

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 OCTOBER 2023

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT FOR POLLINATORS

Purpose:

To note the continuing progress of the Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate 2023-

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:

To note the development of a Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on Council-managed land where there is no conflict between the pollinator-friendly land management practices recommended in the strategy and the existing land use.

Reasons:

It is a statutory requirement that Carmarthenshire County Council prepares, and reports on the delivery of its Environment Act duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience. The delivery of this Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate will evidence the Council's commitment to managing its land for pollinators, which is consistent with its biodiversity duty and Well-Being Objective 10 on the Corporate Strategy: Look after the environment now and for the future
And Council's [Vision Statement for 2022–27](#), which outlines the starting point of the Council's ambitions over the next 5 years. This includes a vision to:

Increase the biodiversity of all council-owned land, and recognise the strong interrelationship between climate change, the loss of biodiversity and human wellbeing. Consider the use of CCC land for creating havens of wildflowers and pollinators, including roadsides and verges. We cannot solve the threats of human induced climate change and loss of biodiversity in isolation. We either solve both or we solve neither.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Cllr Aled Vaughan-Owen - Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability

Directorate: Place &
Infrastructure

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLACE, SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 OCTOBER 2023

DRAFT STRATEGY FOR GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT FOR POLLINATORS

1. SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

The strategy is currently under development to include a change in the policy approach and will set out a delivery plan across the County. The purpose of this report is:

to update Scrutiny on the development of a Strategy for Grassland Management for Pollinators on the CCC Estate 2023–

which sets out the Council's recommended commitment to the adoption of pollinator-friendly land management practices on Council-managed land where there is no conflict between these and the existing land use. This reflects action being carried out across Wales to address the decline in pollinators.

The Strategy sets out a vision, supported by relevant policies, as to how and why CCC will manage its amenity grassland, for which it is responsible. In delivering the strategy contains CCC will play its part in mitigating both the Nature and the Climate Change Emergencies that it and Welsh Government have declared. Successful delivery of the proposed strategy will also deliver the numerous other benefits which good-quality amenity grassland provides and contribute to the development of local environments that will be richer in wildlife and will support sustainable pollinator populations. This approach will contribute to making the places in which people live, work and play more attractive.

It has been written with the intention that other member organisations of the Public Service Board will want to manage their land for the same objectives. With the Council setting the example it is hoped that they will adopt similar pollinator-friendly land management practices, so contributing to the conservation and enhancement of Carmarthenshire's natural environment.

The Strategy reflects local and national policy and legislation linked to the conservation and enhancement of our natural environment and it links to action on carbon reduction and the health and well-being of our citizens.

2. OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND THEIR PROS AND CONS

The Strategy provides a clear direction for the Council and evidence's that we wish to take positive, agreed action to achieve its objectives. It will evidence to WG we are committed to take action to help pollinators.

Without the Strategy we would have to work in a more piecemeal and uncoordinated manner and have less clear means of evidencing our duty to take action under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and also help meet well-being goals under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. It is also a mechanism of making links to the Council's Zero Carbon Plan.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?	YES Draft Strategy Policy for Grassland Management
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: R. Griffiths

Head of Place & Sustainability

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES

2. Legal

The delivery of the strategy and the actions it contains is consistent with the S6 Biodiversity Duty placed on all public bodies in Wales under the Environment Act (Wales) 2016.

Delivery of the actions set out in the Report evidences the Council's delivery and commitment of this duty and its compliance with this Act. It is also consistent with its responsibilities under the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in particular the Resilient Wales goal.

3. Finance

In terms of delivering this change in land management practices, the overall impact should be cost neutral to the Council over time. Land managers, e.g. Housing may want the grass areas for which they are responsible cut less frequently to enhance areas for pollinators, and while this may result in some savings, e.g. labour and fuel, some costs may be higher, e.g. cost of removal of arisings and costs of moving machinery from site to site.

Financial savings should not be seen as the driver for this change of practice. The purchase of cut and collect machines has been funded with Welsh Government grant aid in 2021 and 2023 via their Local Places for Nature programme fund for use by Grounds Maintenance. This in itself is a considerable cost saving.

5. Risk Management Issues

Failure to deliver land management practices that are beneficial to pollinators places a reputational risk on the Council and risks its compliance with its S6 Biodiversity Duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

6. Physical Assets

Delivery of the Strategy for Pollinators will have an impact on how the Council manages some of the assets for which it is responsible e.g. grassland management at amenity sites, around property and housing.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Carmarthenshire County Council Environment Act Forward Plan		Legislation and Guidance (gov.wales) (in the downloads section)