
**MANAGING BIODIVERSITY & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IN CARDIFF –
DRAFT TASK & FINISH REPORT**

Background

1. At the Environmental Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 19th March 2019 the Committee agreed to undertake the Managing Biodiversity & Natural Environment task & finish exercise. This report provides background information about the inquiry and outlines the next steps in the process.

2. The agreed terms of reference for the inquiry were:

To provide Members with the opportunity to explore and consider how the Council can support and help improve the biodiversity in Cardiff. In particular this will include scrutiny of:

- *The development of Cardiff's Biodiversity Forward Plan, for example, its structure, aims and objectives;*
- *The ongoing implications of Cardiff's Biodiversity Forward Plan, for example, future reporting and monitoring of the document;*
- *The approach taken by other Welsh local authorities to develop biodiversity forward plans and to identify best practice in this area;*
- *The Council's current role, obligations and statutory / legislative requirements for supporting and improving biodiversity;*
- *The importance of Cardiff's biodiversity and ecosystems;*
- *The resources available to support and improve biodiversity in Cardiff;*

- *Community collaboration and other partnership working approaches to understand how they help support and enhance biodiversity in Cardiff;*
- *The importance of raising awareness of biodiversity issues in Cardiff – internally, with key stakeholders and the public;*
- *Cardiff’s Green Infrastructure Strategy – including the benefits of green infrastructure and ecosystem services;*
- *Green Infrastructure Management – including the Green Infrastructure Group;*
- *Cardiff Green Infrastructure SPG and Planned Development;*
- *The Green Infrastructure Spatial Strategy;*
- *Green Infrastructure Implementation Programme (Pollinators Action Plan, Individual Park Management Plans, Local Nature Plan, River Corridors, Tree Strategy, Cross border initiatives, other plans & projects);*
- *Sustainable drainage – links with the SuDS Approval Body process.*

3. Members of the Task & Finish group were:

- Councillor Ramesh Patel (Chair);
- Councillor Peter Wong;
- Councillor John Lancaster;
- Councillor Bob Derbyshire;
- Councillor Jaqueline Parry;
- Councillor Owen Jones;
- Councillor Jane Henshaw.

4. During the Task & Finish Exercise the following people provided support and evidence:

- Councillor Michael Michael - Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment
- Councillor Caro Wild - Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport

- Councillor Peter Bradbury - Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure
- James Clemence - Head of Planning
- Simon Gilbert - Operational Manager, Development Management (Strategic & Place Making)
- Caryn Le Roux – Welsh Government
- Geoff Robinson – Welsh Government
- Matthew Harris – Ecologist, Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate
- Nicola Hutchinson - Parks Conservation Officer, Parks Services
- Kerry Rogers - Conservation Manager, Wildlife Trust
- Mark Tozer, Parks Development Officer, Parks Services
- Alan Abel - Complete Weed Control Limited
- Heather Galliford – Natural Resources Wales
- Geoff Hobbs – Natural Resources Wales
- Adam Rowe - South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRcC)
- Lucie Taylor - CLAS Cymru
- Colin Cheesman – Plant Life
- Clare Dinham – Bug Life
- Jazz Austin – RSPB
- Councillor Peter Jones – Swansea City Council
- Siobhan Wiltshire - Welsh Government
- Jo Smith – Welsh Government

5. The draft report titled 'Managing Biodiversity & Natural Environment in Cardiff' has been attached to this report as **Appendix 1**; the draft report makes a series of recommendations across the following areas:

- Biodiversity & Natural Environment – Context Setting;
- Council Resources;
- Commitment, Structure & Process;
- Communication & Engagement;
- Baseline & Focus;
- Best Practice & Practical Applications.

Legal Implications

6. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers of behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

7. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Take account of the information received at the meeting;
2. Agree the content of the report subject to any alterations as required by the Committee;

3. To delegate authority to the Chair to agree any minor alterations to the report after this meeting.

DAVINA FIORE
Director for Governance & Legal Services
14th November 2019