

Agenda Item No. 4(a)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

20 January 2015

Report of the Strategic Director - Economy Transport and Environment

**PROPOSED DEDICATION OF LOCAL NATURE RESERVES AT ASHOVER
ROCK, EDDLESTOW AND LOT HIGHOREDISH**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek approval for the declaration of Local Nature Reserves at Ashover Rock, Highoredish and Eddlestow Lot.

(2) **Information and Analysis** Derbyshire County Council's Countryside Services manages Ashover Rock, Eddlestow Lot and Highoredish countryside sites in the Parish of Ashover. These three sites provide public open access, stunning views and support important heathland wildlife. Countryside Service staff have developed management plans for the sites, and worked with local volunteers and contractors to improve them for people and wildlife. There is an opportunity, with support from Natural England, to declare each site as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

The County Council, as landowner, is able to declare the sites as LNRs under provisions of the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949, as long as consultation on the on-going management of the sites has been undertaken with Natural England and local user groups. Letters have been received from Natural England welcoming the proposals.

The Derbyshire County Council's Departmental Service Plan for 2014-2017 has an agreed target to deliver two extra LNRs declared by the County Council over the Plan period. The declaration of these sites will achieve and exceed this target. In addition, the declaration of these sites as LNRs will enhance and improve the Council's existing LNR network and help to implement the Council's duty to promote biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. If approved, it is proposed the sites are progressed for declaration by the summer of 2015, when it is proposed that a celebratory launch be held.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The management costs for these sites are met from the Countryside Service Revenue budget. Whilst there is significant pressure on this budget, Higher Level Stewardship grant is

received towards management from Natural England. Further, declaration as LNRs may open up potential for future grant aid. No additional financial requirements are anticipated.

(4) **Legal Considerations** Section 21 (1) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 gives local authorities the power to acquire, declare and manage LNRs.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Richard Taylor, extension 39658.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION** That the Cabinet Member resolves to approve the declaration of Ashover Rock, Eddlestow Lot and Highoredish as Local Nature Reserves.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment