
ROCHFORD BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the next steps for the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan and seeks Member approval of Rochford's Biodiversity Action Plan.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Members will recall the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan which was launched in March of last year. This document was the result of joint working between the nature conservation organisations, local authorities, statutory agencies, voluntary interest group, the private sector and individuals.
- 2.2 The Essex Biodiversity Action Plan is made up of a number of separate species and habitat plans. A second tranche of habitat plans is now being written by the Essex Biodiversity Steering Group. By concentrating on habitats in the future plans, it is hoped that the number of plans can be kept to a minimum to focus action. However, all the critical species on the UK priority list will be incorporated into the relevant habitat plans.

3 ROCHFORD BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

- 3.1 Each species and habitat action plan contained within the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan has a lead contact (usually an organisation or group) who is responsible for gathering information about work carried out and targets achieved. It is the responsibility of partner organisations to feed back information about their biodiversity work to the lead contacts, who will then report back to the Association of Essex Councils and national lead partners.
- 3.2 While Rochford District Council is not a lead partner in any of the action plans, there are a number of actions which we are required to undertake. If a species or habitat type identified in the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan occurs within the district, particularly where it is one of Rochford's flagship species, then implementation normally involves the District Council.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the Flagship species within the Rochford District are:
- Heath fritillary
 - Common cow wheat
 - Hornbeam
 - Wild service tree

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- 3.4 It is considered that the most simple way to translate the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan into local action was to develop an action plan for Rochford. Please refer to Appendix One for the draft Rochford Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 3.5 The plan contains actions identified in the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan, where the implementation involves Rochford District Council. It shows the lead partner for the species or habitat, the Council services effected, and the current and recommended actions.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Biodiversity is an indicator of the health of our environment. Biodiversity also promotes human welfare by its role in climate control (e.g. as a carbon sink), and in environmental function more generally (producing oxygen, developing soil and preventing erosion).

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No specific resource implications at this stage.

7 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Some actions identified in the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan are relevant to Parish Councils, particularly in relation to Local Nature Reserves. Lead partners will be approaching Parish Councils on an individual basis where necessary.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS:**

That, subject to comments from Members, the draft Rochford Biodiversity Action Plan be agreed.

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Background Papers:

None

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