

EPSOM & EWELL LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2020 PROGRESS REPORT AND REVIEW OF THE 2010 TO 2020 ACTION PLAN

Head of Service:	Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(no)	no
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	1: Local Biodiversity Action Plan Progress Report

Summary

An update on progress during 2020 in implementing the 2010–2020 Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan and a review of the 2010-2020 Biodiversity Action Plan.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Note the Action Plan Progress Report at Appendix 1.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 To update the Committee on progress to date.

2 Background

2.1 Biodiversity provides the support systems that sustain human existence, providing many of the essentials of life, including the air we breathe, clean water, soils, food, and our health and wellbeing. As a public body the protection and enhancement of Epsom and Ewell's biodiversity is a duty as defined by the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006. Globally it is recognised that biodiversity is in a human activity driven crisis, and that is as true for Epsom & Ewell as anywhere else on the planet.

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- 2.2 The Borough's first Biodiversity Action Plan was approved in 2010 and has helped to coordinate efforts to protect and enhance biodiversity across the Borough, highlighting the importance to our biodiversity of site management plans, monitoring our biodiversity to inform local planning decisions and assists with important aspects of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.
- 2.3 There is no set budget to directly assist in implementing the Plan and consequently the plan operates in a coordinating/prioritising role as an essential guide and tool, helping to deliver the Council's Key Service Priorities (see section 6) and ensure we adhere to our statutory responsibilities (see section 5).
- 2.4 Our biodiversity action plan provide us with an opportunity to 'act locally and think globally'.
- 2.5 The report attached at Appendix 1 summarises progress made during 2020 against the plan's seven objectives and in addition reviews the achievements of the plan from 2010 to the now previous plans final year 2020.

3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Impact Assessment

- 3.1.1 If we do not publish progress in implementing our biodiversity action plan, we could be deemed to be failing in our 'Biodiversity Duty' as a public body, under the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

- 3.2.1 Implementing the Biodiversity Action Plan, has helped to ensure that our green spaces are well looked after, helping our residents to understand and appreciate the importance of their local biodiversity. Greater respect and understanding of biodiversity can help towards decreasing anti-social behaviour.

3.3 Safeguarding

- 3.3.1 The plan has encouraged the use of volunteers to assist in managing and enhancing the Borough's biodiversity. Volunteer activities have been provided that include opportunities for vulnerable adults.

3.4 Dependencies

- 3.4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

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3.5 Other

3.5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 None for the purposes of this report.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 The local authority has a duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to have regard when exercising its functions, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Keeping the Borough Clean and Green – by guiding the implementation of open space management plans.
- Supporting our Community – by encouraging and supporting volunteers, and encouraging healthier lifestyles through regular access to nature.
- Managing our Resources – by helping to ensure the sustainable management of the Borough's environmental resources (Ecosystem Services).
- Supporting Businesses and our Local Economy – by guiding planning policy maintain a green and attractive place to live and work.

6.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

6.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** The biodiversity action plan has had significant positive climate and environmental impacts over the course of its implementation.

6.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** The biodiversity action plan has helped underpin our sustainability policy and has no community safety implications.

6.5 **Partnerships :** The biodiversity action plan has encouraged and supported a wide of range of partnerships that have been vital in delivering progress with the plan.

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7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2010 - 2020

Other papers:

- Epsom & Ewell Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2010 – 2020 annual reports 2011 to 2019