

REPORT TO: Cabinet

03 February 2021

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Lead Cabinet member for Climate Change

LEAD OFFICER: Head of Shared Waste and Environment

Doubling Nature Strategy

Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the Doubling Nature Strategy.
2. The Doubling Nature Strategy sets out in high-level terms the Council's approach to achieving the aim agreed at Full Council in July 2019 to double nature in South Cambridgeshire. It is a sister document to the Zero Carbon Strategy, outlining how the Council uses its widening spheres of influence, on its own estate, through policies and through wider influence in partnerships and communities to achieve more wildlife-rich habitats, increased tree canopy cover and better accessibility to green space.

Recommendations

3. That Cabinet adopt the draft Doubling Nature Strategy at Appendix A.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The Doubling Nature Strategy sets out in high-level terms the Council's approach to achieving the aim agreed at Full Council in July 2019 to double nature in South Cambridgeshire.
5. The Climate and Environment Advisory Committee recommended adoption of the Doubling Nature Strategy at its meeting on 12 January.

Details

6. Full Council recognised the ecological emergency on 18 July 2019 and agreed an aim to 'double the area of rich wildlife habitats, tree cover and accessible green space in order for nature and people to thrive, and businesses to prosper'.
7. The need for a 'visionary strategy' setting out the Council's programme in response to this motion was agreed by the Head of Waste & Environment and the Chair of the Climate & Environment Advisory Committee following adoption of the Zero Carbon

Strategy in May 2020. The objectives, scope, structure and schedule for the strategy were discussed and approved by CEAC on 1 September.

8. The Doubling Nature Strategy is a sister document to the Zero Carbon Strategy, outlining how the Council uses its widening spheres of influence: as an exemplar on its own estate, through policies and through its wider influence in partnerships and communities.
9. The Strategy is complementary to work being carried out by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning to map opportunities for green infrastructure, and develop a new Greater Cambridge Local Plan, and a new Greater Cambridge Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. These three projects, all of which are very significant aspects of the Council's approach to delivering a doubling of nature, are referenced in the Strategy.

Development of the strategy

10. The strategy has been drafted by the Development Officer, Climate and Environment in collaboration with officers from the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Natural Environment and Planning Policy teams, the Air Quality Scientific Officer and the Housing Neighbourhood Services Manager. Two sessions for Members have been held: a briefing session on 8 September on current work relating to 'doubling nature', and a workshop on 20 October to gather Members' views on the vision for nature on the Council's estate and in the wider district.
11. Views from the Member workshop have been considered in the drafting of the Strategy. The chair and vice chairs of the CEAC provided comments on an earlier draft of the strategy, which have been taken account of in changes incorporated into the attached draft.

Plans for delivery of the strategy

12. An action plan will be drawn up in consultation with the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee.

Options

13. Cabinet can adopt the Doubling Nature Strategy at Appendix A as it is, or subject to specified changes, or not.

Background reports

Report to CEAC meeting, 12 January 2021 on Doubling Nature Strategy and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document for Greater Cambridge
<https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s120256/Doubling%20Nature%20Strategy%20Biodiversity%20Report.pdf>

Report to CEAC meeting, 1 September 2020 on Doubling Nature Strategy

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

15. Actions arising from the Doubling Nature Strategy will be resourced from existing budgets where this is possible. Otherwise, budget will be allocated through the Council's usual business and service planning procedures.

Climate Change

16. Nature can provide a range of solutions to climate change, both its impacts and causes, for example, increased tree cover may result in increased carbon sequestration and mitigation of flood risks exacerbated by climate change. The Doubling Nature Strategy supports various natural solutions to climate change.

Appendices

Appendix A: Doubling Nature Strategy

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