

# CABINET

Thursday, 9 December 2021

## BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY 2022-2032

### Report of the Head of Environment

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#### Recommendation(s)

**It is recommended that Cabinet approve the draft Biodiversity Strategy 2022-2032 to go out to public consultation, with the amended final document to be brought back to Cabinet for adoption after the consultation period.**

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#### Summary

The draft Biodiversity Strategy for Eastleigh Borough Council is presented for public consultation following comments received from the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel on 17 June 2021.

The strategy highlights the key issues facing biodiversity, why biodiversity is important, and presents a framework for delivery.

Documents pertaining to the framework of delivery will be reported to Cabinet separately at a future meeting, as will the outcomes of this consultation, in due course.

#### Statutory Powers

Section 2 Local Government Act 2000 (Power of Wellbeing)

#### Strategic Implications

1. The draft Biodiversity Strategy will contribute to creating a Green Borough by contributing to an Excellent Environment for All, developing our Green Infrastructure and by improving Wellbeing through enhancement and access to nature.

#### Introduction

2. This report accompanies the draft Biodiversity Strategy for Eastleigh Borough Council – “Securing our Natural Environment” – which is presented in Appendix One. The draft Biodiversity Strategy sets out a ten-year approach to biodiversity by including:

- A broad description of the current state of knowledge on local biodiversity and identifying national, regional and local trends e.g. on habitat loss and deterioration, species population declines and Natural Capital/Ecosystem Services;
- A review of National Government and local Eastleigh Borough Council strategies, policies and priorities e.g. climate change, Environment Act, A Green Future: Our 25 Year Environment Plan etc;
- A review of the critical factors that need to be addressed based on above analysis; and
- A list of key aims and objectives for biodiversity conservation with measurable targets for delivery.

A previous version of the draft Biodiversity Strategy was taken to Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel on 17 June 2021. The Panel noted the report and provided feedback and comments on the general scope, directions and implications so it can be developed prior to future adoption. The updated draft Biodiversity Strategy is considered within this report.

## **Strategy Structure**

3. “Securing our Natural Environment” is intended to be the most accessible element for residents of the overall biodiversity strategy. It provides background and context, explains why nature is important and highlights the known pressures affecting our biodiversity.
4. The second half of the strategy introduces the main policy drivers and core principles and targets that we will need to adopt and how we will deliver them through the production of a new, revised Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy and new or revised Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for Biodiversity and Sustainable Drainage Systems.
5. The policy documents required to support the draft Biodiversity Strategy as identified in paragraph 5 above have been taken as outline documents to Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel on 18 November 2021. Following input and comment from the Panel these documents will be developed and brought to Cabinet prior to consultation in early 2022.

## **Financial Implications**

6. There are no financial implications for this document at this stage, although taking this forward to adoption in a timely fashion assumes that the current ecology staffing resource remains the same. The wider strategy (i.e. further detailed documents) will identify financial implications as they are developed, and these will be presented as required for comment.

## **Risk Assessment**

7. The overall Biodiversity Strategy (including this document) assumes that the obligations for biodiversity, as set out in the Environment Act, remain unamended before enacted.

8. The strategy also assumes that nature recovery within the Borough will continue to be a corporate priority and part of the response to the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency declaration.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

9. We anticipate that the Equality Act is relevant to the Strategy and a full EqIA will be developed and presented to Cabinet following consultation and prior to adoption.

### **10. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

The draft Biodiversity Strategy is part of the Council's response to the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency declaration. The core principles and delivery mechanisms detailed within the draft Biodiversity Strategy will build climate resilience for biodiversity by creating more, better, joined up habitat which will have multiple associated benefits for climate amelioration (e.g. increased carbon storage through planting and habitat creation as well as through the safeguard of existing priority habitats).

### **Conclusion**

11. "Securing our Natural Environment" is intended to set the framework for biodiversity recovery in Eastleigh primarily through the development of a revised Biodiversity Action Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents for biodiversity and drainage. It is also intended to put the biodiversity crisis into context and highlight why recovery is necessary.

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Appendices Attached: Appendix One – Biodiversity Strategy 2022-2032

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - SECTION 100D**

The following is a list of documents which disclose facts or matters on which this report or an important part of it is based and have been relied upon to a material

extent in the preparation of this report. This list does not include any published works or documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information.

None.