

Ecological Emergency Update

24th November 2023



Context

- Decline in habitat and species diversity
- Cabinet declares countywide ecological emergency; 6th April 2022.
- Ecological Emergency Action Plan identifies how council services to respond to the issue.
- Reviews the management of council land assets in order to revise& intro activities to promote and achieve best ecological practice.
- Plan identifies areas for action, service leads, resource implications and associated targets as possible.

Key Considerations

- Link to LNRS; a strategic approach for nature-based environmental action and investment across the county.
- EEAP improvements to be focussed on actions & doing things within current resources.
- Key themes for outputs: 'Land Management', 'Education, Awareness and Communication', 'Policies and Strategies'.

Land Management

- *Condition assessments of designated sites such as Local Wildlife Sites*
- *Appropriate long-term management to restore key sites to good condition when resources are made available.*
- *Trials for reduced cutting of amenity grassland, encouraging floral diversity including trials on non-herbicide use.*
- *production a strategy document to define the approach to biodiversity interventions on public open spaces and identify constraints to delivery as the programme continues to be rolled out across the county.*
- *Council woodlands assets managed and maintained from current project development to robust legacy provisions*

Education, Awareness and Communication

- *Cont. development & engagement with partners and stakeholders in landscape scale programmes.*
- *investigating viability of using DCC land for 'green' uses – BNG, Nutrient Neutrality and renewables*
- *Promoting the Ecological Emergency within the CERP Marketing Plan under the theme Nature, Adaptation and Land.*
- *Hosting of Ecological Emergency matters on the Climate Change website.*

Policies and Strategies

- *Developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy with the County Durham Partnership*
- *Produce SPD on delivery of biodiversity for urban and industrial developments.*
- *Produce procurement systems addressing Ecological Emergency principles based on Climate Emergency approach*
- *Look at including ecological impact implications in committee and Council reports.*

Overview

- Good progress to date
- New ecologically based practices being adopted without new dedicated resource.
- Priority themes of Land, Awareness and Policies
- 14 areas of action being progressed across services
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- Continually evolving as more programmes come on stream
- Further updates to follow.

Any Points for Discussion?