

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 20 SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

MATCH FUNDING FOR WIRRAL WAY (PHASE TWO) – THURSTASTON TOWARDS HESWALL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report asks Cabinet to agree to allocate £25,000 of match funding for the continuation of The Wirral Way Restoration Plan Phase two -Thurstaston towards Heswall.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The project is to undertake phase two of the restoration of the Wirral Way. The phase one project from West Kirby to the visitor centre at Thursaston was delivered in 2005 and was jointly funded by Mersey Waterfront and Wirral MBC (LTP).
- 2.2 Currently the Wirral Way from Thursaston to Gayton (the Wirral Boundary) has a poor quality surface unsuitable for existing users and the mobility impaired with overgrown areas and flooding making passage difficult.

3.0 THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The total project cost is £180,000. The project is to re-surface the Wirral Way from Thursaston towards Heswall with an unbound surface and provide cycle footpath and bridleway improvements. This will benefit cyclists in particular as it provides a key section of the Council's comprehensive cycle network due for completion by 2012.
- 3.2 The project will benefit other users of the Wirral Way and allow wider access to the Country Park to a greater number of people such as those with mobility difficulties by providing a surface and easy access for wheelchairs and mobility scooters.
- 3.3 The phase two project provides the continuation of a sustainable transport link to Chester, Ellesmere Port, The Flintshire Business Park and beyond and will also make a significant contribution towards completing the Wirral section of the North West coastal trail, a proposed strategic route linking Chester to Carlisle via Liverpool and other key coastal locations.
- 3.4 This phase of the development of Wirral Country Park is part of a Wirral MBC long-term strategic plan that includes the completion of the Wirral Way improvements and new visitor facilities currently being progressed through the Heritage Lottery Fund Parks for People programme.

4.0 PROJECT FUNDING

- 4.1 An Application was made to Government Office under the Merseyside Objective One Programme in October 2006 and a formal offer of £90,000 50% of the project total was received on the 16th January 2007. This left the council to find the remaining 50% (£90,000) match.
- 4.2 An application was made to the Local Transport Plan to fund part of this match and £45,000 was approved within the transport capital programme in June 2007. The Parks and Countryside section has secured £20,000 from a Section 106 agreement allocated to the Wirral Way. This leaves a shortfall of £25,000
- 4.3 Without the £25,000 requested the project will undoubtedly not go ahead as all other funding avenues have been unsuccessful and the grants secured of £160,000 will be lost
- 4.4 **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION SUMMARY**

Contribution	Project Costs £ 180,000	Secured?	
ERDF / Mersey Waterfront	90,000	Yes	
Local Transport Plan	45,000	Yes	
Parks and Countryside 106 agreement	20,000	Yes	
Shortfall Requested	25,000	No	

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is proposed that the sum of £25,000 is found from the Council's Capital Matching Fund Reserve the budget is sufficient to meet this need. The Council's total contribution of £25,000 will attract ERDF of £90,000 and result in a total cash sum of £180,000 to fund the project.
- 5.2 The Council's contribution of £25,000 will secure ERDF of £90,000, LTP £45,000 and Section 106 agreement £20,000 and result in a total cash sum of £180,000. Without support from the match funding budget the grants attracted will be withdrawn and the project will not take place

6.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The design and supervision work will be undertaken by Parks and Countryside staff.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are none arising from this report. The restoration of the Wirral Way however will improve access for all members of the community.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none arising from this report.

9.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Wirral Way restoration will be designed to meet Sustrans standard specification and use a recycled material. Any timbers used will be from sustainable sources. The Improved surface will encourage walking and cycling and provide a sustainable alternative to the motorcar.

9.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none arising from this report.

10.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Wirral Country Park and The Wirral Way are free facilities.

11.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The project will make the Wirral Way accessible to all.

12.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Wirral Country Park is in the West Kirby Thurstaston and Heswall wards. It does however attract large numbers of visitors from across the borough and further a field.

14.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

14.1 None have been used in preparation of this report.

15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That £25,000 of match funding be allocated for the continuation of The Wirral Way Restoration Plan (Phase two -Thurstaston towards Heswall) from the Council's Capital Matching Fund Reserve.

ALAN STENNARD
DIRECTOR

This report was prepared by Mike Garbutt Parks and Countryside Service who can be contacted on 666 4726.