

ByCycle

Extraordinary General Meeting held at Congregational Church meeting room, Murray Street, Perth at 7pm on 21st February 2024

Purpose of meeting: to discuss the future of ByCycle and all that it means to participants and the wider community.

Present

Lewis Simpson (Chairing the meeting), Mike Simm, Katharine Melville, Tom Lamb, Sara Davies, Gerry Burke, David Fletcher, Sarah Walker, Ian Fraser, Christine Fraser, Damien O'Neill, Gina O'Neill, Shelagh Fulton, Kirsty Ellis, Scott Peddie, David Dawson, Tom Collier

Apologies

Bill Melville, David Merrie, Jane Anderson, Richie Neill, Hugh McAninch, Margaret Scott, Tony McCandlish, Andy Collins, Monica Griesbaum, James Herd, Susannah Rae

Introductions

Lewis Simpson, Chairing the Meeting, welcomed everyone and asked the standing Office Bearers to introduce themselves. This was followed by self-introductions around the room.

Lewis Simpson: attended ByCycle meetings from their inception in his capacity as a Councillor. Since retirement he has been Campaigns Coordinator.

Katharine Melville: also a long-term member. Secretary and Chair between the years of 2009-2020. Also acted as Campaigns Coordinator aka Current Issues. Presently coordinating 3rd Sunday Rides. Her final year of organising the Big Ride.

Mike Simm: likewise long-term member. He and Sara organised and led the 3rd Sunday rides for 17 years, and also organised about 10 of the Big Rides. Been Vice Chair for 15 years. Currently Webmaster and Membership Secretary.

Tom Lamb: currently coordinating Wednesday evening rides, but needing help to continue.

Where ByCycle stands at the moment

Lewis explained the current predicament in ByCycle, that the Organisation needs a Chair and Secretary to lead policy and take the Group forwards, and that existing Office Bearers feel the need gradually to step back after many years service, so for the health of a future ByCycle other people need to step in and spread the load.

The alternative to continuing as ByCycle would be to disband and try and find an alternative organisation who would inherit the funds of £4500 in the bank

History: ByCycle had been set up 25 years ago by PKC to interface between the Council and the cycling public. The full name of the Organisation is Perth and Kinross Cycle Campaign.

History of the rides: The Sunday rides were set up early on to advertise the role of the new cycle campaigns group. Wednesday evening rides were set up to replace the defunct PKC-initiated Cycling Summer rides. The Big Ride was inaugurated in 2010 to celebrate Perth's 600 year anniversary.

Lewis made the important point that although existing long-term members could advise a new Committee on how things had been done in the past, this should in no way dictate how things would develop for ByCycle in the future. The rides too could develop new directions.

Discussion

Q. There were questions asked about the ByCycle mission statement, the function of the different roles and the commitment required.

A. The mission statement is the opening paragraph on the website www.bycycle.org.uk

The role descriptions had been posted on the website.

The point was made that TWO officials, Chair and Secretary are really needed to lead the Organisation to support each other and share ideas.

A Minutes Secretary, although useful, is not sufficient.

Q. David Dawson asked if ByCycle would continue to be Perth-centric.

A. Katharine replied that the new Sunday rides schedule alternated between starting in Perth and starting from other venues. The Wednesday rides had always had a wide range of starting venues. See also Tom's comments below.

Q. Is ByCycle as a campaigning organisation still relevant or effective?

A. Tom Lamb had attended the Cycling Scotland Conference as a ByCycle delegate.

He had brought up the subject of the need for improved budgeting and infrastructure in rural areas as much as cities. ByCycle is one of the few cycling pressure organisations remaining.

There is no other similar group in P&K who could carry on the role and use our funds.

Sara Davies mentioned early start boxes at traffic lights in Edinburgh as an example of something that would not have happened without pressure from cyclists.

In any case ByCycle has a very experienced Campaigns Coordinator in post, so this was not the current issue.

New Office Bearers

At this point Kirsty Ellis offered her services as Chair.

Tom Collier, who is new to the area but who brings a wealth of experience from working in a similar organisation in Grampian, is willing to slot in as required. He would take the role of Secretary including the work of Minutes secretary.

Gina O'Neill and Shelagh Fulton would support Tom Lamb as a Rides Committee to produce and organise the Wednesday Rides programme.

Ian Fraser would join as a Committee Member to help where required.

Kirsty Ellis would shadow and assist Katharine in organising the Big Ride.

Kirsty brings a wealth of organisational experience from other events.

Welcome to the new Committee

There was great relief all round and congratulations to the new Team.

A brief meeting of the new committee followed, still chaired by Lewis.

A Succession Plan should be worked out in the future so that Mike could step down from Vice Chair and the new incumbent eventually take the role as Chair.

Mike would continue as Webmaster and Membership Secretary but eventually wished to step down.

There could be a role for someone interested in publicity, social media and as Press Officer.

Quarterly Meeting February 2024

Treasurer's Report In the absence of Richie Neill, Mike reported that there was £4500 in the bank. Although officially £2500 of this was officially ear-marked for use in a PKC project, this had never been utilised. Main outgoings were the website domain, room hire for meetings and membership of Cycling UK which also included insurance for event officials. Community Council Insurance, which included third party insurance but which was very vague in its terms had been allowed to lapse. ByCycle had subsidised First Aid courses and organised Cycle Maintenance courses.

The Big Ride usually made a profit of £250-£400, for which reason ByCycle has ceased to levy a £5 membership, regarding the value of a wide member base as more important for publicity purposes.

Rides

Wednesday Rides The new Rides Group would be producing the programme for 2024

Sunday Rides 22 people had participated in the February ride. Gina had effectively dealt with the large numbers, dividing the group into three with a five minute gap between. This worked well as a future model. and there are enough experienced riders in the group to act as leaders and tail riders. The March ride would be led by Kirsty from Auchterarder.

The Big Ride There is a concern that Abbey Removals will no longer be able to cope with 80 bikes as there has been a considerable increase in the use of heavy, bulky electric bikes.

Katharine would look at the viability of hiring one 53 seater bus, while operating a waiting list and filling the places of retirees. She would look into using Spond for entries.

Current Issues Lewis had attended the Teams meeting organised by SWECO, the developers for Bertha Park (Phase I of the Perth Transport Futures project). They were consulting active travel groups (cycling, horse-riding, countryside access and other wheeling groups), particularly on a proposed path extending through Bertha Park to link in with the Cross Tay Link Road [CTLR] active travel path. They already had identified two other areas for improvement, but listened to other points made by the stakeholders.

In other CTLR meetings Lewis was working on integrating the network of core paths and paths through Scone Palace estate and the National Cycle Network so there was full connectivity. Also involved in this were BAM (the developers for the CTLR), PKC Active Travel and Cycling Group and Susannah Rae who is the Sustrans embedded Officer in PKC.

AOCB There being no other business the meeting closed at 20:30.

Next Meeting The next meeting would be the AGM and April Quarterly meeting to be held at the Congregational Church meeting room, Murray Street, Perth PH1 5EX at 7pm on Wednesday 17 April.