



## Report of the Convener

Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel – 1 September 2020

### Discussion on COVID-19 Service-Specific Impacts / Environmental Lessons

<b>Purpose</b>	The Panel has planned a discussion on service-specific impacts and environmental lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic.
<b>Content</b>	This report outlines the objective of the discussion. The Panel will hear from relevant Cabinet Members and officers about the experience and effects on relevant service areas as well as environmental lessons and opportunities.
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ask questions and discuss issues around COVID-19 relevant to the natural environment</li><li>• Make comments and recommendation as necessary</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor(s)</b>	Councillor Peter Jones (convener)
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#### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Natural Environment Scrutiny Performance Panel will ask about specific impacts arising from COVID-19 on the natural environment & biodiversity, experiences, and lessons, given things like:

- reduced air pollution from vehicular traffic;
- public reconnection with nature / wildlife;
- more active travel such as walking and cycling;
- increased use of parks and open spaces; and;
- less cutting and weed management in parks and roadside verges etc.

1.2 There is concern that any positives / gains are not lost, and that the experiences help to inform Council actions on climate change.

1.3 Relevant Cabinet Members have been asked to attend to speak to the Panel about the experience and reflections on the last six months, and emerging lessons for the future:

- Councillor Mark Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management, is responsible, amongst other things, for:
  - Community Grass Cutting Services
  - Community / Public Transport
  - Cycleways
  - Highways & Engineering
  - Infrastructure Repairs & Maintenance
  - Litter & Community Cleansing
  - Parks Maintenance
  - Public Protection
- Councillor David Hopkins, Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations, is responsible, amongst other things, for:
  - Planning Policy
  - Sustainable Development (including Biodiversity)

1.4 Relevant officers have also been invited to support the discussion, provide input in relation to service-specific impacts, and contribute their views.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** None