

GROWTH, ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
10 JANUARY 2018	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Simon Machen - Corporate Director Growth and Regeneration	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Hiller - Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development	
Contact Officer(s):	Gemma Wildman - Principal Planning Officer James Fisher - Wildlife Officer	Tel. 01733 863824 01733 453543

PETERBOROUGH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: Corporate Director Growth and Regeneration	Deadline date: <i>Cabinet 15 January 2018</i>

It is recommended that the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee:

1. Consider and make any recommendations in respect of the draft Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) prior to its referral to Cabinet; any recommendations made by the Committee will be reported to Cabinet for its consideration.

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 The current Peterborough Green Grid Strategy was published in 2007, though it was not formally adopted by the Council at that time. In addition, various biodiversity planning guidance documents are currently available on the Council's website.
- 1.2 As part of the review of the Peterborough Local Plan, a new Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD is being prepared to support the emerging Local Plan, which will explain how the relevant policies in the Local Plan should be implemented, and act as a "one stop shop" source of information and advice to developers, planning officers, environmental organisations and community groups.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain the Committee's views and comments on the draft Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD (See Appendix 1) which is being presented to Cabinet on 15 January 2018. Cabinet will be asked to approve the draft SPD for the purpose of public consultation. The SPD will provide guidance to developers on green infrastructure and biodiversity in Peterborough. It will expand on overarching headline policies contained in the council's emerging Local Plan (Proposed Submission version January 2018). Officers propose to consult with the public and stakeholders on the draft SPD in Spring 2018.
- 2.2 This report is for the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1 Functions determined by Council : Environmental Capital.

2.3 This SPD is linked to the implementing the Environment Capital agenda and associated outcomes including improving Peterborough’s natural environment and advising on biodiversity.

In addition it links to driving Growth, Regeneration and Economic Development by helping support the development process.

3. **TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	15th January 2018
---	-----------	----------------------------------	-------------------

4. **BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

4.1 The current Green Grid Strategy was published in 2007, though it was not formally adopted by the council at that time. In addition, various biodiversity planning guidance documents are currently available on the Council's website, having being revised several times during the last 5-10 years.

The SPD aims to:

- Bring together appropriate material, and gain formal council approval for the document.
- Support the emerging Local Plan. It will not introduce new policy but explains how policies in the Local Plan should be implemented.
- Act as a material consideration when determining planning applications and is intended to act as a “one stop shop” source of guidance and advice in relation to both biodiversity and green infrastructure (GI).
- Incorporate relevant new Government legislation and policies, with the “Lawton Review” and associated Natural Environment White Paper being key influences.
- Include an updated list of Priority GI Projects which have been carefully assessed against relevant criteria to ensure that the limited resources available are focussed on the most deliverable and beneficial initiatives.

5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The draft SPD has been developed by the City Council working in close partnership with a small working group consisting of a range of conservation organisations and land managers.

In July 2016 a wider stakeholder engagement workshop was held, attended by 40 people, representing 33 different organisations, which further informed the priorities and areas of focus for this Draft SPD.

In July 2016 a presentation was also made at the City Council’s Planning Customer Forum to inform and invite feedback to help inform the Draft SPD.

5.2 Subject to Cabinet approval on 15 January 2018, officers propose to consult on the draft SPD early in Spring 2018 (it is a legal requirement to undertake such public consultation). That public consultation will allow officers to collect views from developers and other interested parties. The public will be invited to comment, though due to the technical nature of the document, it is more likely that comments will be received from those involved in development and environmental sector.

6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

6.1 It is anticipated that Scrutiny will consider, and make comments on it as it sees fit, the consultation draft version of the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD for public consultation in Spring 2018. Cabinet will be informed of such comments, prior to it making a decision whether to proceed to consultation. Following public consultation, the SPD will be

amended accordingly and then will be recommended to Cabinet for adoption later in Autumn 2018 (alongside or shortly after the Peterborough Local Plan).

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 There is no statutory duty to prepare this SPD. However, without this “one stop shop”, developers could be confused or misinformed in relation to appropriate consideration and implementation of biodiversity and green infrastructure requirements in Peterborough. This could have an impact on development coming forward as additional time would need to be spent on applications where biodiversity and GI issues occur.
- 7.2 In addition, this SPD provides a focus for identifying and driving forward delivery of priority GI projects in partnership with a wide range of environmental organisations and community groups within Peterborough.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 Alternative options considered were:

Option 1 - do not update the 2006 Green Grid Strategy and various biodiversity guidance notes available on the Council’s website. This would represent a missed opportunity to simplify the process for those requiring advice in relation to both biodiversity and green infrastructure, and as such this is not the preferred option.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 The SPD is not intended to introduce financial implications for the council or developers, but instead to provide guidance to assist with meeting current legislative and policy requirements.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 The council must follow statutory regulations in preparing and consulting on the SPD. After the statutory process concludes, the final SPD document will be recommended to Cabinet for adoption. Once adopted, the document will be used as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

- 9.3 The SPD is not intended to introduce new legal implications for the council or developers, but instead to provide guidance to assist with meeting current relevant environmental legislation.

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 *None anticipated.*

Rural Implications

- 9.4 *None anticipated.*

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services, Defra 2011

Making Space for Nature: a Review of England’s Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, Defra 2010

The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature, Defra 2011

Peterborough Green Grid Strategy, 2007.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Draft Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity SPD.