

## Climate and environment emergency executive panel

**Date:** Tuesday, 28 June 2022

**Time:** 16:00

**Venue:** Mancroft room, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

### Committee members:

#### Councillors:

Carlo  
Champion  
Hampton  
Lubbock  
Oliver  
Padda  
Stutely

### For further information please contact:

Committee officer: Jackie Rodger  
t: (01603) 989547  
e: [jackierodger@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:jackierodger@norwich.gov.uk)

Democratic services  
City Hall  
Norwich  
NR2 1NH

[www.norwich.gov.uk](http://www.norwich.gov.uk)

### Information for members of the public

Members of the public and the media have the right to attend meetings of full council, the cabinet and committees except where confidential information or exempt information is likely to be disclosed, and the meeting is therefore held in private.

For information about attending or speaking at meetings, please contact the committee officer above or refer to the council's website



If you would like this agenda in an alternative format, such as a larger or smaller font, audio or Braille, or in a different language, please contact the committee officer above.

## Agenda

		<b>Page nos</b>
1	<b>Appointment of chair</b> To appoint a chair for the ensuing civic year	
2	<b>Appointment of vice chair</b> To appoint the vice chair for the ensuing civic year	
3	<b>Apologies</b> To receive apologies for absence	
4	<b>Declarations of interest</b>  (Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting)	
5	<b>Minutes</b>  To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2022	3 - 8
6	<b>Biodiversity Strategy 2022 – 2032 pre consultation discussion</b>  <b>Purpose</b> - To update the committee on the work underway to develop a Biodiversity Strategy, and to seek the committee's views on the draft.	9 - 28

Date of publication: **Monday, 20 June 2022**



**Climate and environment emergency executive panel**

**16:30 to 18:30**

**22 March 2022**

Present: Councillors Stonard (vice chair, in the chair), Carlo, Champion (substitute for Councillor Osborn), Giles (substitute for Councillor Thomas (Va)), Lubbock, Oliver and Stutely (substitute for Councillor Hampton)

Also present: Councillor Packer, cabinet member for health and wellbeing

Apologies: Councillors Hampton (chair), Thomas (Va) and Osborn

**1. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**2. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021.

**3. Environmental Strategy Team Update**

Phil Hunt, the environmental strategy manager gave a presentation to update members to provide an overview of the scope of the activities of the team and the current staffing and recruitment in place to complete the team. (A copy of the presentation was included in the agenda papers for the meeting.) During the presentation, the environmental strategy manager expressed his gratitude to Rachel Sowerby, affordable warmth officer, and his predecessor, Richard Willson for their help with the handover. He also introduced Martin Symons, who would be the carbon management programme coordinator from 4 April 2022. There was funding for a further two more posts from April and the details were still to be agreed.

During discussion, the environmental strategy manager and the head of strategy, engagement and culture answered members' questions. Members were interested in the mapping exercise across the council to ensure that policies and strategies were applied throughout all areas of the organisation and maximised the impact of its environmental policies by working with other councils and partner organisations. It was noted that the 2040 City Vision Business Leaders' group and Norwich Climate Change Commission were focussed on supporting businesses to decarbonise and, although supported by the council, were independent of it.

Members were advised that in relation to the vacant posts, existing job descriptions had been reviewed to prioritise the resources to the budget available.

In reply to a question, the environmental strategy manager commented that the Retrofit Strategy was more closely linked to the Heat Strategy than the Affordable Warmth Strategy (although there were co-benefits for residents). The Heat Strategy described how heating would be provided in the city as it transferred away from reliance on gas.

**RESOLVED** to thank the officers for the report and to welcomed Phil Hunt and Martin Symons, to the council.

#### **4. Report of Progress on the Installation of an Air Source Heat Pump at City Hall**

Martin Symons presented the report as he had managed this project in his current employment. The next stage would be the delivery of the steel frame for the air source heat pump (ASHP) by crane on 28 March 2022. The ASHP would be installed in April. 2022. New efficient gas boilers had been installed which would provide 108 per cent efficiency. The ASHP would deliver 43 per cent of the heating and hot water for City Hall, providing a carbon saving of 104 tonnes. The project should be completed by the end of May.

During discussion, Martin Symons and the environmental strategy manager answered members' questions.

Members commented on the efficiency of the gas boiler exceeding 100 per cent and were advised that the European methodology for calculating efficiency is used by manufacturers which counts energy recovered from flue gas condensate as additional to the maximum efficiency without counting the condensate. In practice this means the boilers installed are condensing boilers and the most efficient available.

Discussion ensued on this project being an exemplar of renewable energy on a listed building and that it would benefit the wider community by sharing information. A member said that cost and lack of knowledge of ASHP were barriers to installation. Members of the community would be curious to see it and encourage the use of ASHPs on other large buildings and in households. Members commented that there should be opportunities for local people to learn skills and noted that the installation was from a firm in Suffolk. The council could share the knowledge of the ASHP by providing visits from interested parties once it was installed and working. Members also noted that this scheme complemented the photo-voltaic panels on the City Hall.

Members noted that the council had received a grant of c£625k for the installation and that decarbonisation rather than savings had been the focus for this project. The environmental strategy manager confirmed that there would be communications about the project, such as around the road closures for the crane. However, the increasing cost of gas and changes to building regulations in relation to prevent the fitting of gas boilers into new domestic properties from 2025, would promote the use of ASHPs as a source of heating. Members were advised that on mild days City Hall's heating needs could be met by the ASHP, but when it was colder 57 per cent of the heat would be delivered by the new gas boilers.

The panel noted that there was a national shortage of installers of ASHP and were advised that as part of the strategy development work in the county it was recognised that there was a need to address this through the Green Economy. The council would address this by working in partnership with the technical colleges and, as part of the Retrofit Strategy, identify opportunities for upskilling contractors.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

## **5. Report of Recent Community Engagement Activities Relating to Biodiversity**

Councillor Packer, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, introduced the report and said there had been a significant amount of work undertaken by the community enabling team to engage the community in the development of the biodiversity strategy.

The environmental strategy manager presented the report, and together with the head of strategy, engagement and culture, answered members' questions.

During discussion, members considered how they or residents in the wards they represented could become "Citizen Scientists" or comment on the emerging strategy. Members were advised that the ["Big Biodiversity Conversation"](#) was still open for comments which were being collated and analysed by volunteers at the University of East Anglia. "Citizen Scientists" could be engaged through voluntary organisations that supported cemeteries and parks and the community engagement team. Members were advised that interested residents could sign up on the [website](#).

The panel commented on the observed outcomes set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Members pointed out that the city council was opposed to the Northern Distributor Road (NDR) Western Link because of its danger to biodiversity. A member commented that it was not clear whether the "negativity to the council" was aimed at the city council, the county council or the adjoining district councils, but noted that the invitations to the event had been to communities within the city council boundaries.

The panel commented that the link to food poverty/sustainability had been discussed. The environmental strategy manager explained that this discussion had been about the rising cost in gas and mobilising the community in the purchase of materials to insulate their homes. Members noted that the community and neighbourhood engagement team's work around food poverty, included work around inequality, disadvantage and cost of living crisis.

Members were advised that the council would seek to work with independent subject matter experts as required, but there was not sufficient work for a dedicated post. Members considered the requirement for biodiversity net gain through planning applications and were advised that applicants provided an independent ecology/biodiversity survey which was assessed by the planning officers.

Councillor Packer addressed the panel on the importance for all ward councillors to encourage residents to engage and respect the council's policies to protect biodiversity and green infrastructure and expressed his regret that trees adjacent to a community centre had been cut down.

A member said that he was looking forward to seeing the biodiversity strategy in June 2022 and how it would fit in with the waste strategy.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the report:
- (2) that members and residents can engage in the biodiversity activities by signing up on the [website](#) or contacting the [community@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:community@norwich.gov.uk)

## **6. Update on Climate Risks to Norwich City Council**

The affordable warmth officer presented the report and explained that there was a greater awareness of risks to service areas from climate change.

During discussion members shared their views on the risk assessment of climate change and mitigation. A member commented on the impact of climate change on the county and concern that one of these impacts would be inward migration as people were forced to relocate from coastal areas.

The head of strategy, engagement and culture and the environmental strategy manager reminded the panel that this work was specific to the council and its services. The identification of risks associated with climate change and the mitigation was ongoing. It should be considered in the context of the council's wider influence on climate change through the City Vision and its other partnerships and would keep an eye on good academic information to build into the council's risk analysis. Members expressed an interest in knowing the source of the baseline information for this purpose.

A member commented that the risk register needed to include mitigation for councillors as community leaders to deal with events directly arising from climate change, such as flash flooding and heat waves, and mitigation such as upskilling members to coordinate the community response. The head of strategy, engagement and culture said this would be relate to emergency situations and that she would report back to a future meeting on the assessment and risk mitigation, including councillor training.

**RESOLVED** to note the work that was being done to identify climate risk to Norwich City Council.

## **7. Update on Funding Bids**

(Councillor Lubbock left the meeting during this item.)

The affordable warmth officer presented the report.

During discussion, the affordable warmth officer, together with the environmental strategy manager and the head of strategy, engagement and culture answered members' questions.

Members commented on the pilot project to increase the number of electric vehicle charging points in the city and discussed the practicality of providing chargers in densely populated parts of the city. Members considered that access to the chargers would be important and that residents would need to communicate with each other through social messaging about availability. The problem would be ensuring that cars were not parked in the bays so that residents wanting to use the chargers could access them. There was some experience of this with the bays reserved for car club vehicles. Discussion ensued on the need for infrastructure for electric charging points to affect the transition to electric vehicles, which included standards to ensure that cables across pavements were protected to ensure access, and payment arrangements. The panel also considered other constraints to the transition to electric vehicle use such as capacity on the national grid and the practicalities of flat dwellers accessing chargers.

In reply to a member's question, the affordable warmth officer confirmed that in relation to the Sustainable Warmth Competition, the survey work was separate to the capped sum of £10k for owner occupiers and £5k for rented properties. She would provide information to ward councillors on the take up of the in Nelson, Sewell and Wensum wards. The private sector housing team would be targeting landlords.

Members were advised that there would be further information on The HNZ (Heat Network Zone) Pilot Programme in June 2022. The environmental strategy manager said that the benefits of this modelling could lead to improvements in affordable warmth and reduced carbon emissions in the city.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the progress on these funding bids;
- (2) ask the affordable warmth officer to circulate ward information data on the Sustainable Warmth Competition to members of the panel.

CHAIR







**Committee Name:** Climate and environment emergency executive panel

**Committee Date:** 28/06/2022

**Report Title:** Biodiversity Strategy 2022 – 2032 pre consultation discussion

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Cllr Giles - Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing
<b>Report from:</b>	Head of Strategy, Engagement and Culture
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the work underway to develop a Biodiversity Strategy, and to seek the committee's views on the draft.

### **Recommendation:**

To provide views on the draft strategy.

### **Policy Framework**

The Council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city objective: priority to protect and invest in our parks, green spaces and biodiversity.

## Report Details

1. Norwich City Council has declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies and a key element of our response to these is the development of a new Biodiversity Strategy.
2. Since the council's previous biodiversity strategy was published significant efforts have been made to improve biodiversity across our city, by the council, partner organisations and by committed work from passionate communities and residents. This has included work to improve the quality of our eight local nature reserves and wildlife sites, namely: Green Flag Status for Eaton Park, Waterloo Park and Mousehold Heath; and management plans in place for those sites with prioritised habitats and species. £300,000 in CIL funding was secured to invest in the creation of new habitats at Kett's Heights to boost biodiversity.
3. At Mousehold Heath a grant of £30,600 from secured from Natural England for Higher Level Stewardship Agreement to improve the quantity and quality of heathland and acid grassland, nationally important habitats. This work has led to the identification of: a number of scarce and threatened bee and wasp species; a number of butterfly species, such as small copper and green hairstreak; and a number of moth species, including true lover's knott, heath rustic, and beautiful yellow underwing. The installation of bentonite clay linings at the Vinegar Pond and the Mustard Pond have seen a good number of dragonfly and damselfly species prosper, including the Norfolk Hawker, a nationally threatened and scarce Red Data book species.
4. The city has a unique and diverse natural environment, with green spaces, moorland, parks, woodland, allotments and waterways. The city's tree canopy cover is higher than the national average<sup>1</sup> with generous levels of open spaces, two river valleys, extensive undeveloped flood meadows and marshes and other significant habitats and species, so we are building from a positive base, and from existing strategies, management plans, and arrangements.
5. The Council's new draft Biodiversity Strategy 2022 – 2032 is attached as Appendix A.
6. It has been informed by expert external advice from the East of England LGA, pre-draft public consultation via an event at the Halls in November 2021, and digital engagement via the Get Talking Norwich platform which is still live. Committee members will recall that the outputs from that pre-draft consultation was discussed at the last CEEEP meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2022. Much of the input from the engagement was specific ideas and tactical comments, and great enthusiasm from the community, and these outputs will be included in our Biodiversity Opportunities Register.
7. The draft strategy will be published for external consultation shortly, and this will include:

---

<sup>1</sup> As indicated by the UK Ward Canopy Cover interactive map at <https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d8c253ab17e1412586d9774d1a09fa07>

- a) Direct engagement with Strategic Partners who are owners or managers of significant natural assets and Interested Parties who can facilitate change. This includes, for example, other local councils, key partnership groups such as the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership, the River Wensum Strategy Partnership and the Norfolk Strategic Planning Group, key organisations such as the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Broads Authority and RSPB and others. A schedule of Strategic Partners and Interested Parties is included in the Strategy.
  - b) Engagement with communities and individuals via the Environment Hub on Get Talking Norwich, and via existing contacts and networks.
  - c) Engagement with Norwich City Council members, via this group and other forums.
  - d) The full detail of the consultation communication plan, and final timelines, are being developed as this report is written. Strategic Partners will be invited to a webinar to discuss and comment on the plan and Interested Parties via an online portal. There will also be an opportunity to contribute to the Biodiversity Opportunities Register.
8. The new strategy proposes an enhanced commitment, from that in the Environment Strategy (2020-2025) of “Protect and enhance biodiversity and habitat” to “Create a city where biodiversity can recover and thrive, halt species decline and increase species abundance by 2030” and includes two principal outcomes:
- a) The development of a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) for Norwich which will be created by leading and inviting coordinated action from Strategic Partners and Interested Parties to work together towards the common goal of sustained nature recovery in the city
  - b) Aligning council operations with the strategy to contribute to the NRN by improving biodiversity in parks, open spaces and the green spaces in and around our buildings
9. Alongside the principal outcomes, the strategy also seeks to:
- a) Improve wellbeing through improved access to nature;
  - b) Reduce heat, drought, flood risk and other impacts of climate change, improve air quality and water quality in our rivers and surface water resources;
  - c) Enhance tourism and visitor experience and
  - d) Grow the green economy with regards promoting biodiversity and ensuring alignment between this Strategy and strategies and plans for economic growth;
10. Delivery of the strategy will be managed via a cross council Biodiversity Working Group, administered from the central Environment Strategy Team and

additional resource is in place to establish this. Funding is also in place for the UEA to undertake a biodiversity baseline measurement exercise for the city.

11. A Biodiversity Action plan, and Opportunities Register, will be put in place to identify and prioritise actions, via the normal internal corporate planning processes.
12. We expect to bring back an updated strategy towards the end of this year for adoption by Cabinet, and intend to discuss that with CEEEP members again.
13. The ambition set out in the Strategy is to achieve an increase in species abundance by 2030, and for Norwich's NRN to be significantly complete by this time. This exceeds the ambitions set out in the Environment Act 2021, which are to halt species decline by 2030 and for the national NRN to be complete by 2042.

### **Consultation**

14. The discussion at this committee forms part of our consultation on the draft strategy, and further consultation is planned.

### **Implications**

15. The Norwich Nature Recovery Network proposed in the Strategy may need to align with the requirements of the national NRN as set out in the Environment Act 2021, the details of which are currently unknown. The strategy makes provision for detail of the city's NRN to flex according to national NRN when details become known. A similar linkage and flexibility exists for the Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy, which is currently in the early stages of development.

### **Financial and Resources**

16. Financial decisions associated with the strategy will be undertaken in line with our Corporate Plan priorities and internal planning processes. Funding is in place for central resource to establish our working group, and for the baseline study of biodiversity in the city.

### **Legal**

17. Not applicable

### **Statutory Considerations**

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Equality and Diversity	NA
Health, Social and Economic Impact	This strategy is intended to have a beneficial impact on health

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:</b>
Crime and Disorder	NA
Children and Adults Safeguarding	NA
Environmental Impact	The strategy will enhance the city's environment.

### **Risk Management**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Controls Required</b>
Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

### **Other Options Considered**

18. No other option considered.

### **Reasons for the decision/recommendation**

19. To seek the committee's views on the draft strategy.

### **Background papers:**

**Appendices:** Appendix A - Draft Biodiversity Strategy

**Contact Officer:** Environmental Strategy Manager

**Name:** Phil Hunt

Email address: [philhunt@norwich.gov.uk](mailto:philhunt@norwich.gov.uk)



**Norwich City Council**  
**Biodiversity Strategy 2022 – 2032**

DRAFT

**Draft for Consultation**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Foreword by Councillor Adam Giles	3
2. The Need and Context for this New Biodiversity Strategy	5
3. Council Biodiversity Policy and the 2040 City Vision	5
4. Taking an Integrated Strategic Approach	6
5. Working in Partnership	6
6. The Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	7
7. Management and Assurance	7
8. Consultation and Communication	7
9. The Strategic Objectives	8
10. Appendix	11



# 1. Foreword

Foreword by Councillor Adam Giles - Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing

- 1.1 Norwich City Council has declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies. This new Biodiversity Strategy and its associated Action Plan are a key part of delivering against the priorities and ambitions set within the Council's overarching Environmental Strategy 2020-25 (Appendix A).
- 1.2 We are rightly proud of our beautiful, unique and diverse city and its natural environment - with many hidden green space gems, heathland, parks, woodland, allotments and waterways, providing Green Flag award-winning places for us to appreciate. This habitat is of course also home to a variety of wildlife and nature, whose survival is dependent on human behaviour. In turn our future prosperity is reliant on biodiversity being able to thrive.
- 1.3 Since the council's previous biodiversity strategy was published in 2002, significant efforts have been made to improve the quality of our local nature reserves and wildlife sites. These include Green Flag Status for Eaton Park, Waterloo Park, and Mousehold Heath, as well as management plans in place for those sites with prioritised habitats and species. £300,000 in CIL funding was secured to invest in the creation of new habitats at Kett's Heights to boost biodiversity.
- 1.4 At Mousehold Heath a grant of £30,600 was secured from Natural England for a Higher Level Stewardship Agreement to improve the quantity and quality of heathland and acid grassland, nationally important habitats. This work has led to the identification of: a number of scarce and threatened bee and wasp species; a number of butterfly species, such as small copper and green hairstreak; and a number of moth species, including true lover's knott, heath rustic, and beautiful yellow underwing. The installation of bentonite clay linings at the Vinegar Pond and the Mustard Pond have seen a good number of dragonfly and damselfly species prosper, including the Norfolk Hawker, a nationally threatened and scarce Red Data book species.
- 1.5 Exceptional partnership work and valuable projects have been delivered with our environmentally passionate community and key stakeholders. A biodiversity event held at St Andrew's & Blackfriars Hall on 30th November 2021, highlighted a vast range of additional ideas that we can look to take forward together. More than ever we need to work collectively and also look to draw on the experience of the Norwich 2040 City Vision partnership to reach out to all sectors of our community.
- 1.6 Our broader Environmental Strategy (2020-25) complements this Biodiversity Strategy through provision for reduced carbon emissions and air pollution.

- 1.7 The City Council has an important leadership role to play as an anchor institution in creating sustainable communities where biodiversity can thrive. Positive action through innovative management techniques of parks and open spaces, excellent conservation of our natural areas, and ambitious expectations of housing developers all support our goal to create a place where our residents, visitors and the environment can all flourish.
- 1.8 The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of access to local green spaces and nature, both for physical health and mental wellbeing. Biodiversity must be protected and enhanced if Norwich is to remain an attractive place to live and work for our residents.
- 1.9 In order to maintain and improve biodiversity across the city, action will need to be taken at every level. From individuals to large organisations. From gardens to our road verges, our green spaces, to our industrial estates and new developments. We need to be much more connected to, and aware of, the nature that surrounds us, our impact upon it, the benefits it brings, and take the opportunities to support biodiversity available to us.
- 1.10 We have set ourselves ambitious targets and pledge to use our planning powers to produce Biodiversity Net Gain on all redevelopments, a genuinely radical approach to sustainable development that enhances biodiversity.
- 1.11 It will be equally important to work closely with and influence key partners and stakeholders, including Norfolk County Council, who have responsibility for transport, highways and verges, lighting and education in our area. We will continue to strive to lead by example in positively managing our own treasured and unique habitats.

I am delighted we are continuing to demonstrate our commitment to put biodiversity at the centre of what Norwich City Council does, support our wider aim of responding effectively to the Climate Emergency, and lead on educating us all in the immense value of our biodiversity being able to prosper.

*A. Giles*

Councillor Adam Giles - Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing



## **2. The Need and Context for this New Biodiversity Strategy**

The paragraphs below firstly define biodiversity, and then go on to set out the need and context for this new Biodiversity Strategy (hereafter ‘this Strategy’).

- 2.1 Biodiversity is the collective term for the variety and abundance of forms of life found in an area, including animals, plants, fungi and microorganisms like bacteria. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, like an intricate web to maintain, balance and support life. Biodiversity supports everything in nature that we need to survive including, food, oxygen, clean air, clean water, medicine, and shelter<sup>i</sup>.
- 2.2 The current global loss of biodiversity is unprecedented in human history. The 2020 global Living Planet Index shows an average 68% fall in populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish between 1970 and 2016<sup>ii</sup>.
- 2.3 Thriving biodiversity and sustainable ecosystems are essential for our survival, wellbeing and our local economy. We are inextricably connected with nature; we are part of the ecosystem and not separate from it.
- 2.4 In response to this, Norwich City Council (hereafter ‘the Council’) declared a climate and environmental emergency in September of 2019.
- 2.5 The Environment Act 2021<sup>iii</sup> (hereafter ‘the new Environment Act’) aims (amongst other things) to halt species decline and improve our natural environment. Part of Central Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>iv</sup>, it sets out a framework for developing Nature Recovery Networks, Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), Protected Site and Species Conservation Strategies and gives councils new powers to ensure 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) is achieved in new developments.
- 2.6 Norwich’s tree canopy cover is higher than the national average<sup>v</sup> with the city providing generous levels of open spaces, two river valleys, extensive undeveloped flood meadows and marshes and other significant habitats and species. This strategy aims to build on the existing knowledge of Norwich’s biodiversity and the success of existing strategies, management plans, and arrangements.

## **3. Council Biodiversity Policy and the 2040 City Vision**

Taking action to redress the climate and environmental emergencies are key policy priorities for the Council and form central planks of the Norwich 2040 City Vision (hereafter ‘the Vision’).

- 3.1 Existing policy statements include:

a) Environmental Policy

Appendix A of the Environmental Strategy 2020-25 states that the Council will monitor its resource for

*Protecting and enhancing habitat and biodiversity*

b) Development Plan Policies, which are listed in Appendix Section 10.1

### 3.2 New Policy Statement

The following *new* policy statement has been agreed as part of the process of producing this Strategy. This statement supersedes the previous statement made in Appendix A of the Environmental Strategy 2020-25<sup>vi</sup>, and forms part of the 2022 Environmental Commitment Policy Statement which is expected to be published in 2022:

*Create a city where biodiversity can recover and thrive, halt species decline and increase species abundance by 2030*

3.3 One of the 5 themes of The Vision is to create a *Liveable City*, which includes:

*Protecting and maintaining our green and open spaces to improve biodiversity*

3.4 The aims and objectives of this Strategy describe how Council policy and the Vision will be effectively and reliably delivered upon, and how legislation will be adhered to.

## 4. Taking an Integrated Strategic Approach

To redress the environmental emergency, it is recognised that this Strategy shall successfully identify dependencies with other associated Council strategies and ensure their successful integration. Associated policies, strategies and plans are detailed in Appendix Section 10.2.

## 5. Working in Partnership and with Interested Parties

To deliver the objectives set out in Section 9 below, partnerships shall be established with key external organisations concerned with strategic planning and action to improve biodiversity.

The Council shall also engage with interested parties to deliver the objectives. A register of interested parties shall be maintained and updated by the Biodiversity Working Group as proposed in Appendix Section 10.3.

## **6. Biodiversity Strategy Aims**

The aims of this Strategy are to set out:

- a) The generalities of the Council's approach to delivering its biodiversity policy commitments;
- b) How relevant parts of the Vision will be realised and
- c) Ensure the Council's duties, with regards biodiversity, are met in a coordinated and effective way.

It is envisaged that this Strategy is reviewed and amended every 5 years to ensure it continues meet its strategic aims, or as required.

## **7. Management and Assurance**

- 7.1 The implementation of Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan will be managed, measured, updated and communicated by the Council's Biodiversity Working Group, as part its Environmental Management System assurance arrangements.
- 7.2 The Biodiversity Working Group shall comprise officers of the Council with reporting lines to the Council Leadership Team, Portfolio Holders and/or Cabinet, as required.
- 7.3 The Biodiversity Working Group shall maintain registers concerning environmental aspects, compliance, risks and opportunities, funding opportunities, key strategic partners and interested parties.

## **8. Consultation and Communication**

This Strategy is informed by a comprehensive consultation exercise including members of the public, officers and members of Norwich City Council, subject matter experts, partner organisations and interested parties.

Communication of this Strategy will be managed by the Biodiversity Working Group.

## 9. The Strategic Objectives

This section describes how the Council will meet its policy commitments to address the environmental emergency with regards biodiversity, and how it will realise the relevant parts of the Vision.

The strategic objectives are:

- 9.1 Develop a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) in the city to bring about a sustained recovery in biodiversity. The city's NRN shall be part of the *national* NRN as set out in the new Environment Act, the proposed aims of which are summarised in Appendix section 10.4.

Norwich's NRN shall:

- a. Identify, connect, protect, create and enhance blue and green natural assets<sup>vii</sup>
- b. Recognise the potential habitat value of all non-built space as well as potential habitats which may exist within the curtilage of buildings
- c. Consist of nature hubs such as existing wildlife sites and parkland, connected by nature corridors which may take the form of designated parts of the city including streets, green spaces on and around buildings and highway verges. Opportunities to 'infill' the network will be sought in the form of smaller green spaces in the built environment, such as back gardens and smaller green areas.
- d. Norwich's NRN will be significantly complete and increase species abundance by 2030;

The NRN shall be enabled by, or comprise, the following elements:

- e. The Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy which shall be a principal driver of the NRN in the Greater Norwich Area.
- f. The *national* NRN may, when details become known, require change to the requirements of the city's NRN to ensure alignment. It is acknowledged that implementation of the National NRN is a duty of Norfolk County Council;
- g. Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Species Conservation Strategies and other mechanisms of the New Environment Act, to establish species and place-based priorities;

- h. Nature assets owned and/or managed by partner organisations such as nature reserves;
- i. A significant portion of the parks, open spaces and undeveloped land owned and managed by the Council;
- j. Existing buildings owned and managed by the Council with regards the potential for green roofs, balconies and green areas adjacent to buildings;
- k. Existing buildings owned and managed by commercial entities, contributing on a voluntary basis, with regards the potential for green roofs, balconies and green areas adjacent to buildings;
- l. Existing buildings owned and managed by members of the public, contributing on a voluntary basis, with regards the potential for green roofs, balconies, back gardens and green areas adjacent to buildings and
- m. New developments providing 10% biodiversity net gain, through either onsite or offsite arrangements.

9.2 Apply evidence and science-based approaches to improving biodiversity, by:

- a. Establishing measurable key indicators using methodologies which are supported by recognised science;
- b. Recording biodiversity baselines and subsequent ecology change using surveys and recognised methodologies, to measure the success of this Strategy and related activity, and to inform the evolution of future iterations of this Strategy
- c. Promoting sustainable ecosystems through recognised ecology theory and practice whilst also enabling innovation, and by recognising the need for ecology to adapt to climate change.

This objective is informed, in part, by the guidance set out in Appendix D of DEFRA's Measuring environmental change: outcome indicator framework the 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>viii</sup>

9.3 In the planning, development and maintenance of the NRN, the Council shall seek to:

- a. Create new policies and strategies as necessary to deliver the NRN and meet new statutory requirements such as realising 10% biodiversity net gain in new developments;

- b. Achieve savings and develop revenue streams aligned with biodiversity improvement, such as through nature-based solution offerings and off-site biodiversity net gain arrangements for new development;
- c. Reduce negative impacts on biodiversity through measures relating to the design and operation of its buildings and other assets;
- d. Reduce negative impacts on biodiversity through measures relating to how the council procures goods and services;
- e. Reduce heat, drought, flood risk and improve air and water quality, through biodiversity improvement schemes;
- f. Improve wellbeing through improved access to nature;
- g. Enhance tourism and improve visitor experience;
- h. Grow the green economy with regards promoting biodiversity and ensuring alignment between this Strategy and strategies and plans for economic growth;
- i. Deliver our policy commitments, plans and the relevant sections of the Vision in relation to this Strategy and Action Plan;
- j. Act as Leader to co-create opportunity and coordinate action and external funding and investment, by proactively and collaboratively engaging with partners and interested parties, and
- k. [Manage financial decisions associated with the NRN in line with our Corporate Plan priorities and internal planning processes. *Wording to be finalised*]

A Biodiversity Action Plan will be developed setting out how each of these objectives will be realised.



## 10. Appendix

### 10.1 Development Plan Policies

#### a) Current Development Plan Policies

##### Policy DM6 Natural environmental assets

Development is expected to take all reasonable opportunities to avoid harm to and protect and enhance the natural environment of Norwich and its setting, including both sites and species

##### Policy DM7 Trees and development

Trees and significant hedge and shrub masses should be retained as an integral part of the design of development except where their long-term survival would be compromised by their age or physical condition or there are exceptional and overriding benefits in accepting their loss.

#### b) Future Proposed Development Plan Policies

##### Greater Norwich Local Plan

The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) is in two parts - the Strategy and Sites Plan. The Strategy outlines the broad approach to housing and jobs growth, along with policies to ensure sustainability, protect our environment and provide infrastructure.

The Sites Plan identifies the sites which we propose to allocate to meet housing and employment needs to 2038, as well as the allocations we propose to carry forward from the current Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk local plans. At this point the Sites Plan excludes villages within South Norfolk which will be addressed through a separate housing sites allocation document and will form part of the development plan for the area

##### Supplementary Development Plan

A supplementary development plan will be produced to give guidance to developers around the requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain, currently expected to come into at the end of 2023.

### 10.2 Associated Policies, Strategies and Plans

#### a) Associated Policies, Strategies and Action Plans owned by Norwich City Council

- Environmental Commitment Policy Statement

- Environmental Strategy
- Environmental Action Plan
- Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan
- Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Strategic Asset Management Framework March 2022
- Asset management strategy for housing
- Parks and open spaces
- Allotments and cemeteries
- Trees
- Pesticide use
- Nutrient Neutrality
- Climate change adaption
- Carbon management plan
- Water reduction
- Waste reduction and recycling

b) Policies, Strategies and Plans owned by external actors

- National Planning Policy Framework<sup>ix</sup>
- HM Government 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>x</sup>
- River Wensum Strategy
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies
- Species Conservation Strategies
- Protected Site Strategies
- Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework

### 10.3 Proposed Strategic Partners and Interested Parties

<b>Strategic Partners</b>
Norwich City Council
Norfolk County Council
Greater Norwich Growth Board
Norwich Climate Change Commission

Broadland District Council and South Norfolk District Council
Breckland Council
Broads Authority
Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership
River Wensum Strategy Partnership
Norfolk Wildlife Trust
Woodland Trust
RSBP
Wild East
Community Representation
2040 City Vision Business Leaders' Group
Norfolk Strategic Planning Group

<b>Interested Parties</b>
<i>Local Interested Parties</i>
Norwich citizens
Norwich businesses
Norwich institutions
Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service
Norwich voluntary, community and social enterprises
Registered housing providers
Community groups with an interest in biodiversity
The Council executive, administration and cabinet
Representative from the Greater Norwich Sport & Physical Activity Strategy
Norwich Fringe Project
Parish Councils
Norwich Friends of the Earth
<i>Campaign Groups</i>
Friends of the Earth
Greenpeace
Extinction Rebellion
<i>Regional and National Interested Parties</i>
Water Resource East

Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Office for Environmental Protection
Natural England
Environment Agency
Forestry Commission
Forestry England

## 10.4 The National Nature Recovery Network

The *national* Nature Recovery Network proposed aims are:

- Halt the decline in species abundance by 2030;
- Increase species abundance by at least 10% by 2042, compared to 2030 levels<sup>xi</sup>;
- Improve the England-level GB Red List Index for species extinction risk by 2042, compared to 2022 levels<sup>xi</sup>;
- Restore 75% of protected sites on land (including freshwaters) to favourable condition so nature can thrive<sup>xi</sup>;
- Create or restore 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites by 2042, compared to 2022 levels<sup>xi</sup>;
- Recover threatened and iconic animal and plant species by providing more, diverse and better-connected habitats;
- Support work to increase woodland cover and
- Achieve a range of environmental, economic and social benefits, such as carbon capture, flood management, clean water, pollination and recreation.

<sup>i</sup> Adapted from WWF link here [What is biodiversity? | Pages | WWF \(worldwildlife.org\)](https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/what-is-biodiversity)

<sup>ii</sup> Living Planet Index link here [Living Planet Index](https://www.livingplanetindex.org/)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/world-leading-environment-act-becomes-law> and

<sup>iv</sup> 25 Year Environment Plan link here [25 Year Environment Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/25-year-environment-plan)

<sup>v</sup> As indicated by the UK Ward Canopy Cover interactive map at

<https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d8c253ab17e1412586d9774d1a09fa07>

<sup>vi</sup> [Foreword – portfolio holder | Environmental strategy 2020-25 | Norwich City Council](#)

<sup>vii</sup> Blue and Green means pertaining to land and water based natural assets

<sup>viii</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/92577/9/25-yep-indicators-2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92577/9/25-yep-indicators-2019.pdf)

<sup>ix</sup> [15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment - National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>x</sup> [25 Year Environment Plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/25-year-environment-plan)

<sup>xi</sup> At the time of writing this target has been proposed in a consultation exercise by the Department of Food, Rural Affairs and Agriculture (DEFRA) [Consultation on environmental targets - Defra - Citizen Space](#)