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**Biodiversity First Consideration Report**

Relevant Portfolio Holder		Councillor Sue Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted		Yes
Relevant Assistant Director		Judith Wills, Assistant Director of Community and Housing Service
Report Author	Job Title: Climate Change Manager Contact <a href="mailto:matthew.eccles@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">matthew.eccles@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> email: Contact Tel: 07816112073	
Wards Affected		All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted		N/A
Relevant Council Priority		
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision		
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.		

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet is asked to resolve RESOLVE that:-**

- 1) the findings of the Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report be noted; and**
- 2) Members agree to publish the full Biodiversity Duty First Consideration Report to the Council's website.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Environment Act 2021 places a legal duty on public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Bromsgrove District Council must publish a Biodiversity Duty Report covering the period up to 1st January 2026 and publish this by 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The Biodiversity Duty Report reviews current activity, identifies gaps, and sets out recommended actions across all service areas.

**3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

- 3.1 The council is taking active steps to enhance biodiversity across the district. Recent initiatives include planting over a dozen fruit trees in Brook Road Park, Rubery, in partnership with local schools to create a mini orchard and boost pollinator habitats. The council is also implementing Biodiversity Net Gain requirements in planning, ensuring all qualifying developments deliver at least a 10% improvement in biodiversity value through on-site enhancements or off-site habitat

creation. Additionally, schemes such as leaving selected grass verges uncut throughout the growing season in areas like Alvechurch are providing vital habitats for pollinators, invertebrates, and small mammals, supporting ecological connectivity across the district.

3.2 Follow consultation with relevant departments the report identifies existing policies and actions across Planning, Leisure, Environmental Services, Housing, and Regeneration. It highlights opportunities for improvement, including:

- Continued engagement with the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Monitoring and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through planning.
- Enhancing biodiversity on council-owned land.
- Promoting citizen science and community engagement

3.3 A new biodiversity report is required every 5 years

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Some actions may require capital investment, e.g., new mowing equipment for grass verge management and individual departments will bring forward to Cabinet any capital/revenue requirements.

4.2 Officers will explore funding opportunities (e.g., Defra grants) if available and where required.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Council is legally required to publish a Biodiversity Duty Report covering the period up to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 by 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

5.2 The biodiversity report has the following mandatory elements that it must cover.

- Policies, Objectives and Actions
- How Other Strategies Were Considered
- Future Actions
- Biodiversity Net Gain Information

#### **6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Local Government Reorganisation**

- 6.1 No direct implications identified at this stage. Any new authority as a result of LGR will also have this legal duty to produce a biodiversity report.

**Relevant Council Priority**

- 6.2 Supports the Council's Environment and infrastructure priorities.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 6.3 Biodiversity actions contribute to climate resilience, carbon sequestration, and nature-based solutions.

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.4 The report and associated documents will be made accessible. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken where relevant.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Risks include non-compliance with statutory deadlines and insufficient monitoring of biodiversity outcomes. Mitigation includes establishing a central reporting mechanism and appointing a lead officer.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix A: Biodiversity First Duty Report

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Cabinet**  
**2026**

**7<sup>th</sup> January**

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**9.     REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Sue Baxter	18/12/2025
Lead Director / Assistant Director	Judith Wills, Assistant Director Community and Housing Services	17/12/2025.
Financial Services	Deb Goodall, Assistant Director Finance and Customer Services	17/12/2025
Legal Services	Claire Felton, Assistant Director Legal Democratic and Procurement Services	17/12/2025
Climate Change Team (if climate change implications apply)	Matthew Eccles	28/11/2025