

AGENDA ITEM NO 12

REPORT NO 288 /16

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 AUGUST 2016

TAYSIDE LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2016 - 2026

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING AND PLACE

Abstract:

The Tayside Biodiversity Partnership is a key mechanism for the Council in furthering the conservation of local biodiversity and carrying out their functions Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. A new ten year Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan has been developed and will aid in the delivery of Council duties and engaging local communities until 2026.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) notes the contents of this Action Plan and approve support for Council staff in delivering actions in the plan that contribute to our public body Biodiversity Duty obligations;
- (ii) approves the publication of the report on the Angus Council website.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/ CORPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- Our natural and built environment is protected and enjoyed
- Our communities are developed in a sustainable manner
- Angus is a good place to live in, work in and visit

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, all public bodies in Scotland are required to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their functions. The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 further requires all public bodies to report every three years on how they comply with this Duty. The first report was published on 1 January 2015 and covered activity for the period 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2014. The report demonstrates how Angus Council complied with the Biodiversity Duty for this period - see report No 49/15. The next report will be due on 1 January 2018 covering the period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2017.

3.2 The Tayside Biodiversity Partnership is a voluntary non-statutory Local Biodiversity Partnership: established in 1998. Funded by Angus Council and Perth and Kinross Council It brings together both national and local organisations and individuals dedicated to promoting the protection and enhancement and enjoyment of Tayside's valuable natural assets and species.

The Partnership (TBP) exists to:

“Co-ordinate the further development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of biodiversity in Tayside to conserve and enhance the region’s biodiversity, taking account both local and national priorities”

- 3.3 The Partnership is an excellent platform for highlighting scientific research and brings together many successful community projects. A series of occasional papers highlighting advances have been included on the Partnership’s website and a newsletter is produced regularly. Its Working Groups meet as necessary to oversee some 70 projects being taken forward across Tayside. Partnership working has resulted in innovations such as the amphibian ladders being trialled in Angus, and good practice projects set up such as the Kirriemuir Swift Conservation Project which has led to similar projects being funded elsewhere.

4. CURRENT POSITION

A key role of the Partnership is the delivery of the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan. The TBP’s first Local Biodiversity Action Plan was launched in 2002. As many actions in the Plan are now complete and the challenges and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement have changed so much lately it was felt that it was time for a new ten year plan running from 2016-2026.

A copy of the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan has been placed in the Members’ Information Hub, and it is available on the Council’s website appended to this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Action Plan and its implementation are covered under Angus Council’s existing contribution of £26,000 per annum to the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership and Angus Council officer resources therefore no specific financial implications arise from this report.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan facilitates a range of works essential to co-ordinating and promoting the sustainable protection of Tayside’s biodiversity. The Co-ordinator also plays a crucial role in disseminating to all Partnership stakeholders, continuous developments in Scottish Government nature conservation legislation.
- 6.2 Failure to produce a regular Biodiversity Duty report to Scottish Government would result in the Council failing to meet the commitment under The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 which requires all public bodies to report every three years on how they comply with this Duty. Delivery of the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-26 will be a key mechanism for providing a wide range of evidence in how well Angus complies with the Duty.

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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