

## APPENDIX C

### Scrutiny Inquiry on Natural Environment – UPDATED Cabinet Action Plan Follow Up/Impact

Recommendation	Action already being undertaken	New Action Proposed	Timescale	Responsible Officer	
<p>1.</p>	<p><b>Development and implementation of a Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan to take this forward (Medium Term)</b></p>	<p>To ensure compliance with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 - Part 1, Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (Section 6 Duty), the Council must prepare and submit to Welsh Government by the end of 2019 a report (Corporate Biodiversity (Section 6) Action Plan) outlining what it has done to comply with the duty and then provide a progress update every three years after this date. A draft Action Plan is currently being prepared.</p> <p>In October 2018 the Council adopted an additional corporate well-being objective “to maintain and enhance Swansea’s Natural Resources and Biodiversity”</p> <p>Initial actions/steps have been identified with reference to this objective</p>	<p>It is proposed that progress on meeting the corporate biodiversity objective actions could be monitored and reported on a quarterly basis by means of the establishment of a Corporate Biodiversity Working Group. This Group would more effectively support and encourage all Service Areas to take ownership of Section 6 duties.</p> <p>The Group would comprise representatives from all relevant service areas and be chaired at a senior level. Proposed terms of reference have been drafted and a first meeting is planned for June 2019.</p> <p>Under the new business planning and reporting regime, all Service Areas will be required to report on progress made and planned future actions to meet the new Corporate priority for the Natural Environment and biodiversity</p>	<p>June 2019 (Corporate Working Group to meet) and quarterly thereafter</p> <p>Dec 2019 Action Plan submission and review every three years</p>	<p>Paul Meller/ Deb Hill</p>

**COMPLETE**

**Progress:** A Corporate Biodiversity (Section 6) Action Plan was submitted to Welsh Government in Dec 2019. The biodiversity actions listed under the Corporate Objective for Maintaining and Enhancing Swansea’s Natural Resources and Biodiversity forms the basis of the Council’s Section 6 Action Plan. This has been expanded to incorporate additional actions to be delivered over the next 3 years including the recommendations of this Scrutiny Inquiry.

The Action Plan aims to reverse the loss of biodiversity, promote healthy resilient ecosystems, strengthen green infrastructure and facilitate adaptation to and mitigation for the impacts of climate change. It seeks to ensure that our natural environment, together with the benefits and services it provides, are protected for the benefit of existing and future generations.

2.	<p><b>Ensure the Action Plan links with other relevant cross organisational policies at a strategic level, for example, the Local Well-being Plan and Area Statements (Medium Term)</b></p>	<p>The Action Plan under preparation involves collaboration with other Public Service Board (PSB) partners to deliver actions which contribute to achieving the PSB Well-being Plan Working with Nature priority. It also provides a more integrated approach that will contribute to the delivery of the other corporate wellbeing goals.</p> <p>Inclusion of the Corporate Biodiversity Objective and actions arising within Service/Business Plans.</p> <p>Nature Conservation Team represented on PSB Working with Nature Group and leading on the development of the Local Nature Recovery Plan and supporting the Local Nature Partnership.</p> <p>Working with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and drawing upon Area Statement evidence base, to promote the sustainable</p>	<p>Establishment of a Corporate Biodiversity Working Group that will explore further opportunities for collaborative cross-service and external partnership initiatives /projects that deliver multiple benefits across the well-being goals.</p> <p>Nature Conservation Team participation in the PSB Working With Nature working group.</p>	<p>June 2019 (Corporate Working Group to meet) and quarterly thereafter</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Paul Meller/ Deb Hill</p>
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		management of natural resources at the local level, enabling joined-up collective action and identification of innovative new solutions, for example the City Centre Green Infrastructure Strategy.			
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**COMPLETE (in part):**

**Progress:** This will always remain an ongoing process as policies, plans, strategies, etc are continually reviewed and prepared.

Following on from the Scrutiny Inquiry into how the Council is delivering against the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015, a Scrutiny Panel for the Natural Environment and Biodiversity was established in August 2019 to provide ongoing scrutiny of the Council's progress in meeting the requirements of the legislation and its new Corporate Biodiversity Objective.

To promote engagement in, and shared responsibility for, delivering the new Corporate Biodiversity Objective, the Working Group has been set up to help review, monitor and report on progress in delivering the steps /actions listed under the Corporate Objective. The terms of reference of this group include helping to ensure that biodiversity is integrated into daily business operations and to provide a vehicle for awareness raising and capacity building; cascading information and best practice to all service delivery teams as well as exploring and testing new approaches to delivering the sustainable management of natural resources. It is also responsible for reviewing and monitoring the Council's Section 6 Biodiversity Duty Action Plan and developing the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

Since the adoption of the new Corporate Objective for Biodiversity, there has been a requirement for the preparation of quarterly and annual progress reports relating to delivery of the steps or actions set out under this objective, and the associated Performance Indicators as part of the Council's business planning and monitoring processes. The first annual report was submitted to Council in December 2019.

3.	<b>Develop a clear and enthusiastic vision and message for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity to ensure a consistent 'buy-in' from each service (Quick Win)</b>	<p>The Council has a duty under the Environment (Wales) Act to embed the consideration of biodiversity into its early thinking and business planning, including any policies, plans and projects as well as day to day activities.</p> <p>Each Council function/Service Area should now be considering where and how they can maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote resilience through their service/business plans.</p> <p>The Corporate Biodiversity working group will provide a vehicle for raising awareness and encouraging best practice</p>	The Section 6 Plan will become an integral part of any business planning, asset management and/or corporate planning processes, as this will demonstrate how the consideration of biodiversity is being embedded.	March/April annually - Annual Service Plans	Heads of Service
<p><b>COMPLETE</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Each Service area now required to demonstrate how they are contributing to meeting the Council's Corporate Biodiversity objective within their annual Service Plans from 20/21 onwards.</p>					
4.	<b>Embed the new corporate priority by developing and delivering relevant training. The Nature Conservation Team could roll out training at the appropriate level and could undertake a service appropriate assessment with ideas and input coming from that service to encourage involvement. (Medium Term)</b>	Biodiversity training for Members/ a limited number of Service Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and address biodiversity training needs for all Service Areas</li> <li>Identification of opportunities and actions within each relevant Service Area to maintain and enhance biodiversity</li> <li>Identify Service Areas where advisory support could be provided by the Nature Conservation Team</li> </ul>	Ongoing  Comms Strategy – Summer 2019	Paul Meller/ Deb Hill

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of on and offline training packages</li> <li>• Development and implementation of a Comms Strategy for biodiversity</li> </ul>		
<p><b>INCOMPLETE (Ongoing):</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> A number of training events (generic and service specific) have been held for Council officers and Members to raise awareness of the Environment (Wales) Act and the Section 6 Biodiversity Duty. This has been an ongoing process and is linked with wider stakeholder engagement and awareness raising. In-house biodiversity training sessions provided include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bat awareness and Aderyn (access to local biodiversity records ) training sessions for Development Management officers</li> <li>• GI training and engagement sessions for officers and Members</li> <li>• Japanese knotweed training for Members.</li> <li>• Green Infrastructure in the Highway officer seminar</li> <li>• Swansea Central Area GI seminars for Members and officers</li> </ul> <p>A task for the Biodiversity Working Group is to identify and seek to address biodiversity training/advisory support needs, opportunities and actions for all service areas.</p> <p>A Comms Strategy for Biodiversity needs to be finalised, including development of on/off line training packages (medium term actions).</p>					
5.	<p><b>Make information available to the public to encourage participation and understanding, including continuing to develop the Natural Environment web pages e.g. explain why some verges are wild or why projects which have a green aspect are taking place. Public promotion is vital. (Quick Win)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving awareness and understanding of our natural environment through provision of information, training and events. An annual Environmental Events programme is published which provides details of hundreds of free or low cost environmental events taking place around</li> </ul>	<p>Provide opportunities for schoolchildren to access and learn about their natural environment (Our Nature Our Future project).</p> <p>Engage with local communities to encourage volunteering and to support them taking</p>	<p>Dec 2019 (Our Nature Our Future)</p> <p>Comms Strategy – Summer 2019</p> <p>Webpages update (Dec</p>	<p>Deb Hill/ Penny Gruffydd</p>

		<p>Swansea  <a href="https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents">https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In August 2018, the Nature Conservation Team was awarded two grants from Natural Resources Wales to fund two temporary (18 month) part-time posts: Our Nature Our Schools project officer and a Wildlife Volunteering co-ordinator</li> <li>• In April 2019 the Council's Nature Conservation Team were successful in securing grants from Welsh Government in partnership with other agencies. These grants will fund 3 part time posts for 3 years: a Nature Partnership Officer, a Place based Project, and a volunteer Co-ordinator. Job descriptions need to be prepared and evaluated for these posts and approval to advertise and appoint obtained</li> </ul>	<p>action to enhance and maintain their local greenspaces and wildlife sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development and implementation of a Comms Strategy for biodiversity</li> <li>• Refresh of Nature Conservation/Biodiversity webpages</li> <li>• Develop and publish Programme of Environmental Events</li> </ul>	<p>2019)</p> <p>Programme of Events (March annually)</p> <p>March 2022 (3 grant funded projects)</p>	<p>Project Officers (to be appointed)</p>
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**COMPLETE (Ongoing)**

**Progress:** This will always remain an ongoing process, as there will be a continual need for improving awareness and understanding of our natural environment.

A programme of environmental events is published annually. This provides details of hundreds of free or low cost environmental events in Swansea: <https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents> . These are also regularly posted on the 'Love Your Countryside' web site. The Nature Conservation Team have also during the past year:

- Part funded a new Clyne Valley Country Park leaflet
- Produced information leaflets for Carmarthen Bay European Marine Site, and Swansea's Ancient Woodlands.
- Designed and installed interpretation panels at Bracelet Bay and Swansea Bay providing information to the public on the rich

biodiversity that can be found around the shore.

Guided tours of the County's specialist parks and volunteer days were particularly popular events, together with a series of Summer 'Seashore Safaris' delivered across the shores of Gower, raising awareness of seashore and marine wildlife, conservation and threats.

There has been a well-attended programme of biodiversity identification and ecology training workshops for volunteers and the public. These have included talks on reptiles and amphibians, mammals, water vole and mink, invertebrates, trapping, safe use of tools, conservation grazing, invasive non- native species, Ash die-back, marine and coastal biodiversity, submitting wildlife records, pond dipping, willow basket weaving and ancient woodland survey methodology. Whilst a number of INSET day training courses on outdoor learning have been delivered at local primary schools as part of the Our Nature Our Future project.

Significant public engagement has been carried out as part the preparation of the Council's Central Area GI strategy including workshops, seminars, lectures, face to face meetings, meetings with local interest/residents groups, school children, businesses, RSL's and developers.

Further work needs to be undertaken to update the Council's natural environment web pages

Job descriptions for three additional project officers were agreed but the posts were not advertised as anticipated due to postponement of the Welsh Government grant offer late 2019. However a revised bid has been successful and 3 year appointments will be made as soon as possible following the award of grant in 20/21 ( confirmation of the award still awaited July 2020).

6.	<p><b>Complete and publicise the ward mapping exercise. This would provide each ward and the Councillor Representatives with information specific to that ward. It would include information about important species, protected sites and other relevant ecological information as well as potential opportunities for improving biodiversity within the ward. A link to the ward mapping should appear on planning applications when</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Wild about your ward' profiles drafted for a few pilot wards highlighting ecological information</li> <li>• Enhancements to greenspace being undertaken as part of an environmental works programme to meet the Council's commitment to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard</li> <li>• GI enhancements undertaken</li> </ul>	<p>Complete mapping of existing Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure assets and ecosystem service provision on a ward by ward basis working with Members to identify areas which provide the best opportunities for improvement and, where appropriate, maximise match funding opportunities afforded by Members' community fund.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>Project Officer</p>
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	<p><b>completed. This would help when it comes to planning applications and empower ward councillors and residents to be able to respond to issues which threaten these special features of their ward and encourage maintenance of biodiversity. It would also contribute to the enforcement activity of the Council. (Long Term)</b></p>	<p>as part of a Welsh Government funded multi-GI project with Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend Councils</p>	<p>In April 2019 the Council was awarded a grant to fund a temporary (3 year) part-time (3 days/week) post to deliver the above project. The post needs to be agreed, advertised and an appointment made.</p>		
<p><b>INCOMPLETE</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> No progress as Project Officer yet to be appointed (see 5 above).</p>					
7.	<p><b>Maintain support for volunteers, Community Councils and groups managing both Council owned and non-Council owned land. There are important areas of natural environment in Swansea that may be managed by trusts or owned privately. The links to these areas need to be maintained to ensure best practice is shared and any relevant information/policy can be applied across Swansea, improving nature-based connectivity overall. (Long Term)</b></p>	<p>The Scrutiny Inquiry identified that there are currently 3 Council officers supporting 40 sites and 27 'Friends of' groups.</p>	<p>See recommendation 5 above. Grant funding for a temporary volunteer coordinator post has been obtained for the next three years. They will assist volunteers, groups and Community Councils to make the work carried out by them more effective and appropriate. They will also recruit, train and engage with new volunteers, for example, through social prescribing, corporate social responsibility, etc.</p>	March 2022	Project Officer
<p><b>COMPLETE (in part)</b></p> <p><b>Progress:</b> Project officer yet to be appointed (see 5 above). This will always remain an ongoing process as there will be a continual need to maintain support for volunteers, manage land, share best practice, etc.</p> <p>However, as the Inquiry identified the Nature Conservation Team has already built up and supports a strong base of Swansea Wildlife Volunteers with the benefit of grant funding from Welsh Government and NRW to help with practical wildlife site</p>					



management and enhancement works. The temporary volunteer co-ordinator post will help to develop and co-ordinate a programme of practical conservation tasks and training workshops for volunteers which, as well as delivering biodiversity benefits, will enable participants to gain skills and confidence.

Over the past year the Team have worked with volunteers and 'Friends of' groups at a number of wildlife sites, including Bishops Wood and Mumbles Hill Local Nature Reserves, four commons, numerous SINC's and nine Rights of Way/cycle routes mainly on Swansea Council land. Work on non-Council land included Horton Community Council Village Green and Betty Church Woods owned by the Wildlife Trusts. Tasks have included litter picking, seed planting, tree planting, fencing removal, step repair, building raised beds, INNS control, dark sky monitoring, species recording and bridge building.

At the Gower Show and the Christmas Green Fayre event at Swansea Museum 86 new volunteers signed up and at the Swansea University annual jobs fair 137 students signed up as volunteers. Two litter pick events for Swansea Council Helping Hands scheme have been held and regular email updates/event details/training information are sent to all volunteer contacts. Through staff taking on additional duties in the absence of a specific project officer there have been 150 practical events held this past year with 685 volunteers helping.

8.	<b>Insert a relevant biodiversity clause into service level agreements, licences etc which relates to land use and land management and land use and ensure that the importance of these clauses is made clear to the land managers/occupiers and the implications of not meeting them are highlighted.(Quick Win)</b>	As a consequence of discussion of this matter during the Scrutiny inquiry a clause has been inserted into the service level agreement for community groups managing green spaces	To work with Estates and other relevant Service Areas to ensure that more detailed and relevant biodiversity clauses are inserted into all service level agreements, licences, etc, which relate to land use and land management. For example, those relating to grazing sites and also in those entered into with external event organisers which require Council consent before certain activities (e.g. clearing land, special events, etc) are undertaken to prevent loss of biodiversity.	Ongoing	Deb Hill/Judith Oakley
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**COMPLETE**

**Progress:** This will take some time to roll out to all service level agreement, licences, etc as clauses cannot be inserted into existing arrangements. The principle has been agreed however and they are being included as and when agreements, licences, etc are renewed and for forthcoming events. Specifically:

- Farm and business tenancy agreements are in the process of being updated to ensure the biodiversity value of land is recognised and safeguarded. For example, grazing of marshy grassland at Garth Farm in Glais and grazing of coastal grassland and heath at Pwlldu Cliffs LNR.
- Friends of Parks Agreements /Memoranda of Understanding have been amended to ensure that biodiversity is taken into consideration by the Friends Groups when undertaking management activities or events within their adopted Park or Greenspace.
- Grazing Farm Business Tenancy agreements now include a clause to contact the Nature Conservation Team before any ground work is carried out.
- Estates lease agreements include responsibility to maintain land including Japanese Knotweed.

Additionally discussions are ongoing with Special Events to ensure biodiversity impact assessments form part of future event planning.

9.	<b>Assess the verges in Swansea that can stop being mowed and sprayed. Give these over to nature and allow for self-seeding, which will encourage native plants and pollinator species. This can also save money as less frequent mowing is required. There could be signs erected to highlight the project to help change the culture. (Medium Term)</b>	An annual programme of wildflower planting and management within verges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To work with Parks, Highways and other relevant Service Areas (e.g. Housing , Education) to identify those locations in Council ownership which can be given over to self-seeding, less intensive mowing and/or seeding with perennial species mixes</li> <li>• Develop a Comms plan in relation to proposed biodiversity actions.</li> </ul>	March 2020  Comms Strategy – Summer 2019	Deb Hill/Judith Oakley
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**INCOMPLETE (Ongoing):**

**Progress:** A programme of wildflower planting continues to be rolled out and reviewed. The use of Herbicides on all verges across the City and County stopped in early 2019. Council owned grassland currently not being regularly mown throughout the growing season totals 42.5 hectares, whilst the first yearly rural flail cut along the highway has been put back to later in the Spring to enable vegetation to flower.

Assessment of locations to be given over to self-seeding, information signs, etc not yet completed.

10.	<p><b>Where appropriate, plant native wildflowers and trees. Non-native species do not benefit pollinators to the same extent as native species. (Long Term)</b></p>	<p>An annual programme of wildflower planting and management within verges which includes non-native species.</p> <p>Over 5000 native trees planted by Nature Conservation Team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include more native species within wildflower planting programme</li> <li>• Develop and adopt a Council tree policy which encourages planting of native species trees where appropriate.</li> <li>• Plans for new tree planting to include native species</li> <li>• Identification of suitable sites for further woodland planting with support from Trees for Cities</li> <li>• Investigate additional sources of funding for woodland planting e.g. Glastir and Carbon Credits</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Paul Meller/ Deb Hill
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**COMPLETE**

**Progress:** This will remain an ongoing task. The Council has supported and delivered a number of tree planting projects through partnership working with the Swansea Tree Forum, Coed Cymru, Coeden Fach, the Woodland Trust, Trees for Cities and local community groups. Wherever possible, a robust mix of native trees of local provenance have been used.

A new woodland has been created at Mynydd Newydd Playing Fields in Penlan through the planting of 4000 native trees in

collaboration with Trees for Cities. This planting will improve biodiversity and woodland connectivity, help to reduce flooding, provide shelter from the wind and improve air quality. The Friends of the Ganges Field in Townhill have been supported to plant nearly 1000 native trees to create woodland habitat and improve woodland connectivity. The Friends of Morrision Park have been helped to undertake a community tree planting project; over 700 trees have been planted on Kilvey Hill with Swansea University volunteers and Friends of Kilvey Hill; and over 200 native trees have been planted in Brynmelyn Park. The Council has provided space in Clyne Gardens (subject to planning permission) to accommodate a new native tree nursery run by Coeden Fach - a local tree nursery charity to develop a source of local provenance trees.

A green artery is being created through Swansea City Centre with several green, tree-lined spaces integrated within development plans for the city. The redevelopment of the Kingsway has seen the planting of the first of 170 new trees. They include alder, birch, cherry, lime, maples and flowering pears. Other city centre tree planting projects, such as the Boulevard and Westway, have seen the Council introduce significantly more street trees and other green areas than were previously present. This has created an attractive street scene and will encourage greater biodiversity.

A programme of green space improvements have been carried out within Council housing estates to help meet the Welsh Government's Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) that requires all social landlords to improve the external environment of their housing stock to an acceptable level. Wherever possible native species and biodiversity enhancements have been incorporated. In Penlan over 250 semi-mature trees standing 10 to 12 ft tall have been planted alongside residential streets together with wildflower planting on roadside verges.

The Gower Hedgerow Hub works with landowners and partner organisations to celebrate, raise awareness and carry out management of hedgerows across Gower and Swansea. The project provides training, volunteer opportunities, advice and funding support to landowners, as well as public walks and crafts sessions. To date, 18 training sessions, 33 volunteer days and 8 public events have been delivered, and over 3000m of hedgerow has been improved by volunteers, contractors, and landowners. There has been a growth in appreciation of, and interest in, this key habitat as a result of the project.

The Council's tree service have undertaken the following tree planting during 19/20

Project	No. of trees planted	Size	Location
WHQS	258	14/16 to 16/18	various sites around Penlan
Memorial trees	12	14/16	Various parks
Tree Forum trees	14	14/16	Guildhall and New Cut Road
Councillor street trees	7	14/16	Mynydd Garnllwyd Road, Morrision
Tree Forum trees	60	8/10 to 10/12	Various highways verges

Parks Trees	10	14/16	Various Parks and Highway Verges
Whip/small donations	40	Whips	Singleton wind breaks
Housing Projects	10	10/12 to14/16	Tirdeunaw Close
Swansea Uni trees	7	14/16	Foreshore/University carbon offset scheme
Highways trees	6	14/16	Various highways verges
Total	424		

A county-wide survey of suitable locations for tree planting remains an ongoing task.

11.	<b>Encourage green projects for well-being such as gardening projects, outdoor green-space activities and volunteering opportunities for adults and children across all relevant services. This includes linking with Community Councils. Communities can make use of the 'Community Green Space Toolkit' which can be found online at <a href="http://swanseacommunitygreenspaces.weebly.com">http://swanseacommunitygreenspaces.weebly.com</a> (Long Term)</b>	Swansea Environmental Forum and Swansea Council for Voluntary Services' Swansea Community Green Spaces project helps people make greater use of green spaces within their communities and become more involved in how they are managed.  Nature Conservation Team Wildlife Volunteer Co-ordinator project.	See recommendation 5 above. Grant funding for a temporary volunteer coordinator post and a Place based project officer and a Nature Recovery Project Officer has been obtained for the next three years. They will liaise with all relevant Service Areas, Ward members and external organisations such as community councils to encourage and provide volunteering opportunities for adults and children.	March 2022	Project Officer
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### COMPLETE (in part)

**Progress:** This will remain an ongoing task and a dedicated Project Officer is yet to be appointed (see 5 above). Various biodiversity identification and ecology training workshops for volunteers and the public have been held (see 5 above), including, specifically for volunteers, safe use, maintenance and repair of tools and identification of Ash die-back and other tree diseases.

Volunteer tools, equipment, personal protective equipment, etc have been purchases along with commonly used materials such as Chestnut pale fencing, fence posts and rails, wire stock fencing, aggregate, etc in support of volunteer projects (see 7 above).

The following 'Friends of' groups have been involved with green projects: Mayhill Washing Lake and Community Food Garden; Swansea Vale Nature Reserve; Kilvey Community Woodland Volunteers; Rosehill Quarry; Bishops Wood LNR; Swansea Ramblers;

Clydach Community Garden. Activities have also been undertaken with the following groups: Business in the Community BITC; Fforestfach and Glandwr Day Services (Council); Gower College Swansea Land Based courses; Helping Hands (Council); HSBC; Santander; St Gwynour's (Llanyrnewydd & Penclawdd) Church; Mumbles Community Council; Wildlife Trust; National Trust; NRW (corporate events); Swansea Young People Service (Council); Tools for Self Reliance; Fire Service Arson Reduction; Grand Theatre; RSPCA; BASC; Sketty Beavers; Barry Camera Club; Knelston, St Helens and Pentrehafod Schools; Keep Wales Tidy; Swansea University; University Wales Trinity Saint David; Environment Centre; Swansea Museum; Shanghai Landscaping and City Appearance Administrative Bureau; Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust; and Dark Skies.

12.	<b>Employ a Section 6 Officer to co-ordinate, support and promote the consideration and delivery of a range of environmental projects across Swansea and also ensure the Council are meeting the requirements of the Environment Act (Section 6). This includes the development of a Corporate Natural Environment Working Group. This should stop us breaching the legislation and potentially facing fines/restricted grant access/reputational damage. (Quick Win)</b>	Not Agreed			
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**COMPLETE / INCOMPLETE – NOT APPLICABLE**

However, a Job Description has been prepared in anticipation of funding becoming available at some future date.

13.	<b>Employ an additional Planning Ecologist/Ecological Enforcement Officer to work with Council services with a specific duty to help ensure the environmental conditions and section 106 obligations on planning consents are met, whilst also contributing to maintaining biodiversity, and meeting the requirements of the new Sustainable Drainage System legislation. (Quick</b>	Not Agreed			
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	Win)				
<b>COMPLETE / INCOMPLETE – NOT APPLICABLE</b>					
<p>However sufficient funding has been identified through match funding officer time to grants to free up sufficient salary budget to create a part time (0.5) Planning Ecologist post for a temporary 2 year period. An appointment was made Dec 2019 and ways of making the post permanent are currently under investigation. The duties of this post include providing in–house ecological advice to other services/departments which could potentially enable the post to become self-funding and a permanent position in future.</p>					
14.	<p><b>Share natural environment and biodiversity costs across services. Much of the work completed in relation to biodiversity is funded by a single team’s budget. Considering both the Council as a whole, and certain specific services, benefit from a thriving environment, it seems appropriate that other services should be contributing financially to this work. (Long Term)</b></p>	<p>Some major developments have been approved subject to Section 106 agreements providing financial contributions towards practical on/off site mitigation and/or compensation measures against biodiversity loss and also in support of maintenance agreements.</p> <p>See also response to recommendation 15 below</p>	<p>It is proposed that the Corporate Biodiversity Working Group carry out a review of how Service Areas have been impacted by the Environment (Wales) Act, Section 6 Biodiversity duty and Well-Being of Future Generations Act Resilient Wales goal and identify the additional demands arising in terms of provision of ecological/biodiversity advice. This should be taken into consideration as part of any Department/Service budget reappropriation exercise.</p>	March 2020	Paul Meller/ Deb Hill
<b>INCOMPLETE</b>					
<p><b>Progress:</b> This is an ongoing task. Departments/Service areas have been instructed to seek the advice of the Council’s Planning Ecology team in the first instance to undertake studies in –house wherever feasible before considering seeking external ecological advice. The team have been set an income target of £25k for this work from 20/21.</p> <p>Biodiversity work undertaken by other service areas during 19/20 has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japanese Knotweed Control as part of WHQS environmental improvement programme (Housing)</li> <li>• Tree removal at Swansea Vale to maintain flood capacity of wetland area (Highways)</li> <li>• Swansea Vale maintenance, ecological survey work, boardwalk replacement and Knotweed control (Joint Venture fund –</li> </ul>					

Swansea Council/Welsh Government)

- Felindre ecological survey work (Joint Venture fund – Swansea Council/Welsh Government)
- White Rock ecological surveys, site clearance and knotweed control (Estates)
- Reuse of felled trees/wood chips for access projects (Parks)

A review of how Service areas have been impacted by the Env (Wales) Act, Section 6 duties, etc is still to be carried out.

15.	<p><b>Renew the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc) service level agreement for 2019/20 (with a plan in place to achieve this in subsequent years) the approximate cost is between £8,000 and £10,000 per annum. The relevant departments (Development Management, Highways, Corporate Buildings and Corporate Property) should be contributing to the costs of accessing this information, using this resource regularly and, where necessary, asking the Council's ecologists to interpret the data. (Quick Win)</b></p>	<p>The cost of the SEWBRc Service Level Agreement (SLA) is currently taken from the Nature Conservation Team's budget, however there is no budget allocated for this purpose. The SLA has been previously funded through grant aid, but this is no longer available.</p> <p>Some Service Areas are carrying out projects, asset disposal, etc without reference to SEWBRc/relevant ecological records which has the potential to result in outcomes that are in breach of the Council's Section 6 duty.</p>	<p>It is proposed that the Corporate Biodiversity Working Group carry out a review of which Service Areas benefit from the SEWBRc data and also those which should be utilising it prior to commencement of any regeneration projects/asset disposal and apportion costs accordingly.</p>	March 2020	Paul Meller/ Deb Hill
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**COMPLETE**

**Progress:** The Service Level Agreement with SEWBRc has been renewed to enable access to Aderyn and to provide biodiversity information in relation to planning applications received.

In addition SEWBREC have undertaken a review of SINC sites to record those that have already been lost to development. They have also provided a list of priority habitats and species known to be present in Swansea and Gower.



16.	<b>Continue to nurture good working relationships with external agencies and encourage other services to do the same. This should not be limited to national organisations but should also include local ones such as Swansea Environmental Forum, the Swansea Biodiversity Partnership and the Swansea Environment Centre. (Long Term)</b>	The Council's Nature Conservation Team already has excellent working relationships with all relevant external agencies both national and local, and play a key role in supporting a number of partnerships e.g. Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and Swansea Environmental Forum	Existing external working relationships/ networking to be further developed to include other Service Areas through training, shared knowledge /good practice at Corporate Biodiversity Working Group meetings, etc.  New Temporary part time LNP officer to be appointed with Welsh Government funding.	Ongoing	Paul Meller/ Deb Hill
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**COMPLETE**

**Progress:** This remains an ongoing task however as new national and local agencies will continually emerge. New/renewed contacts during 19/20 ( in addition to existing established relationships with organisations such as Swansea Environmental Forum, Swansea Biodiversity Partnership, Swansea Environment Centre, NRW, Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Keep Wales Tidy, Friends of Groups, etc) include:

- ABP
- Actif Woods
- Clyne Valley Community Project
- Coedenfach Community Tree Nursery
- Cwm Amman Town Council
- Fire Service Arson Reduction Team (Mid & West Wales)
- Focus on Forestry First
- Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Society
- Glamorgan Fungi Grp
- Gower Commoners
- HSBC Bank
- Local Farmers (various)
- Mumbles/Oystermouth Historical Society
- Santander Bank
- Swansea Airport
- Swansea Community Councils (various)

- Swansea Community Farm
- Swansea Primary and Secondary Schools (various)
- Swansea Tree Forum
- Swansea University Conservation and Ecological Society
- Swansea University Discovery Group
- The Green Infrastructure Company
- The Orchard Group
- Trees for Cities
- University of Wales Trinity St David
- Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) and WBP invasive species group
- Welsh Government Marine Plan Decision Makers Group
- Whitethorns Independent Day Service

17.	<p><b>Invite environmental voluntary group and Community Council representatives to regular liaison meetings e.g. Friends of parks and wildlife sites. This would allow them some support and access to some specialist advice from relevant officers (e.g. Parks Team, Nature Conservation Team, Education Link Officer), whilst allowing them a forum to discuss concerns and success. The loss of these groups would have a severely detrimental impact on the management of Council land and finances, so there needs to be ongoing and meaningful engagement and support from the Council. (Medium Term)</b></p>	<p>The Scrutiny Inquiry identified that there are currently 3 Council officers supporting 40 sites and 27 'Friends of' groups.</p>	<p>See recommendation 5 above. Grant funding for a temporary volunteer coordinator post has been obtained for the next three years. They will regularly meet with external organisations such as environmental voluntary groups and Community Councils and enable them to access support and specialist advice from various Council services.</p>	March 2022	Project Officer
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**INCOMPLETE**

**Progress:** Project officer yet to be appointed (see 5 above). This will remain an ongoing task, however there has been considerable contact with these groups and representatives during the course of the year at various events, training sessions, volunteer days, etc

(see 5, 7,10,11 & 16 above).

18.	<b>Create environmental link Governors on school governing bodies who can take relevant information and projects to their school. They can also report back on a school's activities and this can be used to contribute to the 3 yearly section 6 report to Welsh Government on the Council's performance. (Medium Term)</b>	None	It is proposed that the Nature Conservation Team liaise with the School and Governor Unit to ensure that all governing bodies appoint an environmental link governor. It is expected that these will primarily be local ward Members given the synergy with recommendation 6. The ward mapping exercise will include school grounds within the assessment of opportunities for improvement and it also supports the policy commitment to make schools more accessible and available for community activities.	Dec 2019 (Governor appointment)  March 2022 (Mapping exercise)	Paul Meller/Penny Gruffydd/ Deb Hill  Project Officer
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**INCOMPLETE**

**Progress:** Link governor positions yet to be agreed. Needs to be timed to coincide with ward mapping exercise (see 6 above) for which a Project Officer has yet to be appointed. However strong links have been established with a number of local Primary Schools through the 'Our Nature Our Future' project (see 19 below).

19.	<b>Encourage better use of school grounds and local wildlife sites for biodiversity. For example, gardens, growing schemes, tree planting, wildlife ponds and habitat creation. This can be done by linking in with relevant organisations such as RSPB and sharing good practice with</b>	Improving awareness and understanding of our natural environment through provision of information, training and events. An annual Environmental Events programme is published which provides details of hundreds of free or low cost environmental events	As recommendations 5,6 and 18 above	Dec 2019 (Our Nature Our Schools and Governor appointment)  March 2022 (Mapping)	Paul Meller/Penny Gruffydd/ Deb Hill  Project Officer
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	<p><b>schools who are already doing such activities. 'Making the Most of School Grounds' guidance booklet. (Long Term)</b></p>	<p>taking place around Swansea  <a href="https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents">https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents</a></p> <p>Our Nature Our Schools project which runs until December 2019 connecting schools to local Wildlife Sites and supporting school grounds environmental improvements.</p>		<p>exercise)</p>	
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**COMPLETE**

**Progress:** The Council supports Foundation Phase pupils to study and learn outdoors, ensuring a respect for nature, biodiversity and ecosystems. In support of this the Council's Nature Conservation Team have provided opportunities for children and young people to engage with nature via a range of initiatives such as:

- Outdoor activities delivered at the Council's Activity Centres in Port Eynon, Rhossili and Bishop's Wood, Caswell
- Regular field study visits and numerous public events at Bishops Wood Local Nature Reserve
- Delivery of the NRW funded 'Our Nature, Our Future' project, which has enabled children in twenty local primary schools to benefit from advice on how to improve their school grounds for biodiversity. The pupils have also attended field study sessions with outdoor learning experts using wildlife sites that are within walking distance of their school. The project has resulted not only in connecting the schools with the nature on their door step, but has created a significant resource for the schools to use to enrich enjoyment of and embed opportunities for outdoor learning as part of the curriculum. These schools have also benefited from training for their teaching staff so that biodiversity can be embedded within the curriculum
- INSET training days have been delivered to build capacity among teachers for working outdoors with pupils. Topics have included: an introduction to outdoor learning; group management and safety; sensory exploration of the outdoors; techniques for investigating biodiversity; environmental art; and using games to explain ecological concepts
- Support for the RSPB 'Giving Nature a Home' project, which has provided a biodiversity outdoor learning experience for over 87% of schools across Swansea
- Development of the natural environment within six Swansea school grounds has seen vegetable gardens grown, bug hotels opened, raised flower beds sown and literacy trails established. Further school grounds work is planned to be undertaken including the creation of small wooded areas and nature areas to promote outdoor learning

This will remain an ongoing task.

20.	<p><b>Employ a dedicated outdoor learning officer who can provide the tailored support, training and delivery that will enable Swansea schools to fully realise the potential of outdoor learning, to deliver educational and wellbeing benefits, from the varied natural resources which Swansea possesses. (Medium Term)</b></p>	<p>Improving awareness and understanding of our natural environment through provision of information, training and events. An annual Environmental Events programme is published which provides details of hundreds of free or low cost environmental events taking place around Swansea  <a href="https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents">https://www.swansea.gov.uk/environmentalevents</a></p> <p>The Nature Conservation Team also employs a part-time project officer at the Bishops Wood Local Nature Reserve who delivers at this location low-cost training for schools within Swansea and wider afield.</p> <p>Our Nature Our Schools project which runs until December 2019 connecting schools to local Wildlife Sites and supporting school grounds environmental improvements.</p>	<p>See recommendation 5 above. Grant funding for an Our Nature Our Future school project officer has been obtained for the next three years. They will liaise with Swansea schools within more deprived wards to realise the potential of outdoor learning.</p>	Dec 2019	Deb Hill/Penny Gruffydd
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**INCOMPLETE**

**Progress:** Recommendation is incomplete in so far as a dedicated outdoor learning officer has yet to be appointed. However the intended role of the officer is encompassed within the ‘Our Nature Our Future’ project which has met its objectives over the past year and will continue to be rolled out (see 19 above).