

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Strategy for Horse Riding – Equestrian Access on Pedestrian & Cycle Paths

A review by the Planning, Transportation, Economy & Sustainability (PTES) Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Background

A draft Strategy for Horse Riding was originally prepared by Council officers in January 2004. The main objectives of this Strategy were to:

- Enhance, promote and enlarge the network of routes accessible and safe for horse riders.
- Promote awareness of safety and increase safety skills for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders in their interaction with each other.

In March 2004 widespread consultation was undertaken and copies of the draft Horse Riding Strategy were sent to numerous groups. Comments received in the consultation period revealed a mixed response to the issue of allowing equestrian access on pedestrian/cycle paths. In general, there was support for extending the network available to horses and permitting equestrian access on these paths might be a useful way of achieving this objective. Adverse comments were received about the proposed means of risk assessment and safety concerns, particularly the possible conflict between multiple users and the constraints of the physical nature of the routes. Comments were also made regarding the safety issue of horse excrement on the paths and the risks that this might create for other users.

In early November 2004, the Executive Member for Transportation & Highways, Cllr. Sir Elgar Jenkins was presented with a report '*Strategy for Horse Riding – Equestrian Access on Cycle Paths*' seeking a decision to undertake a 12 month trial of shared access on selected sections of permissive pedestrian / cycle paths. A further batch of comments was received as a result of this paper, providing a wide range of views and concerns about the trial.

As a result of the high level of interest in the matter, the Executive Member deferred making a final decision until the Planning, Transportation, Economy & Sustainability Overview & Scrutiny Panel (PTES O&S) could undertake a review of the matter and provide a report.

The Chair of the PTES O&S Panel, Cllr. Peter Metcalfe has agreed to the review. This document defines the Terms of Reference under which the review will be carried out.

Review Purpose

The purpose of the O&S review is **to investigate and report on the issue of shared access by horse riders to cycle/pedestrian routes.**

The Panel will provide its findings and any recommendations on the matter to the executive member for his consideration in making a final decision. It is important to note that the O&S Panel itself has no powers of decision making, rather it has the

capability to make recommendations which must be considered by the Executive Member.

Objectives

The objectives of this Overview & Scrutiny Review are to:

- Understand the issues relating to multi-use shared access of pedestrian/cycle routes
- Examine current proposals to address the issues.
- Undertake public consultation to inform and widen the debate.
- Publish a report on the Panel's findings and recommendations on the issue and submit it to the Executive Member to inform the decision on the 12 month trial.

Scope

The review will specifically consider whether or not there should be shared multi-user access to pedestrian/cycle routes.

To achieve its objectives, the panel will consider:

- The background to the development of the draft strategy
- Details of the proposed 12 month trial
- Current practice and policies in other neighbouring local authorities
- Reasons for the Executive referral
- Views from organisations with an interest, e.g. representing horse riders, cyclists and walkers
- Comments from the public
- Affects on disabled access provision
- Aspects of public health.

Outputs of this Review

- Notes & papers from an O&S meeting held in public (10 January 2005)
- A short summary report defining the Panel's findings and recommendations to the Executive Member
- Written submissions and correspondence will be collated for reference

Constraints

- For consideration by the executive member, the overview & scrutiny panel is asked to submit its findings as soon as possible. A public review meeting has been set for 10 January 2005.
- The review must be managed within the budget available to the Panel.
- The review will be carried out in accordance with the Bath & North East Somerset Council Overview and Scrutiny project management processes.
- The detailed knowledge of the Transportation & Highways Service is essential in supporting this review. Service contacts are listed in the Project Team (below).

Risks

- The review is being undertaken over a short time frame, which includes the Christmas & New Year holiday periods. Key members of the project team are on holiday during this period.
- The short timescale poses a risk to the quality of the review and may limit the ability to undertake consultation and for consultees to respond.
- The review will require significant participation from Councillors on the Panel who may already have other commitments on their time.

Review Project Team

PTES O&S Panel:	Cllr Peter Metcalfe (chair) Cllr. Ruth Griffiths Cllr. Caroline Roberts Cllr. David Hawkins Cllr. Peter Edwards Cllr. Steve Willcox Cllr. Chris Cray
Transportation & Highways:	Rab Smith, Transportation Planning Team Leader Laura Gosling, Transportation Planner Will Steel, Public Rights of Way Team Leader.
O&S Projects Team:	David Langman, Project Manager Sheila Johnson, Project Officer
Panel Administrator, Democratic Services:	Michaela Newton

Outline Project Plan

Date	Stage
November 2004	Executive referred issue to Overview & Scrutiny
9 December	Private review scoping meeting with Panel Chair
Mid December	Research & Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Witness / contributor selection & briefing • Press / media to publicise review & invite public comment • Set-up Review webpage • Collate information for Panel reading pack
5 January	Private background briefing for the Panel
10 January	Public meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speaking • Contributor presentations / interviews • Panel discussion
To follow (late Jan. / early Feb.)	Panel summary report with recommendations