

The Panel would like to invite you to a Scrutiny meeting to assist the members in their discussions about the Natural Environment and Biodiversity and the relevant legislation which impacts activity under this topic.

The Panel are hoping for a discussion around guidance if a Local Authority fails to meet its obligations under the relevant acts.

The main inquiry question which the Panel are exploring is;

'What should Swansea Council be doing to maintain and enhance its natural environment and biodiversity, and in so doing promote the resilience of eco-systems?'

Friday 21st September 1pm-3pm in Swansea Civic Centre

1. What are the long, medium and short term legal and financial consequences of not meeting the requirements under the act?

Long Term Legislation will be UK -based – unclear at the is stage what will replace the European Commission and the European Court of Justice and therefore financial infraction penalties

Medium Term – (Transition period) European legislation and EC and ECJ will still be effective

Short Term – Whilst still in EU, non-compliance will result in infraction penalties

No clear indication as to what happens if the requirements of the Environment Act are not realised
International Conventions signed up to Biological Diversity; Climate Change; COP21; OSPAR (protection of Marine Environment in NE Atlantic)

2. How will you measure success (or lack thereof) of Councils under the Act? What do the performance measures look like?

Outcomes/outputs; compliance; carbon budgets; indicators; Directives e.g. WFD Good Environmental Status

3. How are these requirements linking in with England and wider to contribute to overall improvement of the natural environment and biodiversity?

Frameworks; Health and Housing; River Basin Management; National Marine Plans; SMP

4. Will success or failure of meeting the act requirements mean enhanced or limited access to grants? Will grant applications be success dependant?

Cannot look in isolation; WFG; Environment Act; Planning Act; SSWB

Cannot look in isolation and focus on one WB Goal

SRG WG looking more and more to cross sector, collaborative approach

WFG Applying the 5 WoW to shape and inform upstream not to be used as a means to justify downstream

5. What do you see as the main barriers going forward for Councils and how can Councils overcome barriers taking into account austerity?

Awareness – getting the Biodiversity duty out there as part of the normal function of what you do- not as an add-on

Breaking out of silo thinking – monies spent in other sectors or departments must contribute to the realisation of the duty

WFG SD principle – whatever you do it should contribute to the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being

6. **Is there anything you think individual Councillors can do in their wards to contribute to success and maintenance and enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity?**

- Raise awareness
- Work in schools- give nature a home
- Involve communities in environmental issues
- 'Plastic-free communities' [Aberporth, Chepstow.]
- Water refill
- Litter picks KWT
- Beach cleans – Marine Conservation Society, KWT
- River Clean ups [Cardiff Rivers Group]
- Marine Litter Plan [80% marine litter is of terrestrial origin]
- Pledges – Clean Seas Wales partnership
- UN Clean Seas <http://www.cleanseas.org/about>
 - Terrestrial and Marine inextricably linked
 - Engagement, education and cross promotion
 - Year of the Sea
 - Volvo Round the World Ocean Yacht Race
 - Pledges (businesses, communities, individuals, organisations)