



Meeting **Footpaths and Rights of Way Committee**

date **02 September 2009**

Corporate Director (Communities)

agenda item number

9

REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CENTRAL LINEAR AND LOWER LINEAR MULTI USER ROUTES

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the routes being developed, and the achievements in securing the respective funding packages, for multi-user routes within the County. Reports are to be presented to Cabinet on the 16 September to ratify the funding packages. The report is for noting.

Background and Progress to Date

2. The former Environment Committee approved the establishment of a Strategic Off-Road Cycle Network in May 1999 and a subsequent report, "Further Development of the Strategic Cycle Network" was endorsed at Cabinet (6 December 2006) which provided an update on progress referring to the delivery to 324 km of a proposed 583 km network, (see Plan attached).
3. Since that report and in line with funders' recommendations there has been a shift from providing for cyclists to including provisions for a wider range of users groups, in particular making extra efforts to satisfy the needs of the less-abled. Since that report a further 9.9 km of route has been completed, with the Silverhill Trail officially opened in May 2007 and the Great Northern Railway Path at Nuthall in 2008.
4. In 2008 a funding stream was set up by the then Alliance SSP (Sub Regional Strategic Partnership) for Multi-User Routes which was based on research undertaken on their behalf by the Scott Wilson Consultancy. The approval to offer an expression of interest for this funding stream and to submit a full bid was given by the Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways in July 2008.
The initial bids have been reduced in scale, with both of the original proposed routes now being delivered though a phased approach.

Supporting Background research

5. The delivery of the Multi-User Network has been supported by three bodies of research that have all agreed that the construction of such a network would provide significant economic benefits to the County and would provide links to many of the initiatives in which this Authority is investing. These initiatives include further access developments in and around the Ashfield and Mansfield areas, On-Trent, links to Bestwood Country Park and the future proposals for the Sherwood Forest area following on from the Sherwood Living Legends Big Lottery application.
 - The first research study focused on the developments relating to the Ashfield and Bolsover Trails. This study was fundamental in providing the funding stream to deliver the Silverhill Trail, opened in 2007 (Ashfield Bolsover Regional Trails Market Feasibility Study, October 2004).
 - A second study was commissioned from the University of Central Lancashire, for the Sherwood Forest Living Legends Lottery bid. This developed the concept of providing a series of routes to encourage more sustainable access and to allow circular movement within the Sherwood area (Sherwood Forest Multi User Trails Network Economic Impact Study, March 2007).
 - The most recent research was commissioned through an economic development grant to confirm that the research previously undertaken was still relevant and that there would be significant economic value in completing the development of Strategic Cycle Network. (Nottinghamshire Strategic Cycle Network Economic Impact Study, June 2008)
6. Further to the research undertaken by this Authority and its partners, the Alliance SSP, aware of the economic benefits that could arise from developing a network of multi-user routes, commissioned their own consultants to verify the outcomes of previous research across the Alliance region. (Multi User Leisure Routes Study, Scott-Wilson June 2008). The outcome of that research is the current funding opportunity which will enable the development of further sections of the strategic multi-user network and contribute to County Council initiatives highlighted elsewhere in this report.
7. Based on the above reports the forecast economic benefits to the county of the overall scheme would attract around 128,000 additional walking and cycling trips per year, generating around £2 million of additional spending and creating or safeguarding 57 fte jobs.
8. Funding was originally to be channelled through the Alliance SSP but will now be delivered through the Nottinghamshire Single Programme Funding. A funding stream is available for Phase 1 of the Lower Linear Route which will run to March 2011. However, the funding for Phase 2 of the Central Linear Route is only available until the end of the current financial year.

Central Linear Route

9. Originally this was to be a route running from Harby on the Lincolnshire border to High Marnham then to Tuxford and on to Walesby, with a link back towards Ollerton, before heading to Sherwood Forest and National Cycle Route 6. The routes left the County at Warsop and Creswell, to join with a similar scheme to be delivered by Derbyshire County Council.
10. This proposal has now been phased for delivery, with funding applications for:

The Harby to High Marnham disused railway, (Phase 1), followed by the Sherwood core routes - linking Warsop, Sherwood Forest, and links through to Clumber Park, (Phase 2).
11. Future phases are planned to link to
 - The eastern end of Phase 2 to the Harby-High Marnham Railway (Phase 1) via Walesby and Tuxford.
 - Links to Creswell Craigs and a Derbyshire County Council multi-user project.
 - Walesby to Ollerton and on to Edwinstowe.

Lower Linear Route

12. Originally the proposed scheme ran from Southwell to Farnsfield and onwards to Rainworth. It joins the existing Mansfield Way and Timberland Trail through Mansfield's urban areas to Kings Mill. The route then follows the urban network through Sutton in Ashfield, to join to the Pleasley Trails Network at Skegby.
13. Funding constraints have required a reduced scheme linking the Pleasley Trails network in the West to the Mansfield Way and to Rainworth in the east (**Phase 1**).
14. Future phases are planned to:
 - Refurbish the Southwell Trail,
 - Link Rainworth to Farnsfield.
 - Link Southwell to Newark

Funding

15. With the revised phasing, the funding weighting has been somewhat skewed in Nottinghamshire County Council's favour. The timetable for funding from the Single Programme Fund has compress the delivery time, but has increased the funding ratio.

16. The overall costs of the various components are as follows:-

- Central Linear Route Phase 1 £780,000
- Central Linear Route Phase 2 £672,000
- Lower Linear Route Phase 1 £1,148,000

17. This funding package is for an 18 month project for completion by March 2011. Further reports will be brought to Committee as necessary in respect of future applications for funding to complete the proposed networks.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, crime and disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been described in the text of the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19. It is RECOMMENDED that the Committee note the report.

TIM MALYNN
Corporate Director (Communities)

Legal Services' Comments

This report is for noting only. [MW – 24/08/09]

Comments of the Service Director – Finance

As noted above, Cabinet will be requested to approve any additional funding allocations with respect to the Routes. [MA - 25/08/09]

Background Papers Available for Inspection

Alliance SSP Scott Wilson MUR report 2008.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

Collingham	Cllr V Dobson
Tuxford	Cllr J Hepmsall
Ollerton	Cllr S Smedley
Rufford	Cllr L Ward
East Mansfield	Cllr R Cross, Cllr M Wright
South Mansfield	Cllr T Appleby, Cllr S Garner
West Mansfield	Cllr V Bobo, Cllr J Stendall
Sutton in Ashfield East	Cllr S Carroll
Sutton in Ashfield Central	Cllr M Gent
Sutton in Ashfield North	Cllr J Zadrozny

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PSP.PJ/RH/ROW5
24 August 2009