

Fleur de Rhé-Philippe
Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and
Economic Development

Fax: 01225 713089
Direct Line: 01225 713111
Operator: 01225 713000
E-mail: fleurderhephilipe@wiltshire.gov.uk

Please ask for: Fleur de Rhé-Philippe

Our ref:

Your ref:

26 May 2010

Dear Mr Williams

Thank you for your memo and enclosure dated 21st March, asking me for my formal response to the Task Group's recommendations.

Before commenting in detail, I would like you to record my thanks and appreciation for what is clearly a thoughtful and well constructed report. I have read the narrative with interest, and in principle, I have no reason to disagree with the majority of the Group's recommendations. In detail, I would like to offer some brief comments as follows;

Recommendation 1

Recognising the current financial position faced by Wiltshire CC, the Task Group recommends that the Council should pilot free training for the new cycling standard in one designated school. Following this, the exercise should be appraised to establish if the provision of free training should be expanded to other schools in Wiltshire.

Using figures provided by the Road Safety Unit the current cost of training children to the new standard is:

£125	5 students
£1,250	50 students
£12,500	500 students

I will give this recommendation serious consideration, however as the task group quite rightly point out, I fear that it may well be an unaffordable initiative at the present time.

Recommendation 2

The Cabinet Member for Environment Transport and Economic Development and Director of Environmental Services to continue to develop working relationships with Sustrans, consulting with Sustrans on new developments and wherever possible improving the national route infrastructure

Noted.

Cabinet Office, County Hall, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN

Recommendation 3

Wiltshire County Council to allocate designated funding to improve signage on existing cycle routes, most notably the national routes 45, 24 and 4.

The Council is already contributing to a project to sign route 4, and the final costs and outcomes will guide our attitude towards funding future schemes. Subject to the availability of funding, routes 45 and 25 seem to me to be good candidates for improvement.

Recommendation 4

Environmental Services Officers to amend the council's Clarence web page to encourage members of the public to report problems on the County owned cycle lanes.

I will ensure that this recommendation is passed on to those responsible for maintaining the Council's website.

Recommendation 5

To combat debris build up on cycle lanes that share the road, more regular cleaning is required than present. A review of this by Environmental Services –Transport Planning Officers is recommended, to determine which roads with cycle lanes need the extra service.

The Council is currently preparing its Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP), which will not only contain detailed information on the assets held by the authority, but will set out the type and frequency of maintenance required to achieve particular conditions and standards. I will ensure that the officers responsible for developing the TAMP are made aware of the group's recommendation.

Recommendation 6

The County Council to develop a more stringent 'signing off' protocol following developer funded cycle lanes. The Task Group recommends that a Wiltshire CC representative visits the site to ensure the cycle lane has been completed to satisfactory standards.

There are well established systems in place which are designed to ensure that developer led works are subject to close scrutiny at both design and construction stages, and will always involve a significant level of attendant supervision throughout the course of any contract. I am grateful to the group for drawing attention to the particular problem at Chippenham, which I will ensure is brought to the attention of the appropriate officer.

Recommendation 7

In recognition of how important it is to successful implementation, to ensure the continued inclusion of the local member in consultation undertaken in response to new proposals from embryonic to advanced stages.

Agreed.

Recommendation 8

To continue to support the role of the TravelwiseTeam in promoting cycling and its clear links to the healthier Wiltshire campaign.

I note and welcome the support and encouragement offered by the Group. I know that their remarks will be much appreciated by the Travelwise team

Cabinet Office, County Hall, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN

Recommendation 9

The Task Group welcome the principles that underpin the new Planning Gain Consultation Document, which would increase transparency for officers and allow more strategic planning for cycling.

Noted.

Recommendation 10

Officers to consider the increased use of contra-flow cycle lanes in urban areas.

I am aware that in suitable circumstances, cycle facilities can be designed to allow cyclists to travel against the prevailing flow of traffic, typically along one-way streets. Providing that safety is not compromised, I am happy to pass the group's recommendation on to officers.

Recommendation 11

Officers in their scheme designs to focus on the area where the segregated cycle lane rejoins the road, to minimise the potential of accidents.

I will ensure that this recommendation is passed on to officers responsible for design. The group should also take comfort from the knowledge that all schemes are subject to an independent safety audit, which is a process designed to identify any potential risks.

Recommendation 12

Officers to continue to utilise shared use pavements for cycling, which the task group noted is not ideal but is the best option in some places. Absence of buildings opening on to it and low pedestrian use are favourable features, with the pavement from Salisbury to Wilton an example of these two points.

Noted, although recent experience has clearly demonstrated to me that proposals which advocate the conversion of footways to shared use regularly attract strong local opposition.

Recommendation 13

Wiltshire County Council to ensure the future use of non-ridged lining to separate shared use paths between cyclists and pedestrians.

I think that this is a detailed issue, where we need to recognise that practitioners rely on contemporary policy and current best practice. My understanding is that there is quite clear national guidance on standards for white lines, and the group can be assured that the Council will be working to those standards. Once again however, I will ensure that this concern is drawn to the attention of officers.

Again thank you for all your hard work in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Fleur de Rhé-Philipe

Mr Ceri Williams
Scrutiny Support Officer
Wiltshire County Council

Cabinet Office, County Hall, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN