

<b>Subject:</b>	Cabinet Response to the Findings of the Public Rights of Way Task and Finish Group Report	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Partner Scrutiny Committee	<b>Date:</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2014
<b>Report of:</b>	Senior Planning Manager	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Operational Services and Development Control/Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Forward Plan	General Exception	Special Urgency
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: /No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Stephen Stray	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252420
<b>Email:</b>	stephenstray@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1.	<b>RECOMMENDATION(S)</b>
1.1	That the Partner Scrutiny Committee note the Cabinet's response to the recommendations within the Public Rights of Way Task and Finish Group Report

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 That the Partner Scrutiny Committee consider the Cabinet's response to the recommendations as set out below.

## 3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- **Responsive Value for Money Services:** This priority is about the Council working collaboratively, being a provider, procurer and a commissioner of services that are efficient and that meet the needs of local people.

## 4. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific risks issues to consider arising from this report.

## 5. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

5.1 When developing its work programme for 2013/14, a member of the public suggested that Overview and Scrutiny look at Public Rights of Way in Rossendale and therefore it was agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group.

5.2 The Task and Finish Group work was undertaken between July 2013 and January 2014.

5.3 A questionnaire was produced to be sent out to local groups. A press release was sent out and the survey was publicised on the Council's website and in the local media. Also, a number of walker groups/organisations agreed to include the link to the survey on their website. A total of 349 responses were received. The Task and Finish Group also invited

numerous people with an interest in walking, running, cycling and horse riding to their meetings to identify any issues they may have had.

- 5.4 Lancashire County Council was sent a copy of the task and finish group report and their response to the recommendations is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 5.5 The report of the Task and Finish Group was submitted to Cabinet on 19th March 2014, when they agreed to respond to the recommendations as detailed below. Some of the recommendations were for both Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council and these would be discussed at a future three tier forum.

## 6. **Response to recommendations**

### 6.1 **Recommendation 1 – Rossendale Borough Council**

**That the Council include on their website links to Lancashire County Council Mario Maps, which are easy to use and include lots of information about Public Rights of Way**

Cabinet accept this recommendation and it was noted that some work had already taken place, such as the use of MARIO maps on the Council's website.

### 6.2 **Recommendation 2 – Rossendale Borough Council**

**That due to the results of the survey and the level of concern highlighted about dog mess on public rights of way, the Council should consider the reinstatement of the Dog Warden to alleviate the issue**

At the Cabinet meeting in March 2014, the Leader of the Council noted that issues surrounding the Dog Warden would need to be reviewed, given the current economic position.

### 6.3 **Recommendation 3 – Rossendale Borough Council/Lancashire County Council**

**That more emphasis is placed on encouraging walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders into Rossendale to bring in additional revenue ie spend on food and drink, taking into consideration the plans for the new Rawtenstall Town Centre development.**

This is being carried forward by the Promoting Rossendale Board which has identified specific actions in relation to this. The RTB partnership is also ensuring that the Rawtenstall plans, including those linking the railway to the town centre, take full account of potential of this market.

### 6.4 **Recommendation 4 - Rossendale Borough Council/Lancashire County Council**

**Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council should consider working with other partners to produce and publicise up to date information both in written and digital form on Public Rights of Way. This would particularly relate to long distance routes such as Pennine Bridleway, Rossendale Way, the Irwell Sculpture Trail and National cycle routes.**

This is in progress through the Promoting Rossendale Board and partner organisations such as the Pennine Mountain Bike Association (PMBA) and Profitts.

At a county level marketing Lancashire are progressing a 'Lancashire Cycling' website as a central resource for such information.

**6.5 Recommendation 5 - Rossendale Borough Council/Lancashire County Council Lancashire**

**That Lancashire County Council should work in partnership with Rossendale Borough Council to look at establishing a 'Statement of Interest' from people in the community, involving schools, scout groups and colleges to undertake surveying of local paths.**

Volunteer groups are actively engaged in surveying paths. As an example PMBA has provided mapping to allow the production of nine cross country cycling route maps.

**6.6 Recommendation 6 - Rossendale Borough Council/Lancashire County Council**

**That whilst the Planning Department consult with statutory consultees such as LCC/Ramblers and Peak and Northern Footpaths Society on future developments affecting PROW as well as issuing statutory notices, they should also consider extending this on a voluntary basis to other appropriate walking, running, cycling and horse riding groups where PROW are affected by future developments.**

At the Cabinet meeting in March 2014, it was noted that it was the responsibility of a developer to identify public rights of way with regard to planning applications

Rossendale Cycle Forum has a delegated volunteer who looks at all planning applications and comments of cycle related issues.

**6.7 Recommendation 7 – Rossendale Borough Council/Lancashire County Council**

**Developers should be made aware that developments affecting the setting of a PROW will require public advertisement and stop orders/diversion orders as appropriate.**

Current practice is to advertise all planning applications where the proposal affects a public footpath. Developers are also informed that they would need to apply separately to LCC if any Diversion Orders are required.

**COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

**7. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 Given the pressures of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Members should ensure that any financial implications arising are contained within forecast resources.

**8. MONITORING OFFICER**

8.1 No comments

**9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT**

9.1 No HR implications.

9.2 Consultation has been carried out by Members of the Task and Finish Group and members of the public through a survey.

9.3 It is important that Lancashire County Council use this report and its recommendations to inform future County Council policy and support informed decision making in relation to targeted PROW improvements in Rossendale.

## 10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Cabinet agree that the report was worthwhile and valuable and had attracted a very good response to its open consultation.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Phase 1 Report of the Welfare Reforms Task and Finish Group	Democratic Services Room 213, Futures Park