

Motion to Full Council 17th November 2021

A Borough Nature Recovery Declaration

This council acknowledges that:

We are experiencing a nature crisis. With 41 per cent of wild species in decline nationally, and 15 per cent facing extinction, we recognise that:

- a) Nature is in long-term decline, and the requirement to take action to halt and reverse this is urgent;
- b) Nature provides us with vital support systems, and severe declines in biodiversity are undermining nature's productivity and adaptability, posing excessive uncertainty for our economies and wellbeing;
- c) A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, happy, prosperous society;
- d) The impacts of the climate change are driving nature's decline, while restoring nature provides a wide variety of cost-effective benefits to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- e) Many of our areas of work across the Borough have an impact on nature, and we have responsibilities to make decisions to protect and enhance it.

This Council further acknowledges that:

To address the nature crisis and aim to achieve the multiple environmental benefits that nature can bring to people, the 'Bigger, Better, More and Joined-up' principles of the 2010 Lawton Report – 'Making Space for Nature' - should be followed to help re-build nature:

- a) There must be more space given to wildlife;
- b) Existing wildlife spaces must be expanded;
- c) The quality of existing wildlife spaces should be improved by better habitat management;
- d) The connectivity between wildlife spaces must be enhanced.

This Council resolves:

In order to support the recovery of nature across Newcastle and wider Staffordshire, this council commits to:

- 1. Create a Local Nature Recovery Action Plan that will sit under the umbrella of the Councils Sustainable Environment Strategy and alongside complimentary policies such the Urban Tree Planting Strategy.**

- 2. Develop a Local Habitat Map that identifies existing habitat sites, priority areas for protection, improvement and expansion as part of the emerging Borough Local Plan**
- 3. Embed nature's recovery into all strategic plans and policy areas, not just those directly related to the environment. Ensure local nature recovery is well understood across the authority and complements other relevant plans and strategies.**
- 4. Improve access to nature by following the Natural England 'Nature Nearby – Accessible Natural Greenspace' guidance.**
- 5. Demonstrate leadership by championing Nature Recovery and supporting residents as well as the local business and education communities to take action to put nature into recovery.**
- 6. Appoint the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Recycling as the member of the Cabinet as the designated lead for tackling the nature crisis.**
- 7. Appoint the Executive Director of Operational Services as the Lead Officer for coordinating council operations in relation to local nature recovery.**
- 8. Integrate the targets, objectives, and outcomes of this motion with those outlined in the existing Sustainable Environment Strategy to ensure measures to tackle climate issues compliment the principles of local nature recovery.**
- 9. Wherever possible, the council will invest in nature-based solutions in order to tackle the local nature crisis and climate change together.**
- 10. Provide training and development resources for Elected Members and staff about the need for and benefits of an effective local nature recovery actions.**
- 11. That the Economy, Environment & Place Scrutiny Committee monitor the Recovery Action Plan alongside its scrutiny of the Sustainable Environment Strategy.**
- 12. Work closely with Staffordshire County Council and other local partners to form a Staffordshire-wide Local Nature Recovery Partnership.**

Proposer: Cllr Simon Tagg

Seconder: Cllr Trevor Johnson