



**Policy, Finance and
Development
Committee**

**Tuesday, 17 June
2025**

**Matter for
Information and
Decision**

Report Title: **Formal Approval of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy**

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

Purpose of Report:	To seek approval for the final version of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire and Rutland.
Report Summary:	<p>A Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire and Rutland has been produced by Leicestershire County Council (known as the responsible authority). The draft strategy was reported to this Committee on 3 December 2024, and a supportive response was submitted.</p> <p>The strategy has been subject to public consultation and is going for adoption by the County Council at a meeting in early July. The Council is a supporting authority in the production of the strategy and the responsible authority is seeking formal endorsement of the strategy from its' supporting authority partners. The final version of the strategy is attached.</p> <p>The deadline for registering any formal objection to the strategy was the 20th of May, so while we cannot formally object the responsible authority would value a supportive response.</p>
Recommendation(s):	A. That the content of this report be noted; and B. That the Committee formally approve the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as a supporting authority.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2642 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>Ed Morgan (Principal Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2650 ed.morgan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Peter Heath (Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2732 peter.heath@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)</p>
Vision and Values:	Collaborative & Creative (V3)

	Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	Click to select or insert narrative.
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. Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

1. Background

- 1.1 In an effort to arrest and then reverse the national decline in biodiversity the previous Government passed the Environment Act 2021. One of the principal ways the Act seeks to address this issue is via the production of 48 local nature recovery strategies (LNRS). Leicestershire County Council were designated as the responsible authority for producing the strategy for Leicestershire and Rutland (the strategy also covers the city).
- 1.2 The Councils within Leicestershire were all designated as supporting authorities that contributed to the drafting of the strategy and had the opportunity to formally comment on the draft strategy before it was released for public consultation and on the final version of the strategy before adoption.
- 1.3 At the meeting of this Committee on 3 December 2024 (minute 37 refers) Members endorsed a response to the draft strategy in advance of public consultation which took place in January-February 2025. The strategy is due to go to a County Council meeting in early July for adoption and they are seeking responses from their supporting authorities prior to its adoption.
- 1.4 Under the regulations underpinning the Strategy, following the public consultation period supporting authorities have a limited period (28 days) to formally object to the strategy. That period has expired. There are two grounds on which an objection can be made, that the strategy was in some way materially deficient or that the strategy was not justified in light of consultation responses received. Neither case applied in relation to the LNRS.

- 1.5 As noted in the December report the strategy does not place any financial requirements/liabilities on the Council or define new areas for protection or designation. It will guide funding and investment into local priorities to provide benefits for people and wildlife.

2. Strategy

- 2.1 The strategy sets out opportunities for improvements to biodiversity across the area looking at specific locations (for example, Rutland Water, the Welland Valley) and then looks at opportunities for eight priority habitats – woodland, freshwater, grassland, urban areas, agriculture, previously developed land, green and blue corridors and geodiversity. The approach of the strategy is to protect, enhance, create, manage and connect these habitats to ensure their future resilience and sustainability.
- 2.2 For each of these priority habitats the strategy has a series of actions that will contribute to one of the five aims set out above in paragraph 2.1. So, for example, for the urban priority habitat there are nine actions that would contribute to at least one of the five aims above. Action 3 - increasing the urban tree canopy by planting native and climate resilient species - is about enhancing the urban habitat. This action compliments emerging local plan policies.
- 2.3 The introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) offers the chance to improve development sites. If there is insufficient space on-site to improve a development site then improvements can be made off-site. The strategy provides multiple opportunities to improve habitats as it will highlight to each local authority opportunities for improvements both within their own area but also with cross boundary links to aid species movement.
- 2.4 The development of a local nature recovery strategy is welcomed. It identifies the important priority habitats within Leicestershire & Rutland that need to be improved. The actions it identifies for each priority habitat will help with the aims of creating, protecting, enhancing, managing and connecting habitats which in turn should help boost the number and diversity of species.
- 2.5 The strategy is attached as **Appendix 1**.