

CABINET

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| Date of Meeting | Tuesday, 26 th September 2017 |
| Report Subject | Biodiversity Duty Plan and Sustainability Policy |
| Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside |
| Report Author | Chief Officer (Planning & Environment) |
| Type of Report | Operational |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Flintshire County Council's Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan has been produced in response to the enhanced biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which requires that Public Authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions and in so doing promote the resilience of ecosystems

As a local authority we have a duty to function sustainability and lead by example when it comes to protecting and enhancing our natural environment. The Environment & Sustainability Policy will set out Flintshire's approach to meet this challenge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1 | Members agree the vision, objectives and actions set out in the Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan. |
| 2 | Members endorse the Environment & Sustainability Policy. |

REPORT DETAILS

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| 1.00 | EXPLAINING THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY DELIVERY PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY |
| 1.01 | Nature is our planet's life support system and consequently essential for human survival. Our natural environment provides our food, water, air, building materials, medicines and landscape. Biodiversity is the variety of life on earth and biodiversity loss continues as a direct result of human impacts, through habitat loss and degradation, over exploitation, pollution, climate change and invasive non-native species. |
| 1.02 | Welsh Government recognise all the benefits that are provided by plants, animals microorganisms and the places where they live and are aiming to reverse the decline of biodiversity in Wales with a ground breaking new framework of legislation. |
| 1.03 | As a local authority we have a duty to function sustainability and lead by example when it comes to protecting and enhancing our natural environment. To meet the challenge of reversing the decline in biodiversity it is essential that we act now and ensure that we meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. |
| 1.04 | The biodiversity duty delivery plan outlines how, as an organisation, FCC plans to address its biodiversity duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2015 and consequently help achieve its Well-being objectives and Nature Recovery Plan objectives over the period 2017-19. |
| 1.05 | Vision - Flintshire County Council is committed to reducing the decline of biodiversity in our County and realises the importance of biodiversity conservation and enhancement for our community's health and wellbeing and enables behaviour change towards a sustainable lifestyle. |
| 1.06 | Objective 1 - Engage and support participation and understanding to embed biodiversity throughout decision making at all levels Objective 2 - Safeguard species and habitats of principle importance and improve their management Objective 3 - Increase the resilience of our natural environment by restoring degraded habitats and habitat creation Objective 4 - Tackle key pressures (Climate change/invasive and native species/habitat loss) on species and habitats Objective 5 - Improve our evidence, understanding and monitoring Objective 6 - Put in place a framework of governance and support for delivery |

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| 1.07 | Monitoring - Action under the plan will be monitored and reported on through a number of ways due to the cross cutting and integrated nature of the plan. Regular updates on plan progress will be received by the Environment Working Group. Actions will be reported on quarterly through the WG Environment Sustainable Development (ESD) Grant reporting requirements. Action will also contribute to the annual output report for the Well-being objectives and report for the Environment (Wales) Act duty every 3 years. |
| 1.08 | Flintshire County Council is committed to embedding continuous environmental improvement into its work. It recognises the important role it has to play in developing the environmental stewardship of Members, staff, and visitors and to integrate the principles of sustainability into all activities. |
| 1.09 | This Environment and sustainability policy updates the Environmental policy Oct 2011 and takes into account the change in the legislation. |
| 1.10 | The formation of a cross departmental sustainability working group will support the integration of sustainable development within the Council. All staff and members share the responsibilities in the policy. |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | The Biodiversity Duty Plan will be delivered through the existing workforce. The outcomes will be led by the FCC Biodiversity Officer with support from the wider Access & Natural Environment Service and funded in part from existing service budgets and in part from external grant aid, specifically the ESD grant. |
| 2.02 | The Sustainability Policy should have a long term cost neutral implication, many sustainability practices have cost benefits over the long term. Sustainable development should be an integral part of FCC business. |

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| 3.00 | CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT |
| 3.01 | Both documents have gone through an internal consultation with key officers, to include COT. |
| 3.02 | The document follows Welsh Government guidance and has been produced following consultation with specific Bionet members. |

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| 4.00 | RISK MANAGEMENT |
| 4.01 | No risks identified for anti-poverty, environment and equalities issues. |
| 4.02 | The plan will be implemented by key conservation staff however the level of success and extent of the action within the plan will be reliant on broader |

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| | council officer support and buy in. |
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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | Appendix 1 - Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan Appendix 2 - Sustainability Policy (Draft) |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | Contact Officer: Tom Woodall, Access & Natural Environment Manager Telephone: 01352 703902 E-mail: tom.woodall@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | <p>Biodiversity - The variety of life found on earth. It includes all species of plants and animals, their abundance and genetic diversity.</p> <p>Ecosystem - An ecosystem is made up of living organisms (plants, animals and microorganisms) in conjunction with their non-living environment (air, water, minerals and soil) and all the diverse and complex interactions that take place between them.</p> <p>Sustainable development - Ensuring that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.</p> <p>NRW - Natural Resources Wales is the largest Welsh Government Sponsored Body. NRW were formed in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales, Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions.</p> <p>Bionet - The North East Wales Biodiversity Network (Bionet) was formed in October 2009 and renamed in 2010. It brought together partnerships that had existed in the Counties of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. The broad aim of the network is to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity for current and future generations. Coordination and collaboration are seen as being important to the partnership alongside other objectives that include raising awareness and the promotion of biodiversity and identifying local priorities to deliver local and regional biodiversity improvements.</p> |