

REPORT TO: GREENER STRATEGIC GROUP 15TH APRIL 2010

SUBJECT: MORAY'S CORE PATH PLAN

BY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MANAGER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 The reason for the report is to provide the Group with information on why the Improvement, Promotion and Management of Moray's Core Path network Key Action milestones will not be fully met by Quarter 4.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 **The Group note the reasons for the delays in fully completing the Key Action and agree that revised milestones be included in the 2010/11 SOA Action Plan to reflect the realistic timescale for getting Scottish Government approval of the Core Paths Plan.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Community Planning Board, at their meeting on 4th March 2010, agreed that a detailed report be submitted to the Greener Theme Group on areas not progressing and are unlikely to be completed in Quarter 4.

3.2 The Board also requested that the report comment on reasons for lack of progress, blockages preventing progress, actions to be taken and risks associated with delay.

3.3 As the Group will be aware, the Key Action relating to Core Paths has five milestones. Three of these are complete, but two milestones have made no progress, these being as follows:

- Initiate preparation of a Development Programme for Moray's Core Paths (Target Quarter 2)
- Report on the progress made on Moray's Core Paths Management Programme (Target Quarter 3)

4. DETAILS OF MISSED MILESTONE

4.1 Reasons for Lack of Progress

4.1.1 The preparation of a Development Programme for Moray's Core Paths has been deferred due to the limited available staff resources being fully committed to achieving the priority of securing an adopted Core Paths Plan. This includes the protracted process of preparing comprehensive statements in response to sixteen outstanding objections, to be submitted along with Finalised Version of the Core Paths Plan to the Scottish Government. The Development Programme is also a lesser priority at present due to the lack to available budgetary resources from within the Council particularly as developing the Core Paths network is not a statutory duty.

- 4.1.2 The Report on progress made on Moray's Core Paths Management Plan has been deferred until IT resources and a pilot project have been developed. This work is now progressing.

4.2 Blockages which Prevented Progress

- 4.2.1 This primarily relates to the need to prioritise workloads taking account of limited availability of staff and lack of financial resources.

4.3 Proposed Actions to Address Performance

- 4.3.1 A development programme will be prepared as an action at a later date once the Core Paths Plan has been adopted and once there is a more definite position on the availability of financial resources.

4.4 Risks Due to Delay in Progress

- 4.4.1 Risks are minimal as resources are being prioritised to areas of greatest need. The two missed milestones are now identified to be of low priority given the current limited staff availability and lack of finance.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) COMMUNITY PLAN/THEME PLANS/ PARTNER PLAN

The report identifies the detail of why the Core Path Plan Greener Outcomes in the SOA (2009-10) will not be fully completed.

(b) POLICY AND LEGAL

There is a requirement to report performance to the Group to ensure accuracy in reporting to the Community Planning Board and Scottish Government on delivery against the SOA.

(c) RESOURCES (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, RISKS)

Minimal resources are available to deal with the workload associated with publishing the Core Paths Plan.

(d) CONSULTATIONS

None.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Due to limited resources, no major works can be carried out on Core Path Development or Management Plans until the Core Path Plan has been adopted. The date for adoption is now estimated as December 2010, as there is likely to be a Public Inquiry due to ourstanding objections.

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Background Papers: None
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