



-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --

BMF ALERTS BIKERS OVER “EXTREME BIAS” AGAINST MOTORCYCLES IN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT

The British Motorcyclists Federation (BMF) is seriously concerned by allegations of anti-motorcycle bias in an official document published for public consumption by Oxfordshire County Council.

A survey on the council’s proposals for its ‘Local Transport and Connectivity Plan’, which is intended to help plan for changes and growth in the city’s transportation network up until 2050, is currently underway. Background briefing documents about it have been published on the council’s website.

However, Councillor John Broad (Bicester West, Independent) has objected strongly to the plan’s specific briefing document on motorcycles. Cllr Broad, who is also a BMF member, wrote to the BMF to express his dismay at what he argues are “sweeping and not justified comments” within the briefing document, such as “Statistical evidence suggests motorcyclists are a danger to themselves” and “Motorbikes are mostly still using fossil fuels to run, meaning they are environmentally unsound, not sustainable, and contribute to air pollution”.

When a previous iteration of the proposals was only found to have a single mention of motorcycles (which concerned accident rates), Cllr Broad spoke in favour of expanding the plans to include powered two-wheelers and this additional briefing document was drawn up as a result. “I thought raising the advantages of motorcycles to both reducing congestion and pollution, especially as electric motorcycles are being produced, would allow the Council Officers to incorporate motorcycling into the transport plans up to 2050. How wrong I was!” Cllr Broad told the BMF.

In an email which has been seen by the BMF, Cllr Broad has written to the portfolio holder for transport at Oxfordshire County Council, Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE, to express his objections to the document’s “extreme bias”, to call for it to be withdrawn immediately and to ask for another team to be appointed to rewrite it. He also took the opportunity to champion motorcycles generally, and argued that they provide “part of the solution to congestion and transport, especially for those who cannot afford to buy a car and cannot access public transport.”

Commenting, BMF Chairman Jim Freeman said: “The BMF totally support John Broad in his opposition to the appalling, discriminatory bias shown by Oxfordshire County Council’s Transport Plan.

“The Oxfordshire Transport Panel, dominated by the Conservatives’ Yvonne Constance, G.A. Reynolds and Les Sibley (also Council Chairman), have cynically used the current COVID-19 crisis to attempt to force through the adoption of this outrageous Transport Plan.

“The BMF urge all members to be especially vigilant at this time in scrutinising local authorities and other bodies, who may use this crisis to ‘bury news’ concerning similar discriminatory attitudes and moves.

“The BMF’s directors and staff, along with regional members like John Broad, are redoubling our guard - lockdown doesn’t mean that we can all take a holiday. We urge any member who is aware of any local issue to contact the BMF via admin@bmf.co.uk or jim.freeman@bmf.co.uk.”

-- About the BMF --

The British Motorcyclists Federation is one of the largest rider groups in the world.
We educate, advise and protect all motorcyclists, from the beginner to the experienced.

Through specialist lobbyists and a UK-wide network of volunteers, we campaign against the dangers of negligent road maintenance, scrutinise new vehicle technologies and safeguard motorcyclists’ freedom from unnecessary interference by governmental and anti-motorcycling groups at a local, national and European level.

We are the unified voice of motorcyclists throughout the UK.

Contact:

BMF (Enterprises) Ltd, 3 Oswin Road, Brailsford Industrial Estate, Braunstone, Leicester, LE3 1HR
01162 795112 - www.bmf.co.uk