

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE

Date of meeting: 1 June 2009
Report of: Genni Butler, Countryside Access Development Officer (Acting)
Title: Update on the Current Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2006-2011) and an Introduction to the Next (2011-2026)

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress of the current Cheshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2006-2011) and to provide an introduction to the next Cheshire East ROWIP (2011-2026).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 None arising at present, though there will be a cost associated with the publication of the new ROWIP for Cheshire East in 2010/2011.

4.0 Legal Implications

- 4.1 None arising.

5.0 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 None arising.

6.0 Background and Options

- 6.1 Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 requires local authorities to prepare and publish a rights of way improvement plan and to assess and review the plan at intervals of not less than 10 years.
- 6.2 The aim of a ROWIP is to assess:-
- the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public;

- the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the authority's area; and,
- the accessibility of local rights of way to blind and partially sighted persons and others with mobility problems.

6.3 Projects currently being undertaken under the ROWIP include:-

- Nantwich Riverside Loop: development of a circular route under the Weaver Valley Regional Park banner;
- Wilmslow Newgate Landfill Site: creation of new bridleways following requests from users;
- Crewe-Nantwich Connect2: development of a new cycle route in conjunction with Sustrans and Highways;
- Middlewich Vision: improvements in public rights of way and cycling routes between residential areas and places of work under the Weaver Valley Regional Park banner;
- Peckforton Permissive Paths for horse riders: as described in a decision paper to be presented to this Committee.

6.4 It is a statutory requirement that the ROWIP will be fully integrated with the Local Transport Plan (LTP) being developed for the period 2011-2026. The LTP3 will consist of a 15 year strategy comprising five 3 year delivery plans. It is intended that ROWIP and LTP representatives are included within the governance structures of the respective plans.

6.5 Whilst the Council is tasked to publish a ROWIP, there is no legal duty to implement the proposals contained therein. The value of the document is seen in the fact that the ROWIP research, consultation and development encourages new ways of thinking about, and improving, both statutory and permissive rights of way networks and their linkages with green space and where people live. It is anticipated that funding for any projects identified by the ROWIP shall be sourced from the LTP, external funds and other partnerships.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendation

7.1 No decision is required by Members at present.

For further information:

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Background documents:

Cheshire County Council Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2011, available on line at:

http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/countryside/Prow/rowip_final_document.htm

Background documents held at Public Rights of Way Office, Phoenix House, Winsford.