

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – 29th October 2012
REPORT ON: ADOPTION OF THE OUTDOOR ACCESS STRATEGY 2012-17
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
REPORT NO: 407-2012

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To gain approval for the City Council's formal adoption of the Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-2017.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the committee notes the contents of the Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2012 - 2017 and approves the adoption of the Strategy by the City Council.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Reference is made to Article IV of the Policy and Resources Committee of 15 August 2005 when approval was given for Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2005-2010.
- 4.2 The Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-17 has been prepared to replace the Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2005-2010. The majority of the actions of the previous strategy have been completed. In addition to including some residual actions from the previous plan, the Strategy embraces the agreed Core Path Plan and new aspirations to improve the choices for active travel infrastructure across the city.
- 4.3 The new strategy has been prepared by the strategy steering group with considerable input from Dundee Local Access Forum. Alongside the development of the Strategy a public consultation and Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) have been completed. The comments and output from both the public consultation and SEA have been incorporated into the Strategy.
- 4.4 The new strategy identifies five key aims and headline actions to meet the strategic goals. A more detailed action plan will be developed by the strategy steering group with input from the Local Access Forum, to ensure the strategy objectives are met.
- 4.5 A full copy of the draft Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-2017, SEA and associated documents have been circulated to Group Leaders, Bailies Scott and Borthwick and Councillor Macpherson. A two page executive summary is appended to this report at Appendix 1.
- 4.6 The multi agency Strategy Steering Group will prepare a detailed plan for delivery of the strategy and will report its progress to the Dundee Local Access Forum. Key performance indicators will be maintained through the Strategy Monitoring database.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Director of City Development and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Post consultation draft Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-2017
- 7.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment
- 7.3 Equality Impact Assessment

KEN LAING
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT
October 2012

APPENDIX 1 – Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY OBJECTIVE

The key objective of the Dundee Outdoor Access Strategy 2012-2017 is to direct the provision of outdoor access in Dundee. The strategy explains that outdoor access includes all non-motorised travel (i.e. walking cycling, canoeing, horse-riding etc) and motorised wheelchairs in and around our city. This is often using paths through and linking our parks, woods and countryside, but also the active travel in built up areas between communities, their local facilities and work opportunities.

This is the second Outdoor Access Strategy in Dundee and it updates the original Outdoor Access Strategy 2005 – 2010. The Strategy fits into a hierarchy of plans and strategies in the city, including the Public Open Space Strategy, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and the Local Transport Strategy.

The strategy directs and co-ordinates our progress to ensure delivery of projects across the city. All our citizens will be able to benefit from outdoor access no matter where they are going to and from.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Consultation process

The strategy has been developed through a multi agency steering group and with considerable input from the Dundee Local Access Forum. The strategy has been through the consultation process as required by the Strategic Environment Assessment including statutory consultees and a 6 week public consultation in April 2012.

The Dundee Local Access Forum is a statutory group set up to advise the local authority on issues relating to the management of outdoor access. The group comprises representatives from cycling, walking, horse riding and canoeing groups and community representative groups. The Local Access Forum has played a significant role in the development of the strategy, from the start.

KEY CONTENT

Strategic themes

The strategy is divided into 5 Aims:-

<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Aim 1: Dundee's green spaces, waterways and built environment will create attractive green corridors and recreational spaces for all to enjoy➤ Aim 2: Dundee's citizens will be aware of their access rights and their responsibilities under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and use them appropriately➤ Aim 3: Dundee City Council will uphold its statutory requirements under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 by delivering its duties and using related powers➤ Aim 4: Dundee's Citizens will be more active in their travel and recreation, with improved fitness and mental well-being• Aim 5: Dundee will have paths, cycleways and public spaces of the highest quality, which are accessible, safer, well maintained and fully used by all	<p>Aim 1 recognises that Dundee's attractive outdoor places encourage citizens and visitors to make use of these assets.</p> <p>Aim 2 acknowledges action to encourage all to behave responsibly.</p> <p>Aim 3 confirms the legal responsibilities and the legal authority that the Council is given by the Scottish Government.</p> <p>Aim 4 recognises the potential benefit that outdoor access has on the health of our citizens</p> <p>Aim 5 commits Dundee to maintain and develop its outdoor access infrastructure.</p>
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Key issues and actions

The draft Strategy has identified 26 key issues and associated outline actions. These issues and actions are linked to Dundee's Single Outcome Agreement.

Some of the highlights of the proposed actions include:

- Extend multi use path network, prioritised by the Core Path Plan, taking advantage of any opportunities from major new housing and road development. Complete Core Path 22.
- Improve seating, signage, and paths. Use information from the Core Path Plan, Community Plan consultation and path audits, to prioritise capital projects.
- Audit and maintain the Green Circular and other existing paths.
- Enhance the natural quality and character of Dundee green space. Work in partnership to control invasive non native species, especially Giant Hogweed, along the Dighty Burn. Green Flag quality assessments to extend across identified green spaces.
- Develop link paths to neighbouring authorities and prepare policy for cross-boundary issues.
- Promotion of Scottish Outdoor Access Code. Use media such as website, leaflets, events and others.
- Core Paths kept open and fit for purpose. Plan is kept up to date.
- Dundee Local Access Forum is supported.
- All new retail, major housing, schools and road developments should include cycling and walking provision prior to Planning Permission.
- Promoted and safe walking, cycling and horse riding routes link green spaces, schools, places of work and other facilities with residential areas. Dundee Waterfront development connects easily with cycling and walking routes to City Centre
- Volunteers and Sustrans work with landowners and City Council to maintain and improve path network. All schools to include cycle parking in travel plans. All retail areas to develop cycle parking.
- Travel Planning. Maintain www.dundee-travelinfo.com and www.tactranconnect.com. Support public and private bodies preparing travel plans through Tactran's Travel Know How. Recognition of value of Active Travel will feature in Dundee Local Plan.
- Park and Choose. Investigate locations of Park and Cycle/Ride/Walk schemes at the south, west, north and east of Dundee
- Support volunteers including health walks leaders, path volunteers, local access forum.
- Capitalise on opportunities for promotion such as infrastructure improvement and Cyclathon, cycle tours, bike week, cycle training schemes and mountain bike skills trails.
- Investigate projects to be developed as Heritage Trails such as Dighty Trail and Tay Trail.
- Safe crossing points for all users are required at busy roads and road junctions including Green Circular crossing of Coupar Angus Road and crossing Riverside to the waterfront and Nature Park.
- Provide alternative Green Circular / National Cycle Network route through Dundee Docks, which can be used by currently excluded groups (unaccompanied under 16's, walkers and cyclists without photo ID).
- Liaise with Community Safety Wardens, Police and Environment Development staff to control problems of illegal motor vehicles/craft in open spaces and Tay estuary.

PROGRESS MONITORING

Many of these actions are already underway. Partnerships and funding opportunities in the strategy are highlighted which will help delivery of the projects. The multi agency Strategy Steering Group will prepare a detailed plan for delivery of the strategy and will report its progress annually to the Local Access Forum.