noted that there were some uncertainties over the future of the Thame – High Wycombe 40 service (OCC fund the evening and Sunday services). TTC to look at ways to promote bus services in Thame.

4. 20mph Speed Limits

- Traffic Order would be free of charge from OCC, but concerns raised over cost of repeater signage which TTC would have to fund. CP/MS to investigate costs ahead of the next Full Council meeting.
- Residents from Lea Park, Park Street and Moreton have all made requests to TTC for 20mph.
- Wider consultation by TTC has not taken place, and perhaps was not needed, but noted there had been one objection.
- Agreed that it needed to be put to Full Council for consideration, also OCC required a minute from a council meeting as part of the application request.
- Possible issues of signage in the Conservation Area?
- Noted that TTC has radar guns which residents can hire to 'speedwatch' in their area.

5. Haddenham / Thame Cycle Path

- Suggestion by Chair to create a coordinated Thame & Haddenham Group – noted that there were already several groups involved (HF agreed to put HR in contact)
- It was reported that the project was not progressing due to landowner issues between Scotsgrove and the floodplain but other routes were being considered. DB had met with OCC's Cabinet Member for Highways who confirmed this. The cost was prohibiting a road route. OCC had put a bid in to central government for funding.

6. Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan consultation

- HR had attended a webinar on the consultation – the LTCP was proposing lots of a good ideas and said the Haddenham – Thame Cycleway was a priority
- Suggested that TPWG submit a response and involve the TGL cycling group

7. AOB

- DB reported that SODC were not supportive of increasing the number of taxi ranks from 2 to 3. However, CP advised that TTC / taxi drivers had negotiated the request for 4 ranks down to 3 and this change was being implemented through the new traffic order by OCC for parking enforcement.

Meeting concluded at 6:08pm.