

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – THURSDAY, 18 JUNE 2026

ITEM 6 – CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

Scrutiny comments made on: Biodiversity Duty Report

Date considered by Cabinet: 24 March 2026

	Comments/recommendations from scrutiny	Advice provided by officers at the Scrutiny meeting	Cabinet response
C1	Local Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG): Members welcomed the commitment that BNG should be delivered locally rather than offset through distant sites. Concerns were raised about the national approach to ‘offsetting’ and were keen to avoid this.	Officers explained BNG mitigation process and confirmed the scheme was designed to incentivize local delivery. They noted that developers were generally keen to provide biodiversity gains on or as near to their sites as possible.	Supported.
C2	Strategic Biodiversity: Reference was made to the UK’s international commitment to protect 30% of land and sea by 2030 (‘30 by 30’) and it was suggested that this could be used as a guiding principle locally.	Officers acknowledged the comment.	Noted.
C3	Reporting periods/future reporting: Members queried the length of the next reporting period as the legislation allows a future report to be published at any point in the next five years. Concerns were raised that a long gap could reduce transparency, especially considering the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation.	Officers confirmed that timelines for future reporting had not yet been agreed. It was noted that progress could be communicated through the quarterly performance updates.	Officers suggested an additional recommendation to provide clarity around the reporting period as follows: ‘The reporting period for the next Biodiversity Report to be from 1 January 2026 to 30 December 2030. The recommendation was agreed.

C4	Measuring success: Members questioned how success would be measured, and it was suggested that Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) be introduced.	Officers confirmed that BNG was currently measured/reported through a KPI in the planning service, and this would continue. Wider actions were not captured in a KPI but it was something that could be considered.	Noted.
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