

## **Report of Cabinet**

1. Any Cabinet recommendations on the reports that require a decision by full Council appear as separate items on the agenda.

### **Meeting held on 13 July 2022**

#### **Biodiversity Strategy**

2. Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Director of Communities seeking approval and adoption of the draft Biodiversity Strategy and the Interim Biodiversity Action Plan.
3. The report explained that Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and recently updated by the Environment Act 2021, public authorities in England are under a legal duty to have due regard to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the exercise of its functions. Section 105 of the Environment Act 2021 requires local authorities to prepare a 'local nature recovery strategy'.
4. Public bodies must also determine what action is required to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions and must determine such policies and objectives as appropriate to achieve this. They must also publish biodiversity reports providing a summary of the action taken and planned and detailing the resulting biodiversity gains achieved.
5. Councillor Mick Titherington, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing) in his introduction commended the work of officers and the Climate Emergency Task Group. He also highlighted the fact that The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside had welcomed the Council's intention to adopt a Biodiversity Strategy.
6. One member raised concerns expressed by local residents regarding rewilding, such as the possibility of increased dog fouling, littering and the alleged presence of tics near children's play areas.
7. Councillor Titherington responded that rewilding would mean an increase in insects which was a key part of reversing the damage to biodiversity, however he stressed that if there were any safety concerns they would be addressed on a case by case basis.
8. Councillor Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets also commented that he had recently investigated an allegation on social media regarding a tic bite which turned out to be completely unfounded, so it was important to take a measured and appropriate response to local residents concerns.

**9. Decision made (unanimously):**

1. That the report be noted; and
2. that the Biodiversity Strategy and Interim Action Plan be recommended to Council for adoption.

**Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan Update, including Annual Green House Gas Update**

10. Cabinet considered a report of Director of Communities providing members with an update on the work undertaken with regard to the Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan.
11. The report indicated that in July 2020 members approved and adopted a Climate Emergency Strategy. The Strategy provided background to the Climate Emergency issue, our current position in terms of the Council and the borough and identified categories of areas to concentrate on to achieve the overall goal of net-carbon neutral by 2030.
12. Members were also given a commitment by the Task Group that the strategy would be reviewed and revised each year, including an update on the current carbon footprint and work undertaken.
13. This Strategy was updated and presented to Full Council in July 2021 and has again been updated and is presented within this report. As the original Climate Emergency Strategy was approved by Full Council, the revised strategy also needs to be approved.
14. In July 2021, following the adoption of the Climate Emergency Strategy a Climate Emergency Action Plan was approved at Full Council, detailing some of the measures that would be taken to achieve the Council's goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. This Action Plan complements the existing Air Quality Action Plan. This report contains an overview of the progress that has been achieved against these action plans and some detail of the challenges that are still faced.
15. Councillor Mick Titherington, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing) in his introduction commended the work of officers and the Climate Emergency Task Group throughout the year.
16. Arising from discussion on this report, one of the key issues was measuring Air Quality Management Areas. This had showed improvement however it could be due to the decrease in traffic during the pandemic. In addition, it was noted that some of the Council's recent decisions would lead to an increase in the Council's carbon emissions such as taking leisure centres in house and waste insourcing.
17. **Decision made (unanimously):**

1. That members note the work undertaken by the cross-party Climate Emergency Task Group.
2. That members note the current carbon footprint of both the Council and the borough.
3. That members note the actions and progress made towards the Climate Emergency and Air Quality Action Plans and wider agenda.
4. That Council be recommended to approve the updated Climate Emergency Strategy.

### **Investment in Leisure Local Facilities**

18. Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Communities to consider investment proposals for leisure local facilities, specifically Fox Lane Sports and Social Club, and Penwortham Priory Academy.
19. The proposed investments contribute towards improving the health and wellbeing of South Ribble residents – making significant improvements to two leisure facilities open for community use.
20. Fox Lane Sports and Social Club and Penwortham Priory have each exhausted their own funds and were unable to carry out the proposed leisure facility improvements without external support. Without support from South Ribble Borough Council, they will have to seek funding from elsewhere. Fox Lane Sports and Social Club require investment to ensure their long-term sustainability.
21. Cabinet Members strongly supported the recommendations and cited examples of community benefit in terms of physical and mental health and wellbeing, and helping to tackle social isolation and dementia.
22. Due to his interest insofar as being a member of Fox Lane Sports and Social Club, Councillor Titherington did not participate in the vote in respect of that recommendation.

### **23. Decision made**

That Council be recommended to:

1. Note and approve the investment proposal for Fox Lane Sports and Social Club. This project is ready-to-go and funding can be provided immediately once grant agreements are in place.
2. Note and approve the investment proposal for Penwortham Priory. Funding to be provided up to the proposed value, subject to final quotes from contractors.

## **Key Contracts and Partnerships Update**

24. The Leader and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform) presented a report of the Director of Change and Delivery providing an update on the performance of the council's key partnership arrangements.
25. The key partnerships performance report is produced in accordance with the requirements of the council's Key Contracts and Partnerships Framework. It informs members of:
  - i. The performance of the council's key partnerships against targets set for the current year;
  - ii. Any emerging issues
  - iii. An assessment of the key partner's financial strength and stability
  - iv. An update on the changes to our key contracts and partnerships.
26. The Cabinet noted the report.

COUNCILLOR PAUL FOSTER  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL