

CABINET

25TH OCTOBER, 2021

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK HIERARCHY

Purpose:

To consider and comment on the adoption of a Public Right of Way Network Hierarchy to enable a risk based approach to the management and maintenance of the Public Rights of Way Network. The report sets out the detail of the proposed network hierarchy.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To approve the adoption of the Public Rights of Way Network Hierarchy.

Reasons:

The Public Rights of Way Network is extensive. It is over 2,400 kilometres in length and consists of circa 3,176 routes. The report sets out the need to develop a consistent, well-reasoned methodology for the prioritisation of resource allocation for the maintenance, improvement and enforcement of the network. A risk-based methodology is proposed. The methodology will consider factors such as: use and level of access. This will assist the Public Rights of Way Access team to deliver a consistent service within the context of rising demand and the limited resources available.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted

YES Forwarded to E&PP Scrutiny members for consideration - e-mail 8th October 2021

Cabinet Decision Required YES - 25th October 2021

Council Decision Required NO

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr. Hazel Evans, Environment.

Directorate:

Name of Head of Service:
Stephen G. Pilliner

Report Author:
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Designations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CABINET
25TH OCTOBER, 2021

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY NETWORK HIERARCHY

The report requests approval to adopt the recently developed PROW Network Hierarchy.

The Hierarchy will provide a consistent means of prioritising the extensive PROW network to ensure that scarce resources are directed towards the most urgent issues and works through the adoption of a risk-based approach. The network hierarchy will provide an effective framework for prioritising the network. It will be used to prioritise works to include: maintenance, development projects and enforcement.

Adoption of the hierarchy will also assist the service to achieve many of the objectives contained in the Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2019-2029.

Should the authority decide not to adopt the draft hierarchy we would continue to work with an un-categorised, un-prioritised PROW network. This would prevent the effective prioritisation of network management in a well-informed, defensible way which takes account of risk.

This would leave the authority more vulnerable to injury claims. It would also leave the authority unable to justify network management decisions.

The hierarchy approach has been trialled with a successful outcome. Given the success of the trial period in assisting the service to move to a strategic, risk-based management approach, it is recommended that the hierarchy should now be formally adopted by the authority.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: S.G.Pilliner

Head of Transportation and Highways

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NONE	NONE

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The network hierarchy will enable consistent prioritisation of resources. The categories have been defined and populated taking account of maximising equality on the network, assigning value, thus priority of resource to those routes that provide multiuser or enhanced access opportunities.

2. Legal

The network hierarchy will be the approved method of prioritising the PROW network. A clearly prioritised network which takes account of risk and value provides a means of defending management decisions in the event of any form of legal challenge or claim against the authority such as an injury claim or service of Notice on the authority.

3. Finance

The network hierarchy will enable the Countryside Access team to target resources in a more strategic and risk-based way. Allocated budgets will be prioritised in accordance with the categories contained in the network hierarchy.

4. ICT

The categories of PROW as determined by the hierarchy need to be embedded in the Countryside Access Management System (CAMS) and be kept continually up to date in accordance with any revised categorisation of individual paths or groups of paths.

CAMS is the day-to-day PROW management tool for the Countryside Access team so ensuring each PROW is categorised with a visual trigger on the system means the principles of the hierarchy will consistently taken into account when issues are reported and projects are planned.

5. Risk Management Issues

Risk Management is the central principle of the draft hierarchy. It will be used to rank PROWs and associated assets with a risk-based scoring which will then direct our use of resources.

6. Physical Assets

The network hierarchy has been drafted to help prioritise and efficiently maintain PROW assets within available resources. The hierarchy will ensure that the highest priority sections of the network and associated assets are targeted for investment subject to the risk score awarded.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: S.G.Pilliner

Head of Transportation and Highways

1. Scrutiny Committee

A copy of this report was circulated to Environmental and Public Protection Scrutiny Committee members for comment on 8th October 2021

2.Local Member(s) - Not applicable.

3.Community / Town Council - Not applicable

4.Relevant Partners

The Carmarthenshire Local Access Forum (LAF) has been consulted. Positive comments were received from the LAF Chair.

Concerns over the position of multi-user routes within the draft hierarchy by the Deputy Chair. All concerns were addressed through an exchange of correspondence, nothing further has been received in this regard.

5.Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Not applicable.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Carmarthenshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2019-2019	ROWIP 2019-2029	https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1222043/rowip-english.pdf https://www.sirgar.llyw.cymru/media/1222044/rowip-welsh.pdf