



Bradford on Avon Town Council

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Dr. M. McClelland
Cabinet Member for Transport Waste, Street Scene & Flooding
Wiltshire Council
Cabinet Office
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire BA14 8JN

6th April 2022

Dear Dr McClelland,

Bradford on Avon Town Council -Results of Future of Transport Consultation

On 29th March, The Sustainable Travel Committee of the Town Council passed unanimously the following motion:-

- *'Notes the report prepared by Copper Consultancy following the 'Future of Transport' consultation;*
- *Recommends that the report be presented to Wiltshire Council Highways and the Cabinet Member for Transport for their consideration;*
- *Requests that Wiltshire Council work in consultation with the Town Council to design measures to improve travel in Bradford on Avon consistent with the views of residents as expressed in the report.*
- *Notes the top three priorities identified by residents are:-*
 - *Reduction of traffic volumes*
 - *Improving air quality*
 - *Improving pedestrian and cyclist safety and comfort*
- *Regards the improvement in pedestrian and cyclist safety and comfort as the aspect most in need of immediate attention.'*

Consequently, we enclose a copy of the final report for your consideration, and highlight below our reasoning for the motion specified above.

Rationale for the Motion

The report identifies three key top priorities:

- 1. Reducing traffic volume** - 1520 respondents felt this was a top 3 high priority.
- 2. Improving air quality** - 1377 respondents felt this was a top 3 high priority.
- 3. Improving pedestrian and cyclist safety and comfort** - 1343 respondents felt this was a top 3 high priority.

All three priorities are inter-linked. We look to Wiltshire Council as the local Highway Authority, with its professional expertise, to prepare measures that address all three issues.

Traffic has impacts or potential impacts on:

- pedestrians, road users or residents, in terms of safety and comfort;
- road users, in terms of convenience;
- residents, in terms of noise and pollution.

We seek a solution which balances these interests by mitigating all three sets of impacts and does not reduce one set of risks only by increasing others.

However, our view is that pedestrian safety (point 3 above) is our foremost concern, given the immediate risks of injury or even death.

To explain our reasoning for reaching this conclusion, we make the following points:

1) Safety and Comfort:

Ensuring that people are safe, and feel safe, while walking as well as cycling, is a fundamental issue highlighted by numerous minor incidents and, in recent weeks, a serious injury to a pedestrian in the town centre. Many respondents are intimidated by traffic: this is particularly a problem on the Town Bridge, but is also experienced on many roads right across town.

Better pedestrian access and movement in the town centre and reduced traffic intimidation is also absolutely vital to the future prosperity of town centre shops and businesses, especially those catering for tourism.

In relation to safety it is perhaps worth noting also;

- A strong majority of respondents (69%) expressed support for a new pedestrian bridge to encourage them to walk and cycle more.
- Responses to the interactive map showed that on virtually every key route, speed limit reduction was at the top or near the top of requested improvements.

Additionally, improving pedestrian and cyclist safety is consistent with recent changes to the Highway Code which establish a hierarchy of road users and require motor vehicles to uphold a duty of care to more vulnerable road users.

Addressing this aspect will also facilitate improvements in the two other priority areas (air quality and traffic volume).

2) Air quality: Bradford on Avon has long had a problem with air quality due to much traffic congestion in narrow streets; the town centre is currently designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for Nitrogen Dioxide, and was also until 2021, an AQMA for fine particulates. The health effects of this pollution are well documented so any improvement here will have a profound impact on the health of individual residents, as well as far reaching benefits for the community as a whole. A road system and reductions in traffic volume which facilitate a steady flow of traffic would be highly beneficial. Longer term, the switch to electric vehicles will help, as will more walking and cycling in town (point 1 above), and greater use of public transport.

3) Traffic volume: This was prioritised by more respondents than any other, but we recognise it will take a series of measures to effect a significant reduction. Improvements are likely to come indirectly through greater uptake of active travel (point 1 above) and better public transport facilities, as well as individual changes in behaviour. In particular, the large number of respondents regularly driving to Trowbridge when there are very good train and bus connections is something we need to target. However, there is only so much we can achieve as residents of the town and we must work with Wiltshire Council to seek measures to reduce out of town, through traffic.

We feel that the strength of the response to our consultation gives a powerful mandate to effect real change. We look forward to working closely with you and Wiltshire Highways officers to directly address the decades old traffic problems that have blighted our town environmentally and economically.

Yours sincerely



Sandra Bartlett
Town Clerk