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1. Introduction

This document sets out Nottinghamshire County Council's strategy for all powered two-wheel vehicles, including mopeds, motorcycles and scooters for the county of Nottinghamshire during the period 2006/07-2010/11, and complements the information contained in the Greater Nottingham and North Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plans 2006/07-2010/11. For the purpose of this strategy the term motorcycles includes mopeds, motorcycles and scooters, and motorcycling refers to the use of all such machines.

2. Wider context

2.1 National policy links

Government's White Paper on Transport, 'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone', states that, motorcycles can provide an alternative means of transport to the car for many trips, especially where public transport is limited and walking unrealistic. It considered that, particularly in rural areas, motorcycles provided an affordable alternative to the car, bringing benefits to the individual and widening employment opportunities. It stated, however, that benefits for the environment and congestion depended on: the purpose of the journey; the size of the machine; and the type of transport the rider switched from.

Government's 'Transport Ten Year Plan' also recognised that motorcycles have a part to play in delivering integrated transport and acknowledged their advantages over cars in terms of affordability.

2.3 Regional policy links

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8) and the Regional Transport Strategy within it were developed in line with Government policy. The policy within the Regional Transport Strategy detailed six regional transport objectives. Although not mentioned specifically, motorcycling has a role to play in delivering four of the objectives, namely:

- to promote accessibility and overcome peripherality in rural areas
- to support the region's regeneration priorities
- to improve safety and reduce congestion
- to promote opportunities for modal shift away from the private car and road based freight transport.

2.3 Consistency with local policy

2.3.1 Community Strategy

Motorcycling has a role to play in each of the aims of the County Council's Community Strategy 'All Together Better' 2005-2009 but particularly the objectives aiming to make Nottinghamshire:

- **safer and stronger**; making Nottinghamshire safer, building a sense of community and enriching lives through reducing the number of motorcycle casualties
- **healthier**; improving health and wellbeing through reducing the number of motorcycle casualties
- **cleaner and greener**; protecting and improving the environment through promoting lower emission vehicles and sensible riding behaviour
- **travel and access**; travelling easily and safely and being able to access all the services people need.

2.3.3 Joint Structure Plan

The Joint Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Structure Plan was adopted in 2006, and is expected to be part of the statutory development plan for a period of up to 3 years. Although not mentioned specifically, motorcycling has a role to play in delivering four of the objectives detailed within the Plan, namely:

- to further **social inclusion** through the regeneration of disadvantaged areas by ensuring that all members of the community have improved access to a wide range of employment, housing, services, education, training, cultural and leisure opportunities
- to promote **health and social well being** through the provision of sufficient suitable good quality housing, designing safer and more attractive environments and improving accessibility to leisure and recreation facilities
- to further **integrate land use and transport** so that the need to travel is reduced while accessibility to employment, homes, services, facilities and other resources is improved by enhanced sustainable transport choices
- to **protect the environment** of the Plan area by avoiding significant harm and securing appropriate mitigation with particular regard to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

The emerging local development frameworks, prepared by district planning authorities will also be developed to support integrated transport objectives.

2.3.3 Local Transport Plans

Motorcycling also helps to meet the seven transport objectives determined nationally and locally detailed within the second local transport plans, namely:

- improved **accessibility** (national objective)
- improved **air quality** (national objective)
- reduced **congestion** (national objective)
- **safer roads** (national objective)
- improved **quality of life** (local objective)
- **regeneration** (local objective)
- **making best use** of the existing highway infrastructure (local objective).

Motorcycling was included within the local transport plans as part of the vulnerable road user strategy. The contribution that motorcycles can make to achieving each of these objectives are detailed within this strategy.

2.4 **Aims of the motorcycle strategy**

To help ensure that the strategy helps to meet the national, regional and local transport objectives this strategy has four key aims:

1. Make motorcycling in Nottinghamshire safer and more convenient
2. Consider motorcycles fully alongside all other modes when developing transport strategy and policy
3. Help ensure that motorcycling, as a choice of travel, can play a role within a safe and sustainable transport system
4. Promote motorcycling as a sustainable means of transport.

To help achieve the aims of the strategy an action plan has been developed detailing the core activities required to help deliver the strategy (see Appendix A), and the action plan will be updated as necessary throughout the life cycle of this strategy.

3. **Background**

It is recognised that motorcycling can offer an affordable alternative to the car, providing independence and mobility, and therefore widening employment opportunities, especially where public transport is limited. Powered two-wheel vehicles can also provide quicker travel for riders in congested traffic conditions. Motorcycles can also compare favourably to other classes of powered vehicles on most environmental parameters. Motorcycle

riders are, however, one of the most vulnerable road users and numbers of casualties are not decreasing as greatly as those for all other forms of transport.

3.1 Ownership

Following decreases in the late 80s and early 90s, the number of licensed motorcycles, scooters and mopeds in Nottinghamshire increased by 73% between 1998 and 2005.

Nationally, the boom in licensed motorcycles was initially due to larger machines over 500cc. The number of mopeds and motorcycles equal or less than 125cc (which includes the scooters popular among younger riders) has also steadily increased since the mid 90s. And the number of these smaller machines which are newly registered each year is now greater than the number of newly registered machines which are 500cc and above.

3.2 Road traffic

Between 1998 and 2005 motorcycle traffic increased in Great Britain by 32%. The Compendium of Motorcycle Statistics stated that motorcycle traffic is generally higher in the summer months and lowest in winter, and that in 2004 it peaked in May. It also stated that motorcycles with larger engines travelled further, on average, than motorcycles with smaller engines.

3.3 Casualties

Casualty figures show that motorcycle riders and passengers account for a disproportionately high number of casualties relative to their share of road traffic.

In 2000 Government published their road safety strategy 'Tomorrow's roads: safer for everyone'. The strategy was developed to help meet Government's intention to reduce road casualties involving all road user types in the UK. National targets, which were adopted by the County Council, are:

- 40% reduction in killed or seriously injured road casualties from 1994-98 average by 2010
- 50% reduction in killed or seriously injured child road casualties from 1994-98 average by 2010
- 10% reduction in slight road casualties from 1994-98 average by 2010 per 100m vkm travelled.

A review of Government's road safety strategy in 2003 highlighted that, despite the inclusion of motorcycles within the strategy, the number of casualties in the UK involving riders and passengers of motorcycles had increased.

Nottinghamshire County Council's road safety strategy to address all casualties in the county is detailed within the Cross-Service Road Safety Plan 2003-2010.

Within the second local transport plans casualties involving motorcycles are identified as a particular road safety problem that needs to be addressed in order to meet the national targets. Therefore a local target to reduce motorcycle casualties in Nottinghamshire by 20% from 2002-2004 average by 2010 has been included within the Plan.

Similarly, casualties on rural (non built-up) roads have been identified as a particular road safety problem and an associated local target has been set for these within the second local transport plan. Analysis of motorcycle casualties shows that a large proportion of them occur on non built-up roads and therefore the need to reduce powered two-wheel vehicle casualties on rural roads is necessary in meeting this target as well.

3.3.1 Fatal or seriously injured casualties

Motorcycle riders and passengers are much more likely to be involved in an accident resulting in fatal or serious injuries than a car driver. The Compendium of Motorcycling Statistics states that

“Motorcyclists are at a much greater risk of death or serious injury than other road users. The relative risk of a motorcycle rider being killed or seriously injured per kilometre was 46 times higher in 2004 than for car drivers.”

The number of fatal and seriously injured casualties involving motorcycle riders and passengers in Nottinghamshire rose significantly between its low point in 1996 and 2003 (39% increase). The number of fatal and serious casualties has, however, decreased in both 2004 and 2005. In 2005 the number of fatal and seriously injured motorcycle casualties in Nottinghamshire had decreased by 5% when compared to the 1994-98 average. This decrease needs to be viewed in context, however, as during the same period the numbers of other road users reduced by much greater numbers as can be seen in table 1 below.

Table: 1 Percentage reduction in fatal and seriously injured casualties between 2005 and the 1994-98 average (provisional figures as of 02.03.06)

Type of road user	Percentage increase/reduction
Motorcycle riders/passengers	5% reduction
Car drivers/passengers	30% reduction
Pedal cycle riders/passengers	43% reduction
Pedestrians	34% reduction

3.3.2 Slightly injured casualties

Prior to 1997 Nottinghamshire had seen a steady decline in the number of slight casualties involving motorcycle riders and passengers. Unfortunately this trend has reversed since 1997 and, with the exception of 2003 which saw a small decrease from the previous year, there have been year on year increases in the numbers of slight casualties.

In 2005 the number of slightly injured motorcycle casualties in Nottinghamshire had increased by 41% when compared to the 1994-98 average. This increase should also be viewed in context however as during the same period the numbers of slight casualties involving other road users reduced, as can be seen in table 2 below.

Table: 2 Percentage increase/reduction in slightly injured casualties between 2005 and the 1994-98 average (provisional figures as of 02.03.06)

Type of road user	Percentage increase/reduction
Motorcycle riders/passengers	41% increase
Car drivers/passengers	5% reduction
Pedal cycle riders/passengers	26% reduction
Pedestrians	23% reduction

3.4 Training

In 1982 a two-part test was introduced for riders in order to qualify for a full licence. Part one was an off-road test which had to be passed to qualify for a part two test. The provisional licence awarded after part one was limited to two years, and a rider was banned for one year if the part two test was not passed during the two year period.

Compulsory Basic Training for motorcyclists was introduced in 1990 to help reduce the high numbers of accidents involving inexperienced motorcyclists. It replaced the part one test which was phased out. Compulsory Basic Training must be completed satisfactorily if riders are to ride on public roads prior to taking their practical test.

An additional theory test for drivers and riders was introduced in 1996, although this requirement is waived if the candidate already holds a full licence for any category A vehicle, or has passed a moped test since 1 July 1996. A theory test pass is also only valid for two years and the practical test must be passed during this period or the candidate is required to take another theory test.

Statutory requirements limit the capacity and power output of motorcycles used when preparing for the practical test, which is dependent upon the age of rider and type of provisional licence held.

3.5 Delivery mechanisms

Consideration for funding of schemes will be made alongside all other local transport plan integrated transport measures. Such schemes are prioritised to ensure that they help deliver the strategies and targets detailed within the local transport plans. Funding will also be considered, where appropriate, through developer contributions for transport improvements as part of new developments. Funding is also available for businesses through the workplace travel plan grant scheme TransACT in partnership with Nottingham City Council and business groups. The scheme provides advice, guidance and funding to companies working to reduce sole car journeys, both in the course of work and for the actual journeys to work. The TransACT scheme provides funding and training for businesses to produce a site specific travel plan and funds measures for implementation, providing on-site infrastructure such as changing and storage facilities.

It should also be noted that the County Council cannot deliver the desired aims of this strategy alone and others also have a key role to play, particularly:

- Government passing effective legislation on motorcycling issues such as those relating to vehicle design, emissions, and training standards
- Emergency services on matters such as enforcement and education
- Driving Standards Agency on matters such as rider and driver training
- Other local authorities in developing regional education (such as the Shiny Side Up and Bare Bones partnerships) and engineering (such as the County Surveyors Society and Best Value Groups) solutions to motorcycling problems
- District councils on matters such as noise nuisance, as well as the effective application of land-use guidance such as planning policy.

And most importantly every motorcyclist and other road user have a major role to play.

4. Accessibility

Through the accessibility planning procedures, the County Council has investigated access to Government's four key destinations - education & training, employment, food & essential services and health. The County Council and its partners also decided to consider access to leisure and cultural destinations as part of this process.

The County Council will continue to consider and where appropriate encourage solutions involving motorcycles (such as the 'Wheels to Work' scheme) to improve accessibility.

The Nottinghamshire 'Wheels to Work' scheme provides an innovative solution to transport barriers. This moped leasing scheme is aimed at helping young people and the long-term unemployed in rural areas, where lack of transport can be a particularly major barrier. The scheme helps clients access training, employment and/or educational opportunities, where a lack of suitable public or private transport would have previously excluded them. It has been operating successfully in Nottinghamshire since its launch in March 2002 and has helped over 140 clients during this time.

5. Air quality

Government's Motorcycle Strategy details the general air quality impacts of motorcycling. The strategy states that motorcycle's relative environmental performance has not matched the dramatic improvements achieved for passenger cars in recent years.

More stringent emission standards for new motorcycles, set by the European Community, are to be introduced from 2006/07, and these are expected to bring the emissions performance of individual models closer to those of current cars, and better with respect to oxides of nitrogen (NO_x).

Additional emissions reductions introduced for new cars and other vehicles in 2005/06 should reduce their nitrogen (NO_x) and other emissions further. This means that the relative contribution of motorcycles to the emission of these pollutants will increase and, especially for mopeds, the relative emissions of hydrocarbons (HC) could increase substantially.

Motorcycles have a clear advantage over cars in terms of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and, the smaller machines (e.g. engine capacity less than 400 cm³) that dominate the urban/commuter sector, tend to have CO₂ emissions per kilometre travelled of less than half of those of the average car due to their far greater fuel economy. However, larger motorcycles can emit more CO₂ than some cars kilometre by kilometre because they offer far poorer fuel economy.

Whilst on average the emissions performance of motorcycles compares favourably with that of cars the levels are greatly dependent on the pollutant under consideration, the type of motorcycle and the way it is ridden. The County Council will therefore continue to monitor research on emissions performance of motorcycles. Dependent upon the findings of such research the County Council will promote sensible riding and the use of lower emissions vehicles.

6. Congestion

It is claimed that with their efficient use of road space, motorcycles can also make a positive contribution towards easing congestion. Research undertaken by Halcrow in 2001 showed that the contribution motorcycles can make towards reducing congestion is a complex issue. For example, if a single occupant car switched to a motorcycle there

would be congestion benefits, as it ought to increase network capacity. A switch from public transport to motorcycling would, however, add to the vehicles on the road and therefore add to congestion.

The research also found that in urban areas, where there is often larger numbers of motorcyclists and better public transport (especially in peak hours when congestion is more prevalent), switching from single occupancy cars to public transport could have a more significant impact on addressing congestion whilst promoting accessibility.

The 'Smarter Choices' programme aims to encourage people to make more sustainable transport choices. Therefore secure motorcycle parking and equipment storage is considered as part of workplace travel plans where there is a lack of public transport. Road safety literature will also be available through workplace travel plans to those who choose to ride to work.

Traffic management improvements will be undertaken where possible and targeted engineering improvement measures will be made to make the network more efficient. The County Council will work to ensure that transport supports economic progress by providing the infrastructure to move people and goods efficiently. The five-year programme of schemes will include a balanced mix of demand-side solutions, such as travel plans, land use planning and civil parking enforcement (detailed within section 8 of this strategy), as well as supply-side solutions, such as intelligent transport systems and improved public transport, cycling and walking facilities. Such schemes are subject to a safety audit where the needs of motorcycles are considered alongside all other road users.

7. Safer roads

Detailed evaluation of motorcycle casualty data in Nottinghamshire identified that accidents primarily involved:

- aged 35+, predominantly male, 'leisure' riders on large capacity vehicles at weekends during summer months on non built-up roads
- younger, both male and female, 'commuter' riders on smaller capacity vehicles on weekdays throughout the year on built-up roads.

7.1 Manoeuvres

The predominant manoeuvres carried out prior to accidents occurring were:

- going ahead (including losing control as well as not being seen by other road users)
- losing control on a bend (which occurs more often on non built-up roads)
- overtaking/filtering (which occurs more often on built-up roads).

Evaluation also identified speed as a major contributory factor in motorcycle accidents in Nottinghamshire. Speed was a contributory factor in more accidents in Nottinghamshire than the average for Great Britain.

7.2 Size of motorcycle

The majority of fatal or seriously injured casualties involved riders of larger motorcycles, although the numbers involving smaller motorcycles is increasing. The majority of slightly injured casualties involve smaller motorcycles and the numbers are increasing. The increasing number of casualties involving smaller machines reflects the increasing number of licensed smaller machines.

7.3 Education, enforcement and engineering measures to improve safety

Analysis of accident causation involving motorcycles is undertaken to identify key trends and inform education, training and publicity campaigns as well as traffic management solutions.

Casualty reduction programmes of work in Nottinghamshire are devised to address all of the identified casualty causes/problems. Education, training and publicity of all road users, as well as engineering and enforcement, are detailed within the County Council's Cross Service Road Safety Strategy.

A reactive and proactive programme of education, training and publicity, devised individually and in partnership with other organisations, focusing on identified dangerous situations and behaviours, will be delivered to educate all road users. In addition to a high standard test for both riders and drivers, post-test training (aimed specifically at newly qualified riders, riders returning to riding after a break and those upgrading their motorcycles) will be supported and promoted. The County Council also support local motorcycle enforcement strategies, as an integral part of police programmes.

8. Making best use of existing infrastructure

The highway network is a key community asset and is central to the integrated movement strategies contributing to the delivery of wider economic, social and environmental objectives. These principles are incorporated into a network management regime with the following core objectives: network safety; network serviceability; and network sustainability.

Some of the key issues in making the best use of existing assets are asset management; road hierarchy; parking controls and the opportunity to reduce trip lengths through development control functions and the powers and duties inherent in the Council's network management duty. These are particularly relevant in how they can add value to the other local transport plan policies by concentrating on making better use of existing highways rather than relying on increased provision.

8.1 Maintenance

Motorcycle needs in relation to the maintenance of roads are considered as part of the transport asset management plan and will be advised by the Code of Practice on Maintenance Management. Routine maintenance inspections are carried out regularly to include the outside edges of roads to ensure they are kept clear of debris.

The County Council has 24 hour emergency reporting systems and procedures in place to ensure that obstacles, such as mud, oil or slurry (which can be more problematic for motorcycles) are promptly and effectively removed.

8.2 Parking

Adequate motorcycle parking provision will be considered as part of the County Council's parking strategy as well as within any integrated parking facilities that are provided. Motorcycle parking provision will be a consideration within civil parking enforcement and transport asset management planning. Local planning authorities are encouraged to consider the needs of motorcycles in land-use planning through for example, appropriate parking provision at new developments.

8.3 Bus lanes

An increasing number of authorities are allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes, allowing riders to share the facility with buses, with several authorities investigating the potential for allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes.

Experiments into allowing motorcycles in bus lanes and their contribution to casualty reduction in London were inconclusive. The Department for Transport advice included within 'Keeping Buses Moving', recommended against motorcycles normally being allowed into bus lanes. Department for Transport has reviewed this advice and has recently published Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/07 'The Use of Bus Lanes by Motorcycles', issued in February 2007. The Traffic Advisory Leaflet 2/07 encourages a more objective assessment to be made on each individual bus lane and the County Council will review its policy in the light of this new guidance.

As there are only approximately 7.5km of bus lanes within the county it is not felt that this would have a major impact on improving road safety or journey times for motorcyclists.

Allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes may also be detrimental as it may cause confusion to drivers of other vehicles who may incorrectly think that they can also drive in bus lanes. This would then increase the number of cars that violate bus lanes. The police are unable to give high priority to the enforcement of bus lanes. If, however, civil parking enforcement is introduced within Nottinghamshire as planned, and if in future this includes the enforcement of moving traffic violations, a review of this situation could be undertaken.

Trials on the impacts of allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes carried out by other authorities and Department for Transport will be monitored and policy relating to the use of such facilities by motorcycles will be reviewed in light of the findings. Any review of this policy will involve consultation with neighbouring authorities where bus lanes extend across administrative boundaries.

8.4 Advanced cycle stop lines

Advanced cycle stop lines are installed in Nottinghamshire at signal junctions to allow cyclists to wait in a marked box ahead of queuing traffic to enable them to wait and set-off more safely. An increasing number of authorities are allowing motorcycles to use advanced cycle stop lines.

No trends in motorcycle casualties occurring when motorcycles are setting off at signal junctions have been identified. Allowing motorcycles to use this facilitate may, however, promote overtaking and filtering which has been identified as a major motorcycle casualty causation factor. It is therefore considered that it is not appropriate to allow motorcycles to use advanced cycle stop lines.

Trials on the impacts of allowing motorcycles to use advanced cycle stop lines carried out by other authorities and Department for Transport will be monitored and policy relating to the use of such facilities by motorcycles will be reviewed in light of the findings.

8.5 Safety barriers

Research in Australia in 2000 argued that falling riders are likely to be at risk of added injury from unprotected barrier support posts. Consequently IHIE Guidelines for Motorcycling issued in 2005 state that it may be appropriate to retrofit secondary measures to protect riders from hitting posts or from going underneath barriers. Whilst analysis shows that such accidents are not common within Nottinghamshire, the County Council is currently reviewing its policy on safety barrier usage and this will include the

review of existing barrier provision, as well as standards to be adopted for newly installed barriers.

9. Quality of life

9.1 Partnership approach

A motorcycle forum is held quarterly at different locations around the county to gather views from motorcyclists to help form strategies, policies and work programmes on how to make motorcycling safer and more convenient.

The County Council has developed a very successful model for establishing the wider needs of the community and the capability to deliver those needs. This involves carrying out local accessibility and transport studies in district centres in the county, where the needs of all road users are considered. These studies culminate in the development of an agreed action plan for the community and where appropriate this will include actions to improve motorcycling facilities and safety.

The County Council also undertake ad hoc surveys as necessary to help develop programmes of work such as the survey of attitudes and behaviour of sports bike riders undertaken in 2003 by the Shiny Side Up Partnership.

9.2 Health

Transport helps contribute towards developing healthy communities and addressing health inequalities, and can therefore help improve both quality of life and life expectancy. The obvious links between transport and health include the fact that around 3,200 people are killed in addition to 31,000 seriously injured each year on UK roads, and traffic levels are one of the predominant factors in contributing towards exceedences of national air quality standards. A 2005 study by the European Commission calculated that poor air quality is thought to result in over 32,000 premature deaths in the UK alone each year.

A Health Development Agency report in 2005 reported that ensuring people have easy access to health facilities and services, leisure facilities, employment, education and healthy food provision can all contribute to preventing ill health. The Government White Paper, 'Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier' also states that improved access and individual lifestyle choices will result in healthier communities.

It is therefore considered that motorcycling has the potential to help improve health through:

- improving road safety through reduced motorcycle casualties
- improving air quality through improved emissions
- increasing accessibility.

Each of these themes is considered both within the relevant sections of this strategy and within the associated Motorcycling Action Plan.

9.3 Community and personal safety

The Compendium of Motorcycle Statistics states that in 2003, 37 motorcycles were stolen for every thousand licensed. It also states that motorcycles are subject to greater levels of theft than cars, possibly due to the fact that, on average, they are easier to steal. A study initiated by the Home Office examining how the risk of theft varies according to type of motorcycle identified that the risk of theft is much higher for mopeds and small-engine bikes than for larger-engine bikes.

A number of agencies across Nottinghamshire work in partnership to reduce crime, improve personal safety and help improve the quality of life for people who live, visit and work in the area.

Crime safety partnerships or crime and disorder partnerships have been established in each district of the county. A Community Strategy Action Plan 2006-2008 has been developed for the county and includes actions relating directly and indirectly to motorcycling.

The County Council works in close partnership with the police to try and ensure effective traffic enforcement of all vehicles. Enforcement of static and moving traffic violations will, however, be considered in due course as part of the County Council's developing civil parking enforcement strategy (which is detailed in section 7 of this strategy).

9.4 Noise

The County Council will consider the implementation of Government's noise strategy when it has been defined. Wherever possible, particularly as part of major transport projects and planned structural maintenance, 'quieter' surfacing materials and techniques are used to minimise and reduce noise. Planning policies also seek to protect occupants in noise sensitive developments from traffic noise, by design or insulation, to achieve recommended internal noise standards.

Increasing standards have reduced noise levels from new motorcycles and modern machines emit much lower levels of noise than older models. Despite these achievements localised nuisance problems can occur caused by some riders failing to maintain their motorcycles properly, or illegally using machines fitted with after market 'Not For Road Use' exhaust systems or silencers. A relatively small number of such illegal machines can create a perception of motorcycles in general being very noisy.

Addressing anti-social behaviour is an action within the County Council's Community Strategy (detailed in section 8.3 of this strategy). Although enforcement can be difficult in addressing noise problems, the best results in dealing with noise nuisance are achieved when the police and district councils work in tandem to address specific local problems.

Where appropriate the County Council will support other ways to address this issue, such as the Advisory Group on Motorcycling recommended campaign led by the motorcycle industry, retailers and rider user groups to 'win the hearts and minds' of riders to keep their machines to road legal specification.

9.5 Use on public rights of way in the countryside

In 2006 the County Council produced a policy on 'motorised vehicle use on public rights of way in the countryside'. The policy statement clarifies the Council's position on positively managing motor vehicles on public rights of way. Further information is also included within the Council's draft 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan'.

The County Council works to ensure the right of users to use highways where the public has a proven right, or there are reasonable grounds to assume that such a right exists, to drive a motor vehicle on a public right of way, or unsurfaced highway maintainable at public expense. Therefore the County Council will seek to resolve doubt that may be held over all routes that are believed to carry public rights through investigation of the available evidence to determine the nature and extent of those rights. Where necessary the Council also ensures that routes are signposted and waymarked as to their correct legal status.

The Council will use appropriate management techniques to deal with any physical deterioration of these routes in accordance with the advice contained in the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs publication 'Making the Best of Byways', and other published good practice guides, to ensure that the standard of maintenance is consistent with the purposes for which they are used by the general public. Such maintenance will be prioritised taking many factors into consideration.

Section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 makes it an offence to drive a motor vehicle anywhere other than on a road. Some public rights of way also have vehicle rights either because of their historic legal status, or through a wayleave granted to an occupier of land or property. Vehicles may also cross or use public rights of way by permission of the owner of the path (not normally the County Council).

Motoring offences committed under the Road Traffic Act are matters for the police, including the offence of driving a motor vehicle anywhere other than on a road, for example woodland and agricultural land. The County Council can and does work with the police, particularly in hot-spot areas and on rights of way that clearly carry no vehicle rights. The County Council will continue to work with its partners in a bid to reduce the impact of illegal motor vehicle use on the public rights of way in the countryside.

10. Regeneration

The County Council's transport strategy supports regeneration in three main areas. Firstly, it provides for access to education, further education, skills training and employment zones. Secondly, it helps create economically vibrant and attractive towns and villages and opens up employment sites. And thirdly, it provides support for local partnerships to develop 'action plans' addressing the unique needs of their community.

Accessibility planning and the emergence of an all encompassing Accessibility Strategy will play a significant role in helping regeneration throughout the county (as detailed in section 4 of this strategy).

The local accessibility and transport studies (as detailed in section 8.1 of this strategy) will help identify the areas that motorcycling can help create vibrant and attractive towns and villages and open up employment zones).

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