

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Council – 06 November 2024

Report Title

Cabinet Response to the Improving Places Scrutiny Review – Nature Recovery

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To report on the Cabinet's response to the findings and recommendations from the Improving Places Select Committee's Scrutiny review into nature recovery.

Recommendations

1. That Council note Cabinet's response to the recommendations summarised in the paper Cabinet Response to the Improving Places Scrutiny Review - Nature Recovery at Appendix 1 and 2.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Cabinet Response to Improving Places Scrutiny Review – Nature Recovery
Appendix 2 Recommendations
Appendix 3 Equalities Screening Impact Assessment
Appendix 4 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Environment Act 2021, c. 30, PART 6, ss. 102 & 103](#)

[Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council \(2022\). *Notice of Motion – Nature Crisis*. Full Council, 25 May 2022.:](#)

[Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council \(2022\). *Work Programme. Overview and Scrutiny Management Board*, 14 September 2022.](#)

[HM Government \(2023\). *Environmental Improvement Plan 2023*, p46.](#)

[Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs \(2023\). *Delivering 30by30 on Land in England*.](#)

[Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council \(2024\). *Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Nature Recovery* and appendices. Cabinet, 10 June 2024.](#)

[Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council \(2024\) *Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Review – Nature Recovery* - Cabinet 16th September 2024.](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Cabinet – 16 September 2024

Cabinet – 10 June 2024

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Cabinet Response to Improving Places Scrutiny Review - Nature Recovery

Cabinet Response to the Improving Places Scrutiny Review – Nature Recovery

1. Background

- 1.1 On 25 May 2022, Council resolved to declare a Nature Crisis for Rotherham. It noted that almost half of all UK wildlife is in long-term decline, with 15% of species at risk of extinction. The motion stated that the climate crisis was hastening the destruction of the natural environment, damaging habitats, and disrupting ecosystems. The declaration of a Nature Crisis was first taken up by local people and groups; the motion called on the Council to do the same, noting that a thriving natural environment underpinned a healthy, prosperous society.
- 1.2 The resolution committed the Council to a range of activities, including a review of its work to enhance biodiversity. At its meeting of 14 September 2022, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) allocated this work to the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC), in its 2023 work programme.
- 1.3 The recommendations resulting from the 2023 review were endorsed by OSMB in March 2024, and presented to Cabinet in June 2024. On 16 September 2024, Cabinet approved its response. The key issues, risks and recommendations are therefore detailed within Appendix 1 and 2 of this report.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The key issues are set out in the Cabinet Report at Appendix 1.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 It is recommended that Council note that Cabinet approved the response to the recommendations as summarised in the Cabinet Report at Appendix 2.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 In preparing its recommendations the IPSC panel which reviewed nature's recovery in Rotherham sought and received a wide range of contributions from elected Members, Council officers, subject matter experts and key local partners. A full list of external contributors can be found at Appendix 2 to the report Scrutiny Review Recommendations – Nature Recovery, received by Cabinet on 10 June 2024.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Scrutiny review recommendations in respect of Nature Recovery in Rotherham were considered by OSMB at its meeting of 13 March 2024 and were received by Cabinet at its meeting of 10 June 2024. Cabinet formally considered and approved its response on the 16 September 2024.

5.2 Approved responses to each scrutiny review recommendation are detailed in Appendix 2 to this report: each proposed response has an associated timescale for delivery or further consideration. Many of these timescales are determined with reference to the Council's statutory responsibility under S. 103 of the Environment Act 2021, to publish a first Biodiversity Report no later than 12 weeks after 1 January 2026.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 Financial and procurement implications are outlined within the Cabinet report listed in Appendix 1.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 Legal advice and implications are outlined within the Cabinet report listed in Appendix 1.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 Human Resources advice and implications are outlined within the Cabinet report listed in Appendix 1.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 An equalities assessment has been carried out at Appendix 3. There are no equalities or human rights implications as a result of this report.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 In its motion of 25 May 2022 declaring a Nature Crisis in Rotherham, Council recognised that nature and climate crises were intrinsically linked, so that restoring nature could help to address climate change.

11.2 A carbon impact assessment (Appendix 4) identifies several potential carbon impacts, arising from the scrutiny review recommendations including potential changes in fuel use, and emissions from waste, improved capability of carbon sequestration through positive management of woodlands and other habitats.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Implications for partners are outlined in the report at Appendix 1.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The main risks and mitigations associated with this review are set out within section 13 of Appendix 1.

Accountable Officer(s)

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director – Regeneration and Environment
Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

	Name	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	24/10/24
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phillip Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.
The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report	Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment	22/10/24
Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion - Councillor Shepherd	24/10/24

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