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| Title of Report: | Council Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2026-2032 |
| Committee Report Submitted To: | Leisure & Development Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 16 June 2026 |
| For Decision or For Information | For information |
| To be discussed In Committee | NO |

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| Linkage to Council Strategy (2026-31) | |
| Strategic Theme | P4 Sustainability & Managing our Natural and Built Environment |
| Outcome | Designated sites, landscapes and biodiversity which are protected, enhanced and managed sustainably |
| Lead Officer | Biodiversity and Habitat Management Officer Coast and Countryside Manager |

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| Estimated Timescale for Completion | |
| Date to be Completed | n/a |

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|------------------------------------|------------|
| Budgetary Considerations | |
| Cost of Proposal | n/a |
| Included in Current Year Estimates | n/a |
| Capital/Revenue | n/a |
| Code | n/a |
| Staffing Costs | n/a |

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|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Legal Considerations | |
| Input of Legal Services Required | NO |
| Legal Opinion Obtained | NO |

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|--|--|--------|------------------|
| Screening Requirements | Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. | | |
| Section 75 Screening | Screening Completed: | Yes | Date: 01/06/2026 |
| | EQIA Required and Completed: | Yes/No | Date: n/a |
| Rural Needs Assessment (RNA) | Screening Completed | Yes | Date: 01/06/2026 |
| | RNA Required and Completed: | Yes/No | Date: n/a |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) | Screening Completed: | Yes/No | Date: n/a |
| | DPIA Required and Completed: | Yes/No | Date: n/a |

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress of the Council Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 All Councils in Northern Ireland have a statutory duty to conserve biodiversity when carrying out their functions under the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011 (WANE Act).
- 2.2 Developing the BSAP will ensure Council carries out its duty to conserve biodiversity effectively and includes targets and actions to ensure Council achieves the necessary outcomes for successful delivery of its statutory duty.
- 2.3 The proposed development of the BSAP was brought to Leisure and Development Committee in December 2025 where the Committee recommended to Council to agree to the development of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan to ensure Council fulfils its statutory duty under the WANE Act.

3.0 Current Position

- 3.1 The table below outlines work undertaken to date and revised timeline for the development of the Council Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

| Action | Description | | Timeline |
|---|--|--|---|
| 1. Internal consultation with relevant Heads of Service (HoS)/Department Leads (DL) | Council Officer meet with HoS/ internal stakeholders: | . engagement on the strategic context of Council's biodiversity duty and how this impacts on individual service areas/ departments | Ongoing since July 2024 to be completed by end January 2026 (completed) |
| | | . recommendations for departments to deliver actions | |
| 2. Draft LBSAP developed | Council Officer draft LBSAP | | January 2026 - March 2026 (completed) |
| 3. Workshop held with Members | Presentation of LBSAP | | March 31st 2026 (completed) |
| 4. Amendments made | Council Officer updates LBSAP according to outcomes of member workshop | | March 2026 (completed) |
| 5. LBSAP sent to HoS and DLs | Draft LBSAP sent to HoS and DLs for feedback | | April 2026 – June 2026 |
| 6. Amendments made | Council Officer updates LBSAP according to feedback received | | June 2026 |
| 7. Equality and rural proofing/screening | Screening completed | . rural proofing/screening | May 2026 (completed) |
| | | . equality proofing/screening | |
| 8. CBSAP sent to SMT | Draft CBSAP sent to SMT for feedback | | June 2026 |
| 9. Update to L&D Committee/Full Council | | | June 2026 |

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| 10. Public consultation | Draft LBSAP put out to public consultation for a period of 12 weeks | . easy read version created | July 2026-October 2026 |
| | | . questionnaire created | |
| | | . PR consulted and adverts put out | |
| 11. Draft LBSAP updated | | | November 2026 |
| 12. Draft LBSAP sent to HoS and Elected Members | Feedback and input for final draft | | November 2026 |
| 13. Final LBSAP draft completed and presented to Committee | Final draft LBSAP presented to Committee | | December 2026 |
| 14. Final draft LBSAP presented to Council | Full approval by Council | | December 2026 |
| 15. Final draft LBSAP completed and published | Publishing and promotion of LBSAP | | January 2027 |

The internal consultation period is complete with amendments been made to the draft Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Appropriate screening has been completed. The draft Council Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan is complete and ready to go to public consultation.

4.0 Recommendation

Elected Members are asked to note the update on progress on the development of a new Council Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and the forthcoming public consultation.