SUMMARY

This paper assesses the present state of consultation by Wolverhampton City Council on cycling, from the perspective of the Cycle Users. It then highlights good and effective practice amongst existing Cycle Forums in England and Wales, quoting the experiences of both Cycling Officers and Cycle Campaigners.

The report recommends that the way forward for Wolverhampton is:

1. for its cycle forum to be led by a key Councillor;
2. to be recognised by the Council’s Cabinets as an advisory body which scrutinises all cycling matters for Highways, Planning and Leisure including major schemes, and
3. whose comments are reported in a meaningful manner to the appropriate Council Cabinet.

The forum needs to better involve all the major stakeholders, especially cycling-sympathetic local residents. Therefore it is proposed that the forum should work towards the creation of a “Cycling in Wolverhampton” register group, similar to the cycling forum in the neighbouring borough of Sandwell, which is generally agreed to be both inclusive and effective.
FOREWORD

Which are the top local authorities in the country for cycling? If you had asked me that question a few years ago, I would have reeled off several places based largely on the quality of the engineering measures I had seen. After three years of the CTC Benchmarking Project, however, I now find it less straightforward to answer, as we have seen so many examples of best practice in areas of cycling policy other than infrastructure.

In the vast majority of cases these examples of ‘softer’ initiatives involve the local authority working in partnership with some other organisation. Increasingly it is being recognised that the successful delivery of a well-balanced local cycling policy depends on the contribution of a wide range of players, spread across many local authority departments and external organisations within the public, private and NGO sectors.

Central to this is the development of effective mechanisms to engage these diverse partners, but especially the cycle users. In many parts of the country, this has been achieved through the work of a Cycle Forum. This can draw in a wide cross-section of the local community and complements the less formal contact between cyclists and their local authority.

In true benchmarking tradition, David Holman has not been afraid of pinching other people’s good ideas. In researching this paper, he has drawn on the experience of effective and successful examples in various parts of the country. By doing so he has compiled a valuable resource, and it is my hope that the approach recommended here will be followed through and become a model of best practice that others will emulate throughout the country.

Tony Russell
CTC Benchmarking Project Manager
4.02.03

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Author and Wolves on Wheels Cycle Campaign wish to express their thanks to the Right to Ride Representatives of the CTC, Local Authority Cycling Officers and all those whose contribution has made this report possible.

GLOSSARY

CTC The national organisation for cycling (Cyclists’ Touring Club)
NOF New Opportunities Fund
LTP Local Transport Plan
UDP Unitary Development Plan
WCC Wolverhampton City Council
WoW Wolves on Wheels Cycle Campaign. See www.wolvesonwheels.co.uk for more details
TRO Traffic Regulation Order
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
PCT Primary Care Trust
LA’s Local Authorities
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1.0 Introduction

For some years, Officers of Wolverhampton City Council (WCC) Highways Department and its predecessors have been meeting on an occasional basis with local cyclists and sustainable transport campaigners for what has become known as Wolverhampton Cycle Forum. Both parties have welcomed this opportunity for a frank exchange of views, the giving and receiving of advice and explanation of highways schemes. The cycle campaign volunteers have thus been able to build a working relationship with key WCC officers involved in cycle planning and infrastructure and in road safety and transport strategy.

The Cycle Forum has led to some positive results. Through the Forum arrangements were made for two pilot Christmas Bike Parks under the “Try-Cycle” banner. These were largely staffed by Wolves on Wheels members. Support for the NOF Cross-City route and the 20 mph city centre speed limit have been forthcoming. Indeed support from Wolves on Wheels is acknowledged as playing an important part in the development of these two projects.

Wolves on Wheels members see the weaknesses of the present forum in these areas :-

1. “Low profile” leadership
2. No recognition by Cabinet as a valid advisory body
3. Limited representation of the views of the wider cycling community
4. Ineffectiveness in delivering solutions. (Advice given is ignored or forgotten !)
5. Lack of influence
6. Repetition of some items for many meetings despite promises.
7. Haphazard production of minutes and publication of agenda.
8. The absence of a “strategic overview” – no view of the cycling strand of large schemes that straddle Highways and Planning.

This has led to a feeling amongst the cycling representatives that the Forum may not be the best use of their time. However on the other hand it is the only consultative cycling-specific body available in the borough so those involved intend to continue with it. A letter from WCC’s John Partridge in 26 September 2002 acknowledged the need for change. (See Appendix 4.)

This report aims to show typical practice in cycle forums from around the Local Authorities (LA’s) of England and Wales and highlight good examples using case studies. The best ideas from these will help to form the recommendations. It should be noted that all LA’s mentioned are under similar pressure for resources as WCC !
2.0 Local Authority Cycle Forums in England and Wales.

Most Local Authorities have some form of Cycle Forum. Tony Russell of CTC’s Benchmarking Scheme notes that over half of the LA’s involved in the scheme have a forum that meets 4 to 6 times per year. He says that in practice there is also a good deal of informal contact between the Cycling Officer and the local users, which is where most of the work gets done. This activity is noted in Forum minutes.

The recent West Midlands Cycle Study from Babtie noted that most of the region’s LA’s had a consultative process with users. This is often in the form of a Cycle Forum, but another example is the very imaginative Cycling in Sandwell group. Over 500 local people with an interest in cycling are able to give their views to Sandwell MBC and other providers of facilities for cyclists. Membership is free. Cycling in Sandwell is cited by the CTC as a Benchmark in UK cycling practice. See Appendix 1.

2.1 Leadership

The status of the person in the Chair of a cycle forum has an important effect on the forum’s authority and how it is perceived by the elected council members.

Involvement of councillors on cycle forums is the key to the success and recognition of the forum. The following “go-ahead” forums are chaired by councillors.

- Leicester city. City councillor and chair of Traffic and Transport.
- Shropshire including Telford and Wrekin. County Cllr Martin Beardwell
- Norwich city cycle forum. An elected councillor as chair.
- Birmingham cycling advisory group is chaired by a senior councillor.

The Cycle Forum observed by the author was Shropshire Cycle Forum. While this is chaired by Cllr Beardwell, the opposite end of the table is occupied by Cllr Philip Engelheart who is the Cabinet portfolio holder for Highways, Transportation and Waste in Shropshire. Both men are regular cyclists and their commitment to cycling and sustainable transport is apparent as well as their depth of knowledge of issues around the county. At the observed meeting 7 other councillors submitted apologies for absence.

The Birmingham Cycling Advisory Group meets quarterly at about 5-30 p.m. and is chaired by a senior councillor. It usually attracts 12 to 15 people and has a formal advisory role. It began in 1987. There have been several changes of chairperson over the years and the respondent noted that this has caused to a loss of continuity.

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1 the forum’s founder and chair since its inception in 1996
2 Shropshire in 2002 / 2003 is a hung council. Cllr Engelheart is amongst a group of independent councillors who hold the balance of power. Good work and steady progress has been made for cycling provision in the county especially around Shrewsbury since the forum began.
Portsmouth City Cycle Forum invites 6 pro-cycling councillors including the Executive member for Transport and two previous chairs of the Traffic and Transportation Committee. There are 40 councillors in the city.

The city’s Cycling Officer Mr Viv Vallance notes that four different councillors have attended meetings in the last 2 ½ years with two at the last meeting at the time of writing.

He said, ‘I think that the key to success is getting a decent Chair with clout’.

2.1.1 Comments from CTC Right to Ride Representatives

John Edwards, Hampshire: City and County councillors regularly attend the Hampshire County Council Cycle Working Group.

Simon Geller, Sheffield: ‘It’s very important that the Chair is a councillor from the ruling party – otherwise nothing will get done. On most councils there is usually one cycling enthusiast so seek them out.’

Gerry Leach, Leicestershire and Rutland: ‘The moving spirit needs to be an influential councillor. You can have all the meetings you like with officers, but without active interest from councillors it is a waste of time’

Matthew Williams, Norwich: ‘Several times I have been asked to take over as Chair but I have always insisted that that is the role of an elected Councillor (as per the constitution) in order to maintain the credibility of the Forum.’

2.1.2 Forums led by people other than councillors.

Senior officers chair some forums, e.g. the highly effective Portsmouth city cycle forum which has been chaired for some years by the Assistant City Engineer, Mr Charlie Stunnell.

Some forums are chaired by other interested people. Pembrokeshire’s is chaired by the West Wales Manager of Sustrans. The aforementioned Hampshire group is chaired by a CTC Right to Ride Representative even though this is a semi-formal advisory body to local government.

The Cumbria Cycling Panel held its first meeting in January 2003 with CTC County Right to Ride Representative Brian Porter in the chair. This is a formal advisory panel to the Cumbria’s transportation cabinet places. It has the onerous duty of ensuring consistency in design scheme quality from all the different district council areas of Cumbria. It is too soon to say at the time of writing if this Panel will become a UK benchmark in cycling consultation but the signs are good.

Mr Porter and the county council officers had previously agreed that their cycling forum was just a “talking shop” and together they presented plans to the County Council for the Cycling Panel to replace it. See Appendix 5 for the Panel’s Remit.

Cycling in Sandwell, on the other hand, tends to be more like informal campaign group or club meeting, but with some council officers and a Walking & Cycling for Health Development Worker from the NHS present
Stafford Borough Cycle Working Group is chaired by the Local Agenda 21 Officer, meets every couple of months and is well-administered with agendas and notes of meetings being circulated. It has had a useful input into the Stafford Borough Cycling Strategy produced by the County Council. The respondent noted good work being done by cycling and Rambling Association representatives but a greater need for attendance from highways department officers. A councillor has come once! Also issues raised do get passed on to appropriate officers at the borough and the county but, like everywhere else, with mixed results. Stafford Borough are also planning a very innovative bicycle recycling scheme and have quite high profile National Bike Week events.

At the other end of the scale, Waverley Cycle Forum is run by district council officers from the Planning department. The respondent noted, ‘there has been plenty of discussion and little action with comments not being relayed to councillors. The group is to be chaired by a cycle campaigner in a bid for improvement’.

2.2 Attendance

Wolves on Wheels Cycle Campaign welcomes John Partridge’s letter of 26 September 2002, a transcript of which is shown in Appendix 4, inviting other organisations to contribute to Wolverhampton Cycle Forum.

However the addition of Wolverhampton Wheelers, Royal Mail Transport, and Virgin Trains will probably not give the breadth of representation required.

Appendix 2 details the attendance at Portsmouth city cycle forum. This is typical of best practice. Five officers attended the observed meeting of the Shropshire Cycle Forum; 3 apologised for absence. There were 12 cycle campaigners and interested members of the public and the two aforementioned councillors.

The range of people and organisations who could be invited to attend a Wolverhampton Cycle Forum and receive its minutes could include any of the following bodies according to the relevance of the topics on the agenda at the time:-

1. WCC Portfolio holders for Transport and Regeneration and for Leisure
2. Councillors from Transport and Regeneration and from Leisure Cabinets plus those interested in the subject.
3. Highways engineering officers
4. Road Safety officers
5. Cycling Officer and Cycle Training Officers
6. Transport Strategy officer
7. Officers from Leisure Services – occasional attendees
8. Wolves on Wheels Cycling Campaign representatives
9. CTC Right to Ride Representatives
10. Sustrans Community Rangers
11. Tandem Club Regional Officer
14. Any of the other local cycle racing clubs.

3 Department responsible for e.g. Smestow valley LNR. Maintenance of planting in roundabouts, Path maintenance etc. Attendees at Cycle Forum will have heard the phrase ‘Oh it belongs to Leisure’. Inaction results. The revamped cycle forum should bring about communication between departments.
15. Wildside Activity Centre.
16. Royal Mail Transportation Officer.
17. TravelWise.
18. NHS Primary Care Health Trust.
20. Any workplace Bicycle User Groups in the area - none known at present.
22. Guest speaker / advisor Status 4
23. Any cycling for profit companies based in Wolverhampton (- none at present)
24. Virgin Trains Station Manager
25. Centro
26. Wolves FC
27. University, colleges, safe-route-to-school schools, large employers.
28. Interested individuals
29. the Cycle trade
30. the future Bike Park company.
31. The over 50’s forum. Pedestrian interests and Disabled Access interests
32. Local Education Authority (travel officers)
33. Staffordshire residents from the villages along Wolverhampton’s border.

This list represents the breadth of consultation necessary to become an advisory body, to influence design of schemes, promotion of cycling, law enforcement and integration with other modes of transport. This group of people can dramatically improve Bike2Work week (June) and Travelwise week (August) promotions.

Large employers including the hospitals and the council are going to have a greater influence on utility cycling. The Football club generates huge traffic problems on match days. It needs to be engaged in the healthy, sustainable transport debate. E.g. There is no cycle parking at the stadium 5. Wolves players are, after all, local role models!

2.2.1 Comments from CTC Right to Ride Representatives.

Simon Geller, Sheffield: ‘It should have as inclusive a membership as possible - try to get local businesses on board, football clubs (they sure make a lot of traffic on match days don’t they?) universities, colleges, schools, bike shops, NHS trusts, hospitals.’

Gerry Leach, Leicestershire and Rutland: ‘But you need to beware of involvement by NHS and other non-cycling bodies- they can be very “make them wear helmets and get them off the road” minded.’

Simon Geller countered this, ‘True, but a cycle forum is a good place to engage with them about their misconceptions. In Sheffield at least, and I’m sure elsewhere, the NHS trust is a major traffic generator and pays only lip-service to sustainability. (Health promotion doesn’t seem to be part of the NHS’s remit) It’s important to get them on board.’ 6

4 E.g. officers from Sandwell MBC, Sustrans or English Regional Cycling Development Team. Or Tipton and Rowley Regis NHS Primary Care Health Trust’s Walking and Cycling Development Officer.
5 Recent cycling visitors to the W Midlands LTP consultation, November 2002 either locked their cycles up at the nearby Asda stands or took the offer of putting them in the home players dressing room.
6 Primary Care Trusts do have a responsibility for health promotion and should be interested in the cycle forum. Hospital Trusts do not have an interest in health promotion though they may have a travel plan possibly driven
Steve Stockham, North Pembrokeshire. ‘I think it’s important to have more cyclists on the forum than administrators, representatives of bureaucratic bodies and non-cycling officers.

2.3 Remit and Authority

The Status of a Cycle Forum can be enshrined in key documents like the local transport plan. The West Midlands LTP 2000 has some strategy statements on improving conditions for cycling and its promotion, but no actual targets or systems for implementation.

In 2000, a draft cycling strategy for Wolverhampton was prepared. Through the Cycle Forum participants were asked to comment on the document first. In the draft of the strategy was:

**Partnership**

*C13 - The Council will work with other agencies, including neighbouring local authorities and interest groups to promote cycle routes, cycling and pro-cycling policies and initiatives. The Council will also continue to support a cycle forum to give advice on policy and priorities. The authority will support other organisations to develop new facilities for cyclists and to encourage people to cycle.*

This is possibly the only known written commitment to a cycle forum in Wolverhampton.

A commitment to a Cycle Forum in the LTP or in a key borough plan or strategy document makes the difference and empowers the forum.

Take a look at these extracts from the Shropshire County LTP (reproduced here with permission):

**Shropshire Cycle Forum**

To hold 4 meetings every year with the Shropshire Cycle Forum.

*Target 11.3*

“The Shropshire Cycle Forum has been meeting quarterly since January 1996. The Forum is proactive in developing ideas for improving and extending cycling facilities and cycle-related initiatives. It is important that this level of involvement is sustained.

11.5 Shropshire LTP - The Shropshire Cycle Forum continues to be a successful example of partnership between officers, councillors and local cyclists. Its members represent Shropshire County Council, Telford and Wrekin Council, district councils, local cycling clubs, Police and individual cyclists. Quarterly meetings provide ideas and feedback on a wide range of cycling issues including considerable input into the preparation of this Local Transport Plan. The Forum is keen to support and encourage the Shropshire Cycling Strategy.

**Partnerships**

A number of partnerships for action have been established and these include:

through car parking congestion or the condition of a planning application. This irony is best illustrated by the City’s New Cross Hospital where there are a few dilapidated bike stands in lonely corners and a brand new bus shelter with ash trays. See www.wolvesonwheels.co.uk Chocolate Chainring Awards for more details of this dire state of affairs.
Shropshire Cycle Forum - membership drawn from police, all local authorities (including Telford and Wrekin) and voluntary bodies such as local cycling and environmental groups.”

This forum helped to write the County LTP and continues to be a formal advisory body to the councils of Shropshire. It reviews and approves all schemes containing cycle content before these are discussed by e.g. the Transport Cabinet. They devised the Shrewsbury Cycle network which is now largely implemented. Winchester City Cycle Working Group works in a similar way, putting schemes for inclusion in new build and the LTP and monitoring their progress.

Possibly the strongest remit for a cycling forum is that of the newly-formed Cumbria Cycling Panel. This is shown in Appendix 5. By authority of the Cumbria County council, this is now the single body responsible for advising the council on its cycling policies and strategies and on transport projects and proposals from a cycling perspective. It is independent of the Council so has no county councillors present. It can ask officers to meetings to answer questions and it can request investigative work. The chairman, a CTC Right to Ride representative, has in effect the casting vote. This is to ensure that schemes are consistent in their quality and provision throughout the county and across several district design offices. In effect Cumbria has made its cycling policy and provision directly answerable to those charged with representing all cyclists.

2.4 Scope of Cycling Forums

The breadth of topics covered by a forum can cover the whole spectrum of new infrastructure, strategy and cycling promotion. For example in Pembrokeshire:

1. Detailed Route planning of 120 miles of the National Cycle Network including the Celtic Trail.
2. Input into writing county cycling strategy.
3. Editing sections of the LTP
4. Editing Sections of the UDP
5. Organising and running National Bike Week Events
6. Press campaigns to highlight local cycling issues.
7. Finding cycling instructors.
8. Policing issues and law enforcement.
10. Maintenance schemes and cycle facilities.

Sheffield City cycling forum is now the primary consultative body to the City Council on anything cycle-related. The Forum’s ideas on formulating policy and implementing schemes are taken on board by the Council Members. The serious mistakes of the past, such as the conflict between cyclists and ‘Supertram’ 7, are thus not being repeated.

2.5 Timing and frequency.

Timing is a thorny issue. The balance between attendance by professionals and by representatives of cycling groups plus individual riders is a difficult one to strike. The availability of the Chair may be the deciding factor.

7 This led to at least one fatal accident.
Wolverhampton City Cycle Forum has met for some years on an ad hoc basis on Friday afternoons. A councillor came once in the last three years. Retired or self-employed persons plus those on a 4½ day week have been able to attend.

Shropshire Cycling Forum takes place quarterly (as per the LTP target shown in the previous section) on a midweek evening starting 7pm with the Chair working hard to conclude business by 9pm. The County Council provides administrative support. Officers attending could take time off in lieu. At the time of writing the next meetings are on 22 January 2003 and 12 April 2003, both at Shire Hall.

Portsmouth City Cycle Forum meets quarterly in the Civic offices with a 9-30 am start. There is usually 2 hours of business. See Appendix 1.

Winchester has an evening public meeting at least twice a year as well as the formal Cycle Working Group meetings. Norwich forum meets four times a year with administrative support from the City Council.

Harrogate Borough Council holds Cycle Consultation Meetings with key stakeholders every six weeks. Additionally, informal weekly meetings are held with Harrogate Cycle Group to discuss details of the Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycle network, now partially complete, which these volunteers planned on behalf of the council.

Cumbria Cycling Panel is required to meet ‘about three times a year’. See Appendix 5

2.6 Effect of a strong cycling forum

The strength of a cycling forum in a locality, and the vigour of its local cycling campaign, both seem to have a positive effect on the quality and extent of cycling provision in that area.

Most of the Local Authorities commended in the recent article in the “Observer” (see Appendix 3) for their good progress with cycling provision, even with limited funds, are notable for having strong and effective cycling forum arrangements.
3.0 Recommendations and Conclusion.

In this paper a cross-section of England and Wales’ cycle forums have been outlined. All have a common set of main aims:-

◊ for local cyclists to put forward their proposals and ideas for improvements for cyclists in an area;
◊ Cyclists can point out the implications of development or regeneration projects where no cycling ‘angle’ has been spotted by the “professionals”.
◊ for local authorities (and other organisations where appropriate) to obtain feedback from local cyclists on schemes affecting cyclists.

Now is the time, whilst Wolverhampton City Council is under scrutiny from the English Regional Cycling Development Team 8, to strengthen its commitment to constructive consultation through the City Cycle Forum. That forum needs to evolve into a body that displays all the best key characteristics of those noted in this report.

3.1 Using the resource of local cyclists’ knowledge

Cyclists know about the experience of riding cycles large and small around Wolverhampton. Cycle campaigners are specialist volunteers trying to improve the situation of all cyclists with an eye on sustainable transport and “liveable” cities. Here is a body of knowledge and enthusiasm into which the City Council can tap through its Cycle Forum, as has happened in the past to some good effect!

3.2 Status and Recognition

To be effective, the main forum needs to be recognised as an official body which scrutinises all major developments, policies and schemes from a cycling viewpoint, and which then forwards its conclusions to the relevant cabinet(s) to help with their decision-making. E.g. Cumbria, Birmingham, Shropshire and Sheffield.

3.3 Composition and leadership

In section 2.1 the point was made that most, if not all, successful cycle forums are chaired by a senior elected councillor with an interest in the subject. They are then able to present the forum’s views directly at formal Council meetings.

The core cycle forum should be made up of the major stakeholders. To preserve the independent status of the forum, it should not be run, or be overly dominated by, council officers formulating and implementing transport policy. However these council officers obviously have an essential role to play. Other major stakeholders to be represented on the main Forum include representatives from Wolves on Wheels Cycling Campaign (amongst whose members at present are representatives of the main strands of utility and leisure cycling.

8 working for Stephen Norris at the National Cycling Strategy Board
- CTC Right to Ride, Sustrans rangers, Tandem Club), other keen, committed cycle users, other councillors, officers and other key local leaders.

Some of the Forum meetings in a year could be themed so that it may be appropriate to invite a representative e.g. head of hospital trust or the Station manager etc. Preparation for Bike2Work week and Bikeweek in June across the borough, for example, may require other Council departments, major employers’ representatives or organisers from the NHS Primary Care Trust to meet at the Cycle Forum in January or February.

3.4 Frequency of Main Forum meetings

The main cycle forum needs to meet quarterly at a time most convenient to key attendees. The availability of the Chair may determine this. If this is in the evening then some benefit in kind may be needed for officers attending the cycle forum.

3.5 Minutes and agendas

Administrative support from the council would be helpful for minute-taking and agenda-writing but a competent attendee from outside the council could take the minutes if necessary. Agendas and Minutes need to be produced promptly. Editorial independence from those responsible for providing for cycling is advisable.

3.6 Broader representation of the cycling public

Throughout this report there have been references to the achievements of the Cycling in Sandwell group which meets in West Bromwich every month. Consultation with this group gives Sandwell MBC a clear mandate for the type of cycling provision required in the borough and ample feedback from local cycle users. Free membership (due to public funding) has made joining Cycling in Sandwell an attractive proposition for over 500 local people to date.

What is required here is the best of both worlds. On the one hand the main cycle forum, with an important and influential individual in the chair, scrutinising schemes and advising Cabinet (and getting support for promotions like Bike2Work and other initiatives) is clearly needed.

On the other hand a broader input from cycling-sympathetic people and organisations with a shared interest is also required. The earlier list of over 30 types of interested parties would make an ungainly cycle forum! But as part of a second free membership group all these people can make a contribution. They could elect representatives to the main cycle forum or the most active and committed group members could attend it. This would be a great way for the Council or perhaps the NHS Primary Care Trust to foster a dialogue about what is needed for local cycling or health promotion amongst the widest cross-section of local people. The council would get a very clear response to such questions as ‘what measures do we need to make this proposed supermarket development more cycle-friendly?’ from such a group.

CTC Right to Ride Representative Dene Stevens (Sandwell and Birmingham) says of Cycling in Sandwell, ‘What I am certain about is that having a free register of those interested in
cycling must be a good thing - it means that we can contact and foster the interest of everyone who is cycling-sympathetic. Useful from a ‘participatory’ and a promotional point of view.’

This combination of a formal meeting plus a more open group gathering opinion may sound radical but this is already happening in Portsmouth, Harrogate and Hampshire for example – areas that are making good progress in new quality cycling provision.

3.6.1 The ‘Cycling in Wolverhampton’ register group.

Therefore we propose that one of the early tasks of the renewed cycle forum is to work on setting up a ‘Cycling in Wolverhampton’ (CiW) group for those interested in cycling with the best facets taken from Cycling in Sandwell (see Appendix 1). Funding such a group is the main challenge to be solved here. A source of start-up funding could be the Local Agenda 21 team. If the CiW group is set up with the intent of having a strong health promotion message then funding might come from NHS Primary Care Trust. Charitable trusts might also be approached.

The West Midlands Cycle Study written by the Babtie consultancy for the West Midlands Area Multi-modal study and the 2003 LTP also supports the creation of such a register group. The free membership should appeal to a broad cross-section of Wolverhampton residents, including those wanting to take up cycling, those returning to it, regular riders and sport cyclists. It should be open to residents of the South Staffordshire satellite villages as the county boundary, as far as travel by bike is concerned, is a very artificial boundary. Reducing Perton to Wolverhampton car journeys, for example, by better cycling connections is a worthy concern for all.

3.7 The complementary role of the local cycling campaign

In proposing this group, Wolves on Wheels recognises that it poses challenges for its own future. WoWcc does a unique range of cycling activities locally; most of which will be unaffected by any future CiW group. The Campaign is the natural home of cycling specialists like the CTC Right to Ride representatives and other highly-motivated cycling supporters who will want to be actively involved with both the proposed renewed forum and the CiW register group. Its principal campaigners may want to be the ‘go-betweens’ for this consultative structure.

3.8 Conclusion

Hopefully we have demonstrated the value of a rejuvenated and high status Cycle Forum structure, with the ability to direct and focus the available resources into effective “hard” or “soft” measures.

The new cycling forum will be able to assist Wolverhampton City Council in its obligations to steer the City towards a more sustainable transport future; cycling, walking and public transport will play an even more important part in making the city’s environment cleaner, quicker and a more pleasant place to spend time in. This aim can only be achieved by constructive two-way engagement between the city council and local cyclists.

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9 Wolves on Wheels is e.g. a Ranger Group for Sustrans’ local future sections of the National Cycle Network. Our Ranger group is free to join and is the no-cost option for people wanting to sample the campaign.
Appendix 1 CTC Benchmark for consultation

LOCAL AGENDA 21: CYCLING IN SANDWELL STRATEGY
Sandwell MBC

The Cycling Strategy was produced by Cycling in Sandwell, a group formed, enabled and promoted through Local Agenda 21. The Council provided funding and a facilitator for the group, but the strategy has been developed independently of the Council, which has since formally acknowledged it and incorporated many of its recommendations into the Unitary Development Plan. An initial pump priming budget of £100k was provided for the Local Agenda 21 group from the Sandwell Council Environmental Fund.

This approach was used as a way of broadening involvement in the process so as to gain wider ownership of the strategy, to build consensus and to encourage innovative solutions. Three levels of involvement were offered, with a small core group, those who attended meetings irregularly and those only involved by mail. There are over 500 people now involved, approximately half of whom ask to be kept informed of meetings and the remainder seeking information only. No major decisions are made without reference to the full group, but a healthy response rate of up to 50% has been achieved. However, reference to the wider membership can make the decision process protracted.

Peer assessment of this initiative:
Extent of user involvement
Integration with LA21

Contact Roy McCauley (Roy_Mccauley@sandwell.gov.uk)\(^\text{10}\) for further information

\(^{10}\) An underscore _ divides the Roy and the McCaulay parts of this email address
Appendix 2  Portsmouth City Cycling Forum

Email from Portsmouth City Cycling Officer, Mr Viv Vallance

David, Thank you for your email. I am not sure that we have a constitution or any documents describing its operation but I have noted a few things down about the forum. The forum attracts quite a wide range of people. The meeting is chaired by the Assistant City Engineer - this is crucial because this makes attendees feel that they are being listened to. The meetings always start at 9.30am and can last up to two and a half hours. The meetings are in office hours so that employers can attend and in the morning so some who work flexi-time can attend before work. The forum has been up and running for at least 20 years I think - it is well established and generally well attended - often more than 10 people attend. It meets on a quarterly basis in a conference room in the civic offices. Coffee is always provided and the meeting is quite formal.

The aim of the Forum is to oversee the implementation of the Cycling Strategy. We usually have a visiting speaker at each forum. Last forum we had one of the IBM representatives give a presentation on how he perceives cycling in the city. He talked through his journey to work and was constructively critical.

Councillors
- we invite all the pro-cycling councillors - there are 6 presently out of 40 or so councillors.
- we also invite the Executive Member of Transport - who is also one of the pro-cycling councillors.
- we also invite the two previous chairs of Traffic and Transportation Committee - one of which occasional attends.

In terms of councillors I have seen 4 different councillors attend the meetings over the last 30 months - 2 attended the last meeting - and we received apologies from 5 others

Large Employers
- the university has attended virtually every meeting in the last three years
- Portsmouth NHS Trust have attended three of the last 5 meetings
- IBM send a representative to every meeting

The Police
- the officer in charge of traffic issues attends virtually every meeting

Other Groups
- we have a local Sustrans rep who has started regualrly attending in the last 18 months
- Hampshire Cycling, local CTC group members and other interested individuals

Other City Council Officers
- a member of the planning department regularly attends
- leisure have also sent officers in the past
- we send minutes to a housing officer who deals with cycling issues on behalf of housing

In total we send minutes and agendas to approximately 25 to 30 people every month. I am not quite sure how we initially managed to get the employers on-board, but it is important to keep them happy. We visit IBM once a year to speak directly to IBM cyclists over a lunchtime. The councillors attend if their ward is affected by a scheme, but sometimes turn up anyhow. We often crowd over plans of schemes during meetings.
I think the key to success is getting a decent chair with clout. When I lived in Leicester the chair was a councillor, who was also chair of Traffic and Transport, but the meetings were in the evenings and that is off-putting to professionals. The forum needs to feel that it is valued, on important issues we make a point of finding out the views of the forum so this can be reported back to the T & T committee now the Executive Member for Transport. The forum has an important role to play in determining which measures take priority when the cycling budget is allocated - this year 150k. The forum's role is highlighted in our LTP.

We also have two other cycling related meetings the cycle drop-in session which takes place every month and was designed to consult with a wider group of cyclists than can be achieved at the forum - meetings were held in the evening. Initially these meetings were successful, but attendance has dropped off that we plan to set up a web-based drop-in session instead. We also have green travel forum for business called signpost which meets 3 times a year - web address www.chamber.org.uk/signpost

I hope this advice is of some help - let me know if I can help further

Best Wishes

Viv Vallance
Appendix 3 Article from the Observer.

Excerpt from an article by Joanna Walters on Sunday December 22, 2002 in The Observer

‘Why cyclists have been forced off Britain's congested roads’

‘The Government is putting record levels of funding into cycling and Transport Secretary Alistair Darling has just announced a huge expansion of the 'safe routes to school' initiative. But it has only just begun a nationwide assessment of all councils' performance on cycling to find out why it is still declining.

A comprehensive picture has yet to emerge but senior advisers to the Government have criticised the lacklustre, and in some cases regressive, approach of East Lothian, Carlisle, Birmingham, the London borough of Westminster, Lincolnshire, Liverpool, Norfolk, Milton Keynes, Wolverhampton, East Riding, East Sussex and Runcorn.

Oxfordshire, Suffolk and cities such as Bristol, Sheffield, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Hull and the London borough of Camden were praised for showing the rest of the country that with some money, readily available knowledge and, above all, the will, cycling could be expanded.’
APPENDIX 4 Letter From J Partridge Of WCC.

Contact Mr N Kitchen on 01902 555734 or 555467
traffic.wmbc@dial.pipex.com.
c.c. Lydia Barnstable, TSDC
cc David Holman (Chair, Wolves on Wheels Cycle Campaign)
our ref : TD/NK/T10/82NSDbjo
26 September, 2002

Dear

Wolverhampton Cycle Forum
In line with its long term development of a strategic cycle network for the City we meet with interested parties to discuss current issues affecting cyclists in Wolverhampton. These meetings have primarily been requested and attended by the Wolves on Wheels group and they represent an important part of our consultation process for forthcoming cycling schemes and issues of safer cycling.

We would like to expand the attendance at these meetings to include business and organisations who have an interest in cycle issues or need to cater for cyclists who travel to and from their sites. The next meeting is provisionally booked for 2.00pm on 18 or 25 October 2002.

If you would like to be represented at the next meeting or wish to see a copy of the agenda in advance please contact my colleague Nick Kitchen on the above extension number, an indication of the date which would be most suitable for you would also be helpful.

I enclose a copy of the latest cycle route map for your information.
Yours faithfully

John Partridge
Section Leader
Traffic Management and Road Safety

Letter to:

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<th>Mr Paul Wedge</th>
<th>Customer Service Centre</th>
<th>Virgin Trains</th>
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Appendix 5 Cumbria Cycling Panel Remit

1. Panel Remit

1.1 The County Council's Cabinet approved the formation of the Panel on 11 June 2002. The Panel is to give independent advice and as a result there is no County Councillor on the Panel.

1.2 The remit of the Panel is as follows.

i. To be the single body to advise the County Council on its cycling policies and strategies and to advise the Council on transport policies and proposals from a cycling perspective.

ii. To act as a network for providing comments and advice on a continuous basis, meeting as required by the Chairman.

iii. To keep under review the progress and effectiveness of the Panel.

1.3 The Panel is able to ask officers to attend the meetings so that they could question them over aspects of design policy etc..

1.4 The Panel can request that investigative work be carried out, subject to the funding being available and the agreement of officers.

2 Membership

2.1 The panel consists of cycling representatives from the six areas covered by the Local Committees and other specialists representing specific cycling matters.

3 Meetings

3.1 Meetings should take place about three times a year to discuss the preparation of the LTP and the APRs. Three meetings are required as a minimum:-

a. In January to discuss the settlement letter.

b. In April when preparing the Annual Progress Report (APR).

c. In August / September to discuss the submitted APR

3.2 Meetings are administered by Member Services.

3.3 When the Chairman is of the opinion that where a design, draft strategy or plans warrant being discussed by all the members of the Cycling Panel, then he shall authorise a meeting of the full Panel.

4. Procedures for consultation responses on Schemes

4.1 Design briefs for all major LTP/APR named priority transport improvement schemes (over £30000), engineering safely schemes and schemes within the annual package of measures to be submitted to the Panel.

4.2 The Panel to be consulted on a scheme prior to the Stage 1 Safety Audit and prior to submission to Local Committee.

4.3 Consultations to be sent to the Area Panellist and the Panel Chairman.

4.4 Responses to be submitted within 21 days of receipt.

4.5 Contact should be made by the Area Panellist with the Panel Chairman within the first 7 days.
4.6 It is the Chairman (and the Chairman only) who shall respond.
4.7 Where there is a difference of opinion between the Area Panellist and the Chairman it was agreed that it is the Chairman’s opinion that will take precedence in order to achieve a consistent approach and continuity of design.

5 Consultation on Strategies and Plans
5.1 Draft strategies and plans to be submitted to the Panel Chairman with the same response time as para 4.4.