

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 9
15 JANUARY 2018	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Simon Machen - Corporate Director Growth and Regeneration	
Cabinet Member responsible:	Councillor Hiller - Cabinet Member for Growth, Planning, Housing and Economic Development	
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DRAFT PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR CONSULTATION

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Corporate Director of Growth and Regeneration	Deadline date: N/A
It is recommended that Cabinet approves the draft Biodiversity Strategy for public consultation.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following consideration by the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 10 January 2018.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft Biodiversity Strategy to Cabinet, with a recommendation to approve it so that it can proceed to public consultation.
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.9, 'To commission reviews by and determine any changes of policy proposed by the Scrutiny Committees and Commissions making recommendations to Council about proposed changes to the Council's major policy and budget framework.'

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	YES	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	Late 2018 (date to be agreed)
Date for relevant Council meeting	Late 2018 (date to be agreed)	Date for submission to Government Dept.	N/A

4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The current Strategy was adopted at Full Council in 2010 and now is considered to be an appropriate time to review the Strategy.
- 4.2 The new strategy aims to:
- Retain the existing Vision and Approach;
 - Revise actions already completed and add new actions where appropriate;

- Provide a clearer structure to the strategy (helped by Defra's recommendations as to how public authorities can show regard for biodiversity) under four key headings:
 - 1) Promoting Biodiversity in Planning;
 - 2) Showing Regard for Biodiversity on Public Authority Managed Land & Buildings;
 - 3) Protected Sites;
 - 4) Green Infrastructure.

4.3 Of particular note in terms of proposed revisions since the 2010 version, Members attention is drawn in particular to:

- The strategy is now more closely aligned with that set out in the new draft Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity SPD
- Greater emphasis on habitat connectivity, reflecting current Government guidance and policies
- Seeking to expand areas of open space managed to benefit wildlife and bringing existing wildlife sites into more beneficial management
- Summary report setting out Council's progress against delivery of the objectives set out in the strategy to be included in, or linked to, the Council's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee received a copy of the draft Strategy on 10 January. Any comments it makes will be verbally reported to Cabinet.

5.2 Subject to Cabinet approval on 15 January 2018, officers propose to consult on the draft Strategy in Spring 2018. That public consultation will allow officers to collect views from environmental organisations 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 environmental sector.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

6.1 It is anticipated that Cabinet will approve the draft Biodiversity Strategy for the purpose of public consultation in Spring 2018. Following public consultation, the Strategy will be amended accordingly and then, ultimately, it will be recommended to Full Council for adoption later in 2018.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

7.1 In exercising its functions, the Council has a duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. It is important therefore that the Council sets out a clear strategy to ensure biodiversity is considered in all Council strategies, plans, programmes and practices. The Council's constitution determines that the Strategy is a 'major policy item', and therefore can only be adopted in due course by Full Council. Prior to that, Cabinet is able to approve a draft for consultation.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Alternative options considered were:

Option 1 - do not update the 2010 Biodiversity Strategy. This which would represent a missed opportunity to: refresh the now outdated list of actions; present information in a clearer format; and reflect current Government advice. As such, this is not the preferred option.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

9.1 The Strategy is not intended to introduce financial implications for the Council, but instead to provide guidance to assist with meeting current legislative and policy requirements.

Legal Implications

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

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 There are no equalities implications anticipated.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 10.1 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Section 40)
- 10.2 The Biodiversity Duty for Public Authorities, Defra Guidance, 2014
- 10.3 Peterborough City Council Approach to Biodiversity submitted to the Environment Capital Scrutiny Committee in 2010
- 10.4 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, Defra 2011

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 - Draft PCC Biodiversity Strategy

