

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
13 MARCH 2024	PUBLIC REPORT

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INFORMATION ITEM: BRIEFING ON THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted as an information item to the Climate Change & Environment Scrutiny Committee following their request to be briefed on the progress of drafting the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to brief members of the Climate Change & Environment Scrutiny Committee on the progress made to-date with the drafting of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It will also allow members to ask questions and seek clarification from officers of Cambridgeshire County Council, who will be leading on the delivery of this strategy and will be presenting the item to committee.

2.2 This report is for Climate Change and Environment 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 the Council:

- 4. Climate Change;
- 6. Biodiversity;
- 7. Green Space

4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 LNRS are a new system of spatial strategies for nature, introduced in the Environment Act 2021. LNRS will help map out the action needed to restore nature, working closely with local stakeholders, especially farmers and land managers. When put together they will be a key way to meet the Government's England-wide nature targets.

On 23 March 2023, the government published regulations and statutory guidance setting out the process that each responsible authority must follow and what each strategy should include.

The preparation of each LNRS will be supported by Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Forestry Commission.

Each LNRS will:

- agree priorities for nature's recovery
- map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- map proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals

4.2 Responsible authorities are appointed to lead LNRS for an area by the Secretary of State. On Friday 30th June 2023, Defra announced the 48 LNRS responsible authority appointments, and the formal appointment of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). The CPCA have contracted the responsibility to Cambridgeshire County Council to develop the LNRS, in collaboration with Natural Cambridgeshire (Local Nature Partnership) as a key partner.

4.3 The regulations create the role of “supporting authority” and say how responsible authorities must work with them. Supporting authorities within Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) are:

- Peterborough City Council,
- East Cambridgeshire District Council,
- Fenland District Council
- Cambridge City Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council

Why are they needed?

- To make sure LNRSs dovetail with the planning system and avoid conflicting steers for the same piece of land. LNRSs will identify areas for nature recovery for Local Plans; Local Plans will help LNRSs understand which areas of land are earmarked for other uses.
- So that the LNRS reflects LPA thinking on delivery of BNG
- To provide a different point of view & constructive challenge

Natural England will provide support and advice and encourage consistency and join-up.

4.4 The PowerPoint Presentation attached within Appendix 1 outlines the progress made so far with the creation of the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire LNRS.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Steering Group members will be consulted throughout the creation of the LNRS. Peterborough City Council will be asked to review and approve the draft LNRS between **25 June 2024** and **23 July 2024**. Following this the document will go out for full public consultation **24 July 2024 - 16 October 2024**. Peterborough City Council will then receive the final document **4 February 2025** for review and approval before the **4 March 2025**

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

6.1 It is hoped that the LNRS created will aim to restore and enhance the natural environment within Peterborough. It can have multiple benefits for both people and wildlife, such as:

- Improving the quality and quantity of habitats, which can support biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Providing opportunities for recreation, education, health and well-being, which can boost the local economy and social cohesion.
- Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, such as flooding, drought, heat stress and carbon emissions.
- Enhancing the landscape character and cultural heritage, which can increase the sense of place and identity.

8. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

8.1 It is considered that the LNRS will have no financial implications other than increasing the opportunity for investment in the natural environment within the Peterborough Unitary Area.

Legal Implications

8.2 The legal responsibility of Peterborough City Council as a supporting authority within the creation of a LNRS is to:

- Collaborate with the lead local authority and other stakeholders to identify the priorities, objectives, and actions for the LNRS
- Contribute relevant data, evidence, and expertise to inform the LNRS
- Support the consultation and engagement process with the public and other interested parties
- Comply with the statutory guidance and regulations on LNRS
- Monitor and report on the progress and outcomes of the LNRS
- Review and update the LNRS as necessary

Equalities Implications

8.3 There are no known implications, positive or negative.

Rural Implications

8.4 There are no known implications, positive or negative.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

9.1 N/A

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1 - PowerPoint Presentation

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