**Annual General Meeting**

###### 1 April 2017, 1:00-4:00pm

**Commercial Union House, Newcastle upon Tyne**

**Minutes (DRAFT) – to be reviewed and approved at AGM 2018**

Present (45 in attendance including 41 members): Scott Dawson (Committee member), Roderick Joyce (Committee member), Claire Prospert (Secretary), John Watson (Treasurer), Sally Watson (Committee member), Paul Adams, Tom Bailey, Cerian Brogan, Valerie Bythell, Tim Dowson, Bill Dodds, Jo Ellis, Ali Ford, Nicola Frearson, Julie Hall, Ruth Hayward, Chris Heath, Matt Henderson, Yulia Henderson, Robert Hope, Tom King, Andrew Lambert, Bill Lawrence, John Litherland, Peter Macdonald, Andrew McCowan, Thomas Maskell, Mark Nelson, Ben Nuttall, Colin Percy, Cllr Dan Perry, Carlton Reid, Cath Scaife, Christine Sheperdson, Khalid Shroufi, James Stanton, Cllr Marion Talbot, Peter Ward, Peter Wesoloswki, Alex White, Laura Wilkinson, John Dales (Urban Movement), Graham Grant (Newcastle City Council), Cllr Gareth Kane, Chi Onwurah MP

Apologies (42):Katja Leyendecker (Committee member), Tony Waterson, Armelle Tardiveau, Shannon Robalino, Taymar Pitman, Achim Treumann, Alan Loftus, Kathy Barley, Mima Cattan, Richard Innes, Tim Binks, Alex Thompson, Jennifer Barros, Phil Brookes, Ingra Grebere, Macks Solicitors, Stephen Murray, David Ross, Robert Mullen, Richy Hetherington, Nada Aly, Malcom Farrow, Cllr Stella Postlethwaite, Simon James, Paul Snedker, Rorie Parsons, Stephen Psallidas, Vicki Gilbert, Peter Hawthorn, Matthew Snekder, William Mortada, Cllr Rob Higgins, Phil Brookes, Jo Whaley, Carole Gibson, Suzanne Thompson, Cllr Ged Bell, Cllr Ian Tokell, Chris Sherratt.

1. **Welcome**

Sally Watson, who joined the Committee in 2014, welcomed the audience and introduced the agenda for the AGM. She gave Katja Leyendecker’s apologies and explained that Katja could not be here today as she is spending a lot of time abroad doing field work for her PhD.

1. **Minutes of last AGM**

Claire Prospert, NewCycling’s Secretary, introduced the formal part of the AGM, starting with the minutes from last year. The minutes of the last AGM held on 12 April 2017 at Broadacre House were approved as a true record with no matters arising.

1. **Reports (for information)**

**Claire Prospert** presented the annual report, which is now on the Campaign’s website. Last year was a roller coaster ride, a ‘year of extremes’ as Katja described it in the foreword of the Annual Report. The focus was on campaigning for a comprehensive quality cycling network in the city so that people of all ages and abilities can safely cycle wherever they need to go, every day. Sadly, a lot of volunteer time, effort and resources had to be diverted from July onwards to fighting the Northern Access Corridor and the Council’s plans to create a motorway across the Northern Newcastle neighbourhoods. We were not the only ones fighting. This has meant that the Campaign could not deploy the planned members’ actions but it was great to see more people involved throughout the year, contacting us, tweeting, writing about their concerns and also expressing their support to the campaign. Thank you. We will continue to campaign for a better city. There has been evidence of better street design; quality cycling infrastructure has been constructed in the city: John Dobson Street is a good example and there are others in the report. However, these are still disjointed, the concept of a comprehensive network is emerging but much more needs to be done to make it happen. The Campaign is an expert group; we have more than 6 years of experience and knowledge engaging with the council to make a case and champion quality cycling infrastructure. We are here to help and advise. Our infrastructure group (led by Scott Dawson) has not only the technical skills but also the unique ability to design and visualise cycle solutions which work for people, rather than cars. Please read our annual report; there are a few copies here today and you can download it as well as all previous annual reports from our website.

**John Watson,** Treasurer, summarised the financial report which shows a healthy balance of £3,518.39 at the end of our financial year, beginning of March. In terms of outgoings (total: £947.06), we paid for Paul Gasson’s train ticket to present at last year’s AGM. Paul slept in John’s spare room to save on accommodation costs! Most costs related to travel and attendance at events: Scott went to Leeds on an infrastructure Safari organised by Leeds Cycle Campaign, Claire travelled to Cambridge to participate in the Cycling Embassy of Great Britain AGM, Katja spoke at the All Party Parliamentary Cycling group meeting in London and claimed £24 for sustenance, Sally presented an analysis of planning policy and cycling in Lancaster in September. We also bought books for our library. With regards to income, we had a very successful Grow Your Tenner campaign, a big thank you to all our donors (a total of £1,742.19 donations was made during the year). We now have 7 direct debits which provides us with a degree of visibility and financial security and allows us to plan ahead. We also had a healthy level of corporate membership renewals. Finally, we will be receiving a grant from Waitrose Community Giving next year.

1. **Management Committee 2017-18**

**Claire Prospert** introduced the process to appoint the Management Committee. As there were less nominations than places available on the committee, it will not be necessary to hold a formal election.

The following members expressed an interested to remain on the committee and **Claire Prospert** asked for members in attendance to second them:

* **Scott Dawson –** seconded by **John Litherland**
* **Roderick Joyce –** seconded by **Tom Bailey**
* **Katja Leyendecker –** seconded by **Cllr Marion Talbot**
* **Claire Prospert –** seconded by **Peter Ward**
* **Sally Watson –** seconded by **Ruth Hayward**
* **John Watson** – seconded by **Bill Dodds**

The constituted posts and roles will be discussed and appointed at the first (newly formed) Committee Management meeting in May.

1. **Motion**

This year, a motion was proposed to make a minor change to the Campaign’s Constitution. The change relates to the number of members required to be quorate at our AGMs which currently stands at 5% of the number of members. We wish to add a number, i.e. 40, and be quorate using the lower number between 40 people and 5% of the membership. The reason for proposing a number is purely practical. A further growth in our membership would require to organise a large AGM which could put pressure on capacity and resources. Given that the attendance has been fairly constant (i.e. just above 40) over the last few years, we thought it would be helpful to formally include this number in our constitution.

Claire Prospert asked members in attendance to give their views.

A lively discussion followed with members suggesting that we could make this number proportionate to the number of committee members (max 10). So for example, establish a quorate which would be 3 times the number of committee members so quorate would be between 9 and 30 members. Another member suggested to fix the number to 30.

Following further discussion, members agreed the motion with a number of 30 (rather than the proposed 40).

**Claire Prospert** will amend the Constitution accordingly.

This concluded the formal business part of the AGM 2017.

1. **Campaign Plan 2017/18**

**Sally Watson** introduced the campaign plan which builds on last year’s focus on a comprehensive and first class network for the city. Last year, we saw the completion of a two-way cycleway on John Dobson Street; this is the kind of high-quality infrastructure that we want to see all over the city.

We will continue to campaign for a mapped-out network plan and for the council to adopt it into their policy. A primary network of routes must be complemented by a secondary network connecting neighbourhood destinations, and designed for people to ensure that trips on bike are convenient, direct, safe and pleasant.

We will also campaign for the adoption of design standards and sustainable safety principles (Dutch system of road safety).

It will be important for the Council to direct resource and investment towards the network planning and construction.

**Sally** illustrated quality aspects and sustainable safety the Dutch way: showing pictures of residential streets with no through traffic; protected cycleways on main roads; low traffic local centres, and; city centres which are permeable for cycling. In England and not just in London, we can do this, as the Council has demonstrated on John Dobson Street. But for such infrastructure to be well used and unlock higher levels of everyday cycling, it is essential to connect routes and destinations through the development of a comprehensive cycle network.

Sally concluded by explaining what can be done to grow the campaign: join the campaign and ask friends to do the same, donate monies, contact your Councillors, participate in online discussions, discuss the network and contribute to its development, attend meetings (we’re planning campaign social evenings) and spread the word!

Councillors can help too, (thanks for those who came today, Cllrs Gareth Kane, Dan Perry, and Marion Talbot). They can join the campaign, receive our newsletter, read our website and in particular the section about data collections for Newcastle, and get in touch to support our vision for a better, cleaner, fairer, greener and healthier Newcastle.

Sally asked members for their views on the proposed plan:

* Concerns were voiced about the maintenance of new cycling infrastructure. The Heaton and Coast road routes were mentioned as being neglected. Worries were expressed about council’s budget and asked whether maintaining the existing infrastructure (e.g. repainting white lines on road and ASL) would be cheaper.
* Local routes are important and small improvements (e.g. dropped kerbs) can make a big difference for existing cyclists.
* In response to the above points, members of the Committee explained that the Campaign’s aim was to get people to take up cycling so quality infrastructure with sustainable safety is absolutely key. A quality cycling network will get everybody and more people to cycle.
* A member asked for the Campaign to be more involved in Streets for People. The Campaign’s local expertise in cycling infrastructure and best practice is very much valued. Support was expressed to keep the focus on lobbying the Council for better infrastructure, for a citywide and local networks.
* Air quality is a big hook, there is more coverage and public awareness and this can help support cycling in cities.
* Very supportive of strategic cycle routes and the proposed campaign plan, simple concept and important to unlock mass cycling. More local people are motivated about it and groups are forming, i.e. in Heaton.
* Winning hearts and minds is important. Focussing too much on cycling can antagonise the wider public. It is important to talk about cycling AND walking. This can still be a hard thing to sell from a Councillor’s perspective.

The Campaign’s main aim is to achieve a better cycling network and we are always happy to advise and support other groups with similar aims. We recognise the importance of mobilisation. The membership secretary role has remained vacant at the campaign base, since we started – click [here](http://newcycling.org/meet-the-committee/) for our structure. It would be great if more people came forward to support our campaigning effort.

1. **Speaker**

Following Claire’s short introduction, **Chi Onwurah MP** addressed the audience; her speech can be found [here](http://newcycling.org/chi-onwurah-mps-speech-at-newcyclings-2017-agm/).

A Q&A session followed, with members keen to understand how Chi, as an MP, can help and champion cycling as a means of transport and address the barriers to everyday cycling.

Q1: Are you a member of the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (APPCG) and would you go to their organised rides?

A1: Yes but Chi hasn’t had a chance to go to any of their meetings. As recently back on a bike, she feels more comfortable cycling in a known environment, in Newcastle than in London. And it does not look great to cycle in London. She was referring to the Minister of Transport, Mr Grayling, dooring a cyclist outside parliament.

Q2: A member referring to their daughter who recently relocated to London due to the lack of jobs in cycling locally, indicated that London boroughs are making significant investments in cycling infrastructure and supporting children to cycle and that levels of resource is much lower in Newcastle and the North East. What are you going to do to address this?

A2: Chi understands that the government is due to release the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, after much delay and this will require local authorities to develop investment plans for cycling and walking. She would like to see included school children learning how to ride bikes. As an MP she will also ask for levels of resource per head to be the same in London and Newcastle and if this is not the case for cycling, she will raise it.

Q3: A member made a point that the pace of delivery and change has been very slow in Newcastle. We have had 4 years of cycling infrastructure funding and haven’t really seen much improvement on the ground, with the exception of John Dobson Street. Is this something that Chi can raise when she meets with the city leaders?

A3: Chi meets with the Leader and Deputy Leader once a month. This is something that has already come up in discussions and she is aware of the challenges that the council faces with new cycling infrastructure – as an MP she does get emails/letters against it so she understands it is not an easy task. It took Fenham Hall Drive 3 years to be have something put in place. Having said that, she is happy to apply more pressure on specific points and areas (as long as they are in her Constituency) when delays occur. She is also committed to speak to the Freemen to see more and better cycle paths on the Town Moor.

Q4: There seems to be a communication problem with cycling; benefits are well known, and as demonstrated by the photos in the Netherlands earlier, it’s not just about cycling but also better quality of life and safer neighbourhoods. So why is it that so much opposition exists when cycling lanes are being build? What can you do to help communicate these positive changes and counteract misconceptions?

A4: Chi recognises that it is difficult to sell Amsterdam and other European cities which invest in cycling like Lyon to the Geordies. And maybe we need to find something which fits more within the local culture, something local people can relate to. She is thinking about it and would like to hear more from us if we have any ideas. In particular anything to do with communities and families through events and rides.

Q5: A member had spoken to Vera Baird, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and invited her to cycle around Newcastle with her to see how it is. Vera said that she would not be able to because it is too dangerous. The member suggested that Northumbria Police adopt the West Midlands campaign where drivers not giving enough space to cyclists when overtaking were stopped and educated. A different operation, a 3-week marketing campaign, was recently undertaken by Northumbria Police. The member asked whether Chi could approach Vera so that the Police would adopt the West Midlands campaign, which seems to be more effective and does not rely on helmet camera footage.

A5: Chi said she could raise it, in particular if someone could write to her to explain what the other police force’s operation is. She can also try and invite Vera on a bike ride.

Q6: Air pollution is a huge issue; and it’s not the only public health issue we face. The member works for the Hospital Trust and there are big physical developments in hospitals and yet there is no push within the Trust, as the biggest healthcare provider and one of the major employers in Newcastle, to incorporate active travel and cycling in their plans. Even bike parking is poor.

A6: Chi offered to help and write to all major employers in Newcastle to raise this issue, unless this has to be done by the Council. A council officer then explained that the Trust would face the same costs pressure as the Council and they make money out of parking. Chi re-iterated that she is happy to write to employers about cycling, and praised the Tyneside Cinema for providing additional bike parking in the alley alongside the cinema.

Q7 – A member works for one of the largest bariatric surgery units in the country in Sunderland. We have the highest rates or obesity and spent a huge amount of money on obesity related diseases. The government seems to only understand economic argument about lots of things. So do you think we spend enough time making the economic argument for cycling, in relation to the savings in a time where we have less and less money to spend on healthcare?

A7: Chi reckoned that we probably don’t, the economic argument is very strong. One of the problems is that departments which invest in the infrastructure are often different than the ones which will benefit from it in terms of savings. And therefore more needs to be done to connect and link them. Chi wondered whether there are studies that can be used.

The member indicated that there is a fantastic tool from WHO which can be used to calculate the monetary value generated by health benefits – the Campaign has advertised it and used it to demonstrate the significant financial contribution that cycling makes to the city.

Sally also indicated that Transport for London was doing some great work, and were starting to develop their case for transport investment using the WHO tool rather than the traditional transport costs benefits analysis which is only based on a reduction of journey times. So it is possible to do it but it’s not being done in transport schemes outside London.

Chi is happy to ask parliamentary questions to find out how DfT is embedding such tool to assess transport’s schemes across the country, so that it is not just happening in London.

1. **Workshop: cycling network planning**

Scott Dawson introduced the workshop where maps put together as part of the Streets for People initiative from the council will be available for people to add comments in particular related to the emerging city and local cycling networks in Newcastle.

1. **Feedback and key messages**

As the event was running very late, the results and key messages of the workshop will be published [here](http://newcycling.org/agm-2017-our-network-workshop/) on the Campaign’s website.

1. **Partners’ update**

John Litherland advertised an event held at the Journey by Recyke Y’ Bike on 12 April at 6:30pm: Peter Walker, well known Guardian journalist, will be launching his new book: Bike nation - how cycling can save the world. All welcome; booking is recommended.

Tom Maskell from Newcastle University has just started some research about how data collected by cyclists during their journeys and there is an information session on Monday 10th April in Gosforth.

Graham Grant from Newcastle City Council indicated that 15th June is the National Clean Air day and encouraged people to organise actions, he was not able to confirm whether the Council would do anything. Members talked about car free days which is something that Newcastle hasn’t seen to date.

1. **Closure and off to the pub**

The event concluded and Sally thanked all members who came today and contributed to the debate. For those who would like to continue the discussions, rendez-vous at the Lady Grey pub in town.

END