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12 September 2019

Councillor Caro Wild,
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Wild,

Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems (BRED) Forward Plan

As you will be aware the Environmental Scrutiny Committee is currently in the process of finishing off a task & finish exercise titled 'Managing Biodiversity & Natural Environment in Cardiff'. As a part of this work they received a presentation on the 'Cardiff Green Infrastructure Plan' on the 27th June 2019; this document was structured around the 'Green Infrastructure Plan' and the 'Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Action Plan'.

Members are aware that Cabinet is due to receive a paper titled 'Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems (BRED) Duty' at its meeting on the 26th September 2019. As this refers to the 'Cardiff Green Infrastructure Plan' they have asked me to write to you in advance of this meeting to provide feedback, comments and observations on the content of the document. These are set out below:

- Members are supportive of the publication of the 'Cardiff Green Infrastructure Plan'. They believe that it will act as an important co-ordinating document that will help the Council and its partners to deliver a wide range to vital biodiversity projects, and in doing so contribute towards wider well-being objectives. They particularly welcome the introduction of the 'Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Action Plan' that contains information on projects being delivered in Cardiff to help meet this objective.
- The Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems (BRED) Duty Action Plan includes a table called the 'Green Infrastructure Implementation

Programme 2016 to 2019'. This table includes a number of columns including 'Action' and 'Delivery focus' that are designed to explain what the projects are and how they will be delivered. Members agreed that the structure of the table was sound; however, the key columns lacked detail. They felt that each project documented in the table required:

- A detailed explanation of what the project involved;
 - A starting point for the basis of the work;
 - An explanation on reporting and monitoring for the project;
 - The aims and objectives for the project;
 - Who would be responsible for the delivery of the project;
 - Detail of the resources available to support the project.
- After reviewing the 'Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Action Plan', it became clear how important the contribution of volunteers and partnership working was to the delivery of the projects. Volunteer contributions do not happen by accident, they need the Council and other key partners to provide support and resource. It is not obvious from this document how support and resources will be made available to ensure that the projects are delivered. Members believe that if the Council is serious about delivering the volunteer projects, then it needs to confirm the support and resources that will be available to deliver each project.
 - To support the delivery of the 'Cardiff Green Infrastructure Plan', the Members recommend that the Council should re-establish the Cardiff Biodiversity Partnership. This group could be tasked with overseeing the delivery of the projects contained within the 'Biodiversity & Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Action Plan', and could provide Cabinet with regular updates. Some Members felt that the title of the group could be changed to 'Partnership for Nature' to better define its purpose, and that the partnership could be chaired by a Council appointed nature and biodiversity champion.
 - Section 3.2.3 of the 'Green Infrastructure Plan' makes reference to urban 'brownfield' habitats and the importance that these can have on supporting

biodiversity in Cardiff. Given the pressure to develop 'brownfield' sites in the city, Members would like to understand what the Council can do in practical terms to support the range of biodiversity that relies upon these sites.

- Section 3.3.4 of the 'Green Infrastructure Plan' makes reference to a various forms of green infrastructure and the mitigating impact that these can have against climate change; this includes an acknowledgement of the contribution that trees can make. Members support this, however, feel that the document should go further and highlight current and potential future policies that the Council can use to protect and enhance tree coverage in Cardiff.
- Section 3.1.1 of the document makes reference to the six objectives of the 'Green Infrastructure Plan', these are:
 - Protecting the natural environment;
 - Protecting people and places;
 - Supporting the local economy;
 - Improving health;
 - Creating opportunities for people;
 - Enhancing local character and sense of place.

Members welcome the creation of these objectives, however, recommend that the document sets out who will be responsible for each of the objectives and supporting actions. The task group would also welcome greater detail on how the supporting actions will be delivered, for example, timescales and actions for each delivery action.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the content of this letter.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ramesh Patel', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory - Director of Planning, Transport & Environment
- James Clemence – Head of Planning
- Simon Gilbert – Operational Manager - Development Management
(Strategic & Place Place Making)
- Matthew Harris - Ecologist
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee