



Full Council	Tuesday, 09 December 2025	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Biodiversity Duty Report (Winter 2025)**

Report Author(s): **Peter Heath (Senior Planning Policy Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	This report seeks Committee approval to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report on the Council's website and forward a copy of the report to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
Report Summary:	<p>The adoption of the Environment Act 2021 increased the responsibilities on public bodies (such as Councils) to have regard to biodiversity in exercising their functions.</p> <p>Alongside implementing Biodiversity Net Gain through the land use planning system local authorities are now required to produce a report setting out how its corporate action and policies (Council-wide, not just as a local planning authority) will improve biodiversity – a biodiversity duty report. This report is attached as Appendix 1.</p> <p>This is the first biodiversity duty report the authority has been required to produce. An update will be required every five years.</p> <p>The Act requires that a copy of the report is submitted to DEFRA so central Government can assess how local progress is contributing to the national drive to boost biodiversity.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>That Council:</p> <p>A. Approves the publication of the Biodiversity Duty Report (attached as Appendix 1) on the Council website; and</p> <p>B. Agrees to forward a copy of the report to DEFRA in line with the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.</p>
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2652 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Peter Heath (Senior Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2732 peter.heath@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1)</p> <p>Our Communities (SO2)</p> <p>Our Partners (SO5)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)</p> <p>Customer & Community Focused (V1)</p>

	Collaborative & Creative (V3) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	No corporate risk(s) identified.
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Biodiversity Duty Report (Winter 2025)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The adoption of the Environment Act 2021 increased the responsibilities on public bodies (such as Councils) to have regard to biodiversity in exercising their functions.
- 1.2 The most obvious example of this is the requirement for local planning authorities to seek a 10% net gain in biodiversity from the planning applications they process.
- 1.3 In addition, it introduced a requirement to report on the actions the Council is taking corporately to promote biodiversity.
- 1.4 Alongside implementing Biodiversity Net Gain through the land use planning system local authorities are now required to produce a report setting out how its corporate action and policies (Council-wide, not just as a local planning authority) will improve biodiversity – a biodiversity duty report. This report is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5 That report, known as a Biodiversity Duty Report, must set out what actions a Council is currently taking to aid biodiversity and what actions it will undertake over the next five years, these are set out in Section Two of the attached Biodiversity Duty Report. This is the first biodiversity duty report the authority has been required to produce. An update will be required every five years.
- 1.6 Section Three deals with other strategies specifically the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

(produced by the County Council), any protected site strategies within the Borough (produced by Natural England) and any protected species strategies (part of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy).

1.7 Section Four deals with any future actions the Council will undertake that are separate from the strategies identified in Section Two.

1.8 In addition, the Council is required to submit a copy of the report to DEFRA by 31 December 2025 so they can monitor how local initiatives are contributing to the national drive to boost biodiversity.

2. Conclusion

2.1 Members approve the Council's first Biodiversity Duty Report for publication and agree that the report is sent to the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs by the end of this calendar year (31 December 2025).