

Subject:	Rights of way Improvement Plan		
Date of Meeting:	27 November 2018		
Report of:	Executive Director, Economy, Environment & Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Robert Walker	Tel: 01273 294349
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Ward(s) affected:	(All Wards);		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The Committee is being asked to adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Review following public consultation. (Appendix 1: full ROWIP Review document ; Appendix 3: Summary document)
- 1.2 The ROWIP is a strategy document which is a statutory requirement for the council to have.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee note the results of the public consultation and adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 A ROWIP identifies changes that will improve rights of way and access provision for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and those with mobility issues. It is a statutory duty to revise the ROWIP every 10 years.
- 3.2 The ROWIP Review was drafted June to October 2017 in consultation with the Local Access Forum (a statutory board of advisors made up of representatives of rights of way user groups and land managers). An internal consultation was carried out with council departments, as detailed in the ROWIP Review document (Appendix 1). The draft ROWIP Review was taken to Environment Transport & Sustainability (ETS) Committee 23/01/2018 to ask for permission to go the ROWIP to external consultation.
- 3.3 The external consultation ran from February to May 2018 (3 months statutory consultation period) through local newspapers, social media and stakeholder groups. Results of the consultation are contained in Appendix 2.
- 3.4 Minor changes have been made to the original ROWIP Review to reflect the public consultation. Specific changes made to the original document are:

- Add horsebox parking to the new online access map
- Work with bus companies on the new online access map – promoting bus routes and showing bus stops in relation to the network / access land
- Add Mill Lane to list crossing point improvements
- Add action point to 7 .4.1 (covering severance from the National Park) on better partnership working with neighbouring authorities and SDNPA through Rights of Way Accord meetings

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The production of a ROWIP is a statutory duty for the council.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 The Local Access Forum were consulted with for the first draft of the ROWIP Review

5.2 Internal council departments were consulted with on the second draft

5.3 The third draft was taken to external consultation – a full list of the 171 stakeholder groups consulted with are listed in Appendix 2

5.4 140 people responded to the consultation questionnaire (a very similar response rate to WSCC ROWIP consultation)

5.5 87% of respondents agreed with the vision for the ROWIP

5.6 88% agreed with the five main aims of the ROWIP

5.7 Positive support was given by SDNPA, the Biosphere Partnership, Bricycles (Brighton & Hove cycling campaign), Brighton & Hove Living Streets, Brighton MTB (mountain biking).

5.8 Minor amendments have been made to the ROWIP Review as a result of the consultation as the majority of responses were positive and in agreement with aims, objectives and actions outlined.

5.9 Profile of respondents:

- Age range 27-81 years
- Gender 62% male, 27% female, 11% not specified (more detail in Appendix 2)

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 As the ROWIP has now been through the appropriate consultation process and the view of consultees have been incorporated we suggest the ETS committee adopts the ROWIP Review.

- 6.2 The aims of the ROWIP are aspirational but the previous ROWIP provided a mechanism for achieving significant improvements to the rights of way network and access. These are summarised in Chapter 5, page 27 , Appendix 1.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The consultation costs included in the report recommendations were met from existing revenue budgets within CityParks.
- 7.2 The objectives outlined in the ROWIP will be prioritised and implemented depending on when funding is available. Recommended actions will be carried out using existing staff and resources within the CityParks revenue budgets over the length of the plan (up to 2027) where possible. Projects with higher costs will require additional budgets, therefore external funding will be sought such as developer contributions (section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy), lottery funding or central government grants.
- 7.3 Capital expenditure will require further approval from Policy, Resources and Growth committee as part of the Targeted Budget Monitoring process.
- 7.4 The difficult financial climate means securing resourcing for improvements is very challenging. The council needs to pursue an opportunistic approach to improving rights of way, without diverting resources from delivering statutory maintenance work.

Finance Officer Consulted: Gemma Jackson

Date: 26/10/18

Legal Implications:

- 7.5 Under Section 60 of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 local highway authorities are under a duty of prepare and publish a ROWIP by 21 November 2007 and once published to review it at least once every 10 years. Brighton and Hove City Council published its first ROWIP in 2007 and this is the 10 year review of that original ROWIP.
- 7.6 By publishing the 10 year review the Council will be complying with its statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of way Act 2000

Lawyer Consulted: Stephanie Stammers

Date: 25/10/18

Equalities Implications:

- 7.7 It is a statutory obligation under the ROWIP to look at improving rights of way provision for user groups, including those with mobility issues
- 7.8 The first aim of the ROWIP Review is to Improve Accessibility for diverse users in Brighton & Hove, including blind and partially sighted people and those with mobility issues – adhering to principals of ‘least restrictive access’. More details can be found in Appendix 2, Chapter 7.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.9 By improving the rights of way network we are encouraging more sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling.
- 7.10 One of the aims of the ROWIP is to reduce severance to the Downs by improving crossing points over the A27 for users. We anticipate that this will encourage more users to access the Downs by foot or bicycle rather than vehicles.
- 7.11 Where people choose / need to use a vehicle to reach an area of the network we are encouraging use of the bus service. We will achieve this by linking bus information to access maps.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.12 Public Health Implications: a more accessible and improved rights of way network will lead to more physical activity and improved health.
- 7.13 More sustainable travel choices (walking / cycling) can lead to reduction in vehicle use and resultant emissions, improving air quality.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

- 1. Results of Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) Consultation 2018
- 2. Rights of Way Improvement Plan Summary document

Documents in Members' Rooms

- 1. Rights of Way Improvement Plan Review (draft 4)