

Appendix 1:

Agenda item - NOTICE OF MOTION - NATURE CRISIS - Rotherham Council

25 May 2022 – Council Meeting

This Council notes we are in the middle of a nature crisis. Almost half of all UK wildlife is in long term decline and 15% of species are at risk of extinction. The climate crisis is only hastening this destruction of the natural environment, damaging habitats and disrupting ecosystems. Yet it is these very habitats that have the potential to lock up carbon and fight back against rising global temperatures. It is essential that we not only protect these spaces, but let them thrive – for the benefit of people, planet and nature. We recognise that the terms Nature, Ecological and Biodiversity can be and are often used interchangeably by people and, for the purpose of this motion, all mean the same thing.

Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta's review into The Economics of Biodiversity, commissioned by Her Majesty's Treasury, highlighted that humanity does not exist in isolation from nature but sits within it. Nature is an asset on which all aspects of our society depends and with biodiversity declining faster than at any time in human history, we are undermining the productivity, resilience and adaptability that nature lends our society.

As we recover from the Covid-19 crisis, the need for nature-rich green spaces where we live and work is clearer than ever and will help health, education and the economy build back stronger. We recognise that the Climate and Nature emergencies are intrinsically linked with each other and also to social justice; and by building a better world to deal with the Climate and Nature Crises we will also be building a better society. We recognise that action must be taken now to remedy this and to put nature into recovery at a local level, not only to benefit Rotherham, but in support of regional, national and international work to do the same.

This Council therefore notes and recognises that

- a) Nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this.
- b) A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society.
- c) The nature and the climate crises are intrinsically linked and that the impacts of the climate crisis drive nature's decline, while restoring nature can help to tackle the climate crisis.
- d) Local people and groups have recognised the issues and have declared a Nature Crisis for Rotherham themselves and call on the Council to do so too.

This Council resolves to:

1. Therefore, this Council proposes to declare a Nature Crisis for Rotherham.
2. Ask the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to consider commissioning a review into how the Council can support improvements to ensure a more natural environment is enhanced.

3. Ensure our responsiveness on tackling climate change is extended to be complimentary to this separate but well aligned cause.
4. Continue to further our work on enhancing biodiversity by adopting innovative approaches to support wild flowered areas and ecological approaches to grounds maintenance.
5. Note the ongoing significant progress the Council is making through its Climate Change Action Plans for a carbon neutral Council by 2030 and Borough by 2040.

On being put to the vote, the motion as submitted was declared as carried by majority.