

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee: Holding the Executive to Account

Scrutiny Monitoring – 13 July 2023

Date	Portfolio	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
08/06/23	Environment & Transport	Draft Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity Strategies	<p>1) That, reflecting the ongoing impact of climate change, consideration is given to the reviewing the wording within the Executive Summary of the draft Biodiversity Strategy to provide clarity to the term 'halt the decline of biodiversity in Southampton.'</p>	<p>The Vision statement included in the draft Biodiversity Strategy has been reviewed and it can be confirmed that term 'halt the decline' is consistent with the narrative used in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the UK's Environment Bill and the Nature Positive 2030 report, published by the five UK statutory nature agencies.</p> <p>The vision statement, as currently worded, will be included in the draft strategy for the public consultation exercise and then reviewed again, following consideration of the responses received.</p>	Ongoing
			<p>2) That, as the strategies are developed, work is undertaken to refine the targets and metrics against which success will be measured.</p>	<p>Both strategies identify the need to develop appropriate performance indicators in order to monitor progress and these will be developed as part of the subsequent action planning.</p>	Ongoing
			<p>3) That, with the recent events relating to the Outdoor Sports Centre in mind, the Council reviews its approach to Governance to ensure that strategies, policies and projects are compatible.</p>	<p>This matter is to be referred to the Place Leadership team for further consideration in July, with the expectation that all relevant departments will convene to review the existing process and identify opportunities for improvement and collaborative, cross council working.</p>	Ongoing
			<p>4) That, to accompany the final versions of the draft strategies, a list is published outlining practical actions that residents can undertake to help</p>	<p>As part of the Communication Plan, that will promote the consultation exercise, we will use our channels to promote some of the practical steps that residents might want to undertake themselves. This will</p>	Ongoing

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			improve biodiversity and the green infrastructure in Southampton.	be based on existing content that has been developed by SCC and our partners the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (as part of the Wilder Southampton project). This content will be reviewed, and a fresh campaign will be included in the forward plan for delivery to coincide with the anticipated adoption of the strategies later in 2023. Opportunities for wider community engagement and will be explored in the action planning stage, seeking to identify ideas and projects that can be supported by neighbourhoods, schools and business.	
			5) That, to support decision making, a guide, that is updated regularly, is produced for developers and residents that outlines the most suitable plants and habitats that will deliver the optimal impact on biodiversity and the green infrastructure in Southampton.	Guidance is in development that will help inform both SCC projects and developers on the delivery of sustainable green infrastructure. This will include ensuring that opportunities to support biodiversity are optimised. It is anticipated that the first iteration of the guidance can be adopted as a “Public Realm Toolkit” to support the current city centre master planning process and then more widely by incorporating versions into council standard operating procedures and planning policy. Opportunities to account for blue infrastructure are being considered as part of this process.	Ongoing
			6) That, to help deliver the Council’s Green Grid ambitions, the Executive encourages the master-planning exercises for the city centre to have reference to the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Strategies.	Conversations with the Master Planning team in Economic Development are taking place to ensure that green and blue infrastructure are given appropriate weight in the master planning process. The “Public Realm Toolkit” being developed	Ongoing

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				will also ensure that, where the green and blue infrastructure is delivered, it is of a suitable quality and the benefits it can offer are fully realised.	
			7) The Committee recommended that Cabinet, when determining their response to the recommendations within the River Itchen Inquiry, considers incorporating the appropriate findings within the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Strategies and further develops our approach with respect to waterways.	The recommendations within the River Itchen Inquiry will be considered alongside the response to the public consultation for both strategies. Where appropriate, the strategies will be aligned to support those recommendations and the actions that are likely to emerge from them.	