WinACC Open Meeting on Winchester Movement Strategy
27 November 2021 10.30–12 noon (refreshments from 10.00)
United Church Jewry Street in person

Getting Ready for consultation in December/January

Hampshire County Council will be consulting soon on their priorities for taking this strategy forward. Don't miss your chance to respond.

The story so far

In March and April 2019 Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council first adopted the strategy which had three priorities:

- Reduce city centre traffic
- Support healthier lifestyle choices
- Invest in infrastructure to support sustainable growth.

You can find Hampshire's progress reports in section 5 of https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/strategies/transportstrategies.

Much work has been done, mostly drawings of traditional walking and cycling projects, and redesign of some junctions, with 3 options for new traffic-flow arrangements. Very large car parks have been proposed for the edge of town.

A crisis, but with opportunities

Much has happened since 2019 that warrants a modified, more ambitious strategy, builds on what has been done, and adds a strong climate focus:

- The world now agrees it is essential to take rapid effective action to tackle global heating
- The City Council is now committed to net zero emissions by 2030 and Hampshire County Council to net zero by 2050
- Hampshire are considering a Local Travel Plan target of reducing traffic by at least 10%, superseding the latest progress report's assumption of a traffic increase of 46%.
- The lockdown freed up streets for cyclists and pedestrians, and showed us what was possible
- The pedestrianisation of The Square has shown us how removing traffic can improve the public realm, and encourage business
- The latest (2019) data show transport was responsible for 58% of the net emissions in Winchester District; emissions from local roads have grown continually since 2012
- The government is now offering 'at least' £12bn nationally for local transport schemes, (£260m for Hampshire??, £23m for Winchester District???) but only if plans demonstrate they will reduce transport emissions
- The government have reiterated their "target that active travel should make up at least half of all journeys in towns and cities by 2030"
- National standards for walking and cycling infrastructure have been upgraded so that some of the work done so far needs to be respecified and reworked
- In *Bus Back Better* the government has committed itself to increasing bus use substantially, offering £3bn for areas outside London (potentially £65m for Hampshire)

The last chance

We need to make sure the strategy reflects these developments. If the strategy does not reduce transport emissions in Winchester there may not be another opportunity to remove the 455 Kt CO2 emitted by transport in the District. Clear targets for reduction need to be agreed and initiatives chosen according to their potential for reducing emissions.

Electric vehicles are not enough

The strategy should not rely solely on the battery-electrification of road vehicles, and must take account of the problems they present:

- The simultaneous electrification of road transport and home heating will place impossible demands on the electricity supply. We will need almost 6 times more green electricity than is currently available. The scale of the demand will threaten a return to more electricity generated from gas,
- The movement strategy will therefore have to concentrate on mode transfer from cars to walking, cycling, and public transport to limit the demand for green electricity.

The scale of mode transfer will have to be extensive. To reduce car use by 30%, for example, could require more than doubling walking, an eight-fold increase in cycling, and more than 5 times more journeys by bus. There need to be carefully considered mode transfer targets that will deliver the emissions and energy reductions required.

Priority schemes

The priorities identified by HCC show considerable development but are not without problems.

- Andover Road Park-and-Ride will be expensive and must surely be superseded by the possible HCC target of a 10% reduction in traffic
- Proposals for reduction in city centre parking are an important development, but need to go much further, more quickly, if they are to succeed in reducing emissions sufficiently
- Traffic flow and public realm proposals are too limited to provide the city centre we need
- The high quality walking corridor is a good starting point, but we need a bigger walking network
- Proposals on cycle routes need to be extended if we are to achieve the eightfold increase required
- Bus priority measures need to be spread to cover the whole of the centre
- On-street bus stands will not provide the quality environment or capacity we need to increase bus use in line with Bus Back Better
- Fright delivery proposals need to take account of developments aimed at decarbonising freight transport.

Other schemes with great potential for reducing emissions have been overlooked:

- Low traffic Neighbourhoods
- School Streets
- A mobility hub (transport interchange) at the station.

Given the scale of what needs to be done, we may have to focus on schemes that cost least but reduce emissions the most.