

# GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



## Report to the Cabinet

**Meeting Date:** 03 July 2018  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Dafydd Meurig  
**Contact Officer:** Gareth Jones, Senior Manager Planning and Public Protection  
**Contact Number:** 34092  
**Item Title:** Gwynedd Biodiversity Duty Plan

### 1 DECISION SOUGHT

The Cabinet's approval to adopt the attached Gwynedd Biodiversity Duty Plan

### 2 REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

Comply with the A6 duty of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016

### 3 INTRODUCTION

In order to comply with A6 duty, public authorities are required to prepare and publish a plan that sets out what they intend to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. This Plan is published to comply with this legal duty.

### 4 REASON AND JUSTIFICATION BEHIND THE DECISION

Section 6, Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced a wider duty on biodiversity and ecosystem resilience (A6 duty) for public authorities in exercising functions that are relevant to Wales.

'Ecosystem resilience' means how well ecosystems can deal with disturbances - either by resisting them, recovering from them, or adapting to them. Resilient ecosystems are able to carry on delivering services and benefits despite these disturbances.

The A6 duty requires public authorities to seek, maintain and enhance biodiversity as long as it is consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, promoting ecosystem resilience in doing so.

In order to comply with A6 duty, public authorities should incorporate the need to consider biodiversity and ecosystems in their ideas and initial business planning, including any policies, plans, programmes and projects, as well as their daily activities.

In order to comply with A6 duty, public authorities are required to prepare and publish a plan that sets out what they intend to do to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience. This Plan is published to comply with this legal duty.

Gwynedd Council's Biodiversity Duty Plan aims to:

- Outline why Gwynedd's biodiversity is so important
- Explain the legislative background of the plan
- Identify what Public Authorities need to comply with this duty
- Identify the Action Plan that includes the Council's current actions for biodiversity and the proposed actions in 2017-19.

All council departments were consulted before drafting the plan during the beginning of 2017 and again before the final version in 2018.

Although the Plan has slipped in terms of publication date due to staffing cuts and restructuring within the Department, it should be noted that the actions already identified in it are already under way.

A report must be published by the end of 2019 and every three years thereafter regarding what the authority will have done to comply with the duty. The Action Plan, in part 60 of the Biodiversity Duty Plan, will set the foundation for all the subsequent reports.

It should be noted that this plan does not identify or ask any department for additional resources beyond existing resources.

## **5 NEXT STEPS & TIMETABLE**

Following the adoption of the Plan, confirm with the relevant Departments the actions in part 58 of the Action Plan, that they are responsible for.

Review the plan at the end of 2019 following consultation with all the Council Departments.

Publish a report at the end of 2019 and every subsequent 3 years regarding what the authority has done to comply with the duty.

## **6 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION**

Consultation with all Council Departments.

Consultation with Concillor Angela Russel in her role as Countryside and Environment Champion

## **7 VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS**

### **Chief Finance Officer:**

I note that the last paragraph of part 4 of the report confirms that the Biodiversity Duty Plan does not require additional funding, and it is expected that Council services will act as required within their current budgets.

### **Monitoring Officer:**

It is noted that there is a statutory obligation on the Council under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 to prepare and publish a plan as to how it is intended to maintain and improve biodiversity. The plan addresses this. The cross departmental obligations and the need to be aware of the obligations within the Action Plan are noted.

## **Appendix**

Gwynedd Biodiversity Duty Plan (Draft)