

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY INQUIRY QUESTIONNAIRE**

Staff Name:	Ben Smith
Position:	Head of Financial Services and the Service Centre
Service Area:	Financial Services and the Service Centre
Directorate:	Resources

1. Prior to receiving this questionnaire, did you know that the City and County of Swansea has a Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty?

YES                      Please tick  
NO                        

Y

2. Briefly describe below the main local authority functions undertaken in your service area.

<p>Financial grip and governance Forward planning Resilience Reputation Solvency Grant management Income and Payment processing Payroll Pensions payments, management, fund investment Council Tax and NDR collection Benefits payments</p>
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3. During your day to day work, do you currently consider biodiversity when making decisions? If YES please describe what you currently do to maintain and enhance the Natural Environment and Biodiversity.

**Yes even if only in terms of at the margin considering the environmental impact of financial decisions having due regard to our Wellbeing of Future generations obligations.**

- 4. Do you have any ideas about how your department could do more/work differently to contribute to the maintenance, enhancement and promotion of the natural environment and biodiversity in Swansea Council?**

Ever more explicit wording for the due regard to Wellbeing of Future Generations and biodiversity duties in particular in any financial sign off of any project.

Progress being made in terms of our divestment strategy in the Pension Fund subject to constraints on returns and protecting member assets.

- 5. Please list below any constraints that may prevent the delivery of the above actions.**

**Financial constraints mean it is often difficult to not “prefer” the cheap now option.**

**Pension fund objectives are to protect member assets and deliver fund returns primarily notwithstanding the objective of fossil fuel divestment and diversification into more sustainable funds, infrastructure etc. We’re pushing boundaries where we can through the WPP pension partnership around for e.g. Tidal Lagoon support, future cleaner more sustainable infrastructure investment**

- 6. What help and support would enable you overcome these constraints? If you have any other comments, please list them here.**

**Some explicit funding in future settlements from WG/UK government  
ot help recognise that investment and spend now on projects that  
could improve biodiversity and eco systems or protect for future  
generations are worthwhile in the longer term interests of us all.**

