

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Forward Plan (2019-2022) 2020/21 annual report

Section 2.5. Appendix 2.

2020/21 Progress and 2021/22 Activity Plan

Service Area	Business Plan linked Objectives	Progress 2020/21	Areas of Focus and Opportunity 2021/22	Environment Champion/s	Assessment Red – Amber – Green
Governance & Partnerships	<p>1. Support the integration of Forward Plan objectives into council Corporate Business Plans and provide quarterly reporting</p> <p>2. Provide a link to Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan and Public Service Board</p>	<p>1. Fully integrated into processes during 20/21 and being utilised also for the Annual Report on Council Performance.</p> <p>On-going projects continue, despite COVID-19 and the PSB is overseeing the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>Significant progress with climate change work, including the Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly, where key recommendations were made around nature and green space, particularly its protection and improvement.</p>	<p>1. Further strengthen relevant duties for Biodiversity and Ecosystem throughout organisational processes.</p> <p>Strengthen local and regional partnership working on environmental issues in-line with Gwent PSB changes, with a strong local focus on the Green Infrastructure Plan</p> <p>Build on the delivery of community led projects benefiting from participatory budgeting in the borough.</p> <p>Ensure key stakeholders are able to consider and participated in consultation on</p>	Yes – One (Governance)	Green

		<p>Furthermore, a number of environment community based projects have been funded by 20/21 participatory budgeting programme in Blaenau Gwent.</p> <p>Biodiversity and Ecosystem a key part of development of the Gwent Well-being Assessment for the newly formed Gwent PSB. Considered locality issues e.g. Blaenau Gwent and will be available for formal consultation early in 2022.</p>	the well-being assessment, which will shape the new PSB well-being plan for 2022/23.		
Resources	None set	-	Set objectives with Section 6 duty leads	Yes – One (Accounting)	Amber
Commercial Services	Organisational Development (OD): 1. Take further steps towards implementation of a “paperless office” via the further development of the iTrent system and the roll-out of the self service functions	<p>New Agile Working Operating Model: Further reduction in the use of paper Less commuting but also less business travel overall Closure of a building</p> <p>Occupational Health- Fully remote service</p> <p>ITrent: Further development to streamline processes and reduce use of paper i.e.</p>	<p>Include section in Staff Newsletter</p> <p>Further digitalisation of the remaining filing.</p> <p>Tendering for a permanent Hybrid mail solution which will give the service area full functionality and the ability to send out secure emails to staff instead of paper letters.</p> <p>Making more use of staff email addresses since COVID</p>	Yes – Two (OD; Business Support)	Green

		<p>recruitment and other forms Majority of correspondence now within the system to auto populate</p> <p>It was agreed (prior to the pandemic) that all communication being electronic, however it was impacted by Covid 19 do there has been a delay to going completely paperless on staff communication.</p> <p>Introduction of the new Hybrid mail system but does not allow all functionality of going completely paperless with staff communication.</p>	<p>Decarbonisation Agenda: One of OD's actions is to explore how staff can be encouraged to switch to ULEV. This will be considered through the review our car loan scheme next year.</p>		
Social Services	<p>1. Environment Act leads to attend Provider Managers meeting annually</p> <p>2. Encourage nature friendly management at our Provider Services outside spaces</p> <p>3. Engage our citizens and staff with the environment through involvement in</p>	<p>Unfortunately, Community Options closed in March 2020 and staff were redeployed to essential services and as a result limited progress has been made within Social Services – Adult services has prioritised supporting the delivery of essential services and a number of non-regulated services have focussed of supporting citizens in their own homes and in the</p>	<p>In 2021 staff member Steven Spear has attended environment champion meetings, Steven has worked with the group in helping with the new sensory garden at Bryn Bach Park. Steven will continue to work with environment champions and continue the upkeep of our gardens and also the planting of wild flowers and bird boxes in our community centres.</p>	<p>Yes – Two (Adult; Child)</p>	<p>Amber</p>

	environmental projects within our Provider Services	community who are assessed as being in critical need. However recently we have made some progress with the garden at one of our establishments, including bird boxes and wild flowers.			
Regeneration & Community Services	<p>1. Work towards the Local Development Plan (LDP) aims</p> <p>2. Maintain and enhance biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience on council owned land, particularly with regard to Section 7 priority species and habitats in partnership with community groups, Gwent Wildlife Trust and others.</p> <p>3. Ensure that the Council Embraces the Well-being of Future Generations Act across the service functions and contribute to improving educational standards in relation to biodiversity.</p>	<p>1. Supported the inclusion of ecosystem resilience in the Local Development Plan 2018-2033 and reference up to date policies from the Environment Act including Natural Resources Policy and Area Statements.</p> <p>Changes to Edition 10 (2018) of Planning Policy Wales highlighted by Chief Planner 1st March 2021. PPW 11 was issued February 2021.</p> <p>2. The Resilient Greater Gwent has several work streams delivering on maintaining & enhancing biodiversity and improve ecosystem resilience.</p> <p>3. Due to covid 19 (March 2020) and changes to staffing, engagement</p>	<p>1. Support LDP Allocation master planning</p> <p>2. Support Local Nature Reserves and community groups via collaborative management plans.</p> <p>3. Programme of environmental education to be developed to deliver the Schools SLA from April 2021.</p> <p>4. Support the Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership Nature Recovery Action Plan. Bring to council for scrutiny and approval.</p> <p>To support and assist with promotion materials for Wales Nature Week 2021.</p> <p>Discuss and develop BGCBC becoming Bee Friendly (WG scheme)</p>	Yes – Two (Regeneration; Natural Environment)	Green

	<p>4. Support the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in its work as a strategic partnership of organisations and individuals directing and delivering nature conservation in both Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent boroughs, at local and wider landscape scales.</p>	<p>wasn't able to take place at its full level of delivery. January 2021 the role of the Biodiversity officer to be filled.</p> <p>4. Supported the Local Nature Partnership (Appendix 2a, Local Nature Partnership progress 2020-21).</p> <p>Supported community groups running events and assisted with promotion materials for Wales Nature Week in June 2020 (Appendix 2b, Nature Week Events 2020).</p>			
Education	<p>1. Engage schools and students via educational sessions and eco-councils and embed sustainability</p> <p>2. Environment Act leads to attend a Head Teachers meeting annually</p> <p>3. Encourage nature friendly management on school grounds</p>	<p>1. A Bio-diversity SLA is in place between Natural Environment team and schools; engaging with 17 schools providing indoor and outdoor learning sessions linked to the natural environment. Adaptation required for Covid-19 restrictions. Blended delivery style of online engagement and outdoor classroom. The SLA review process has commenced, the aim of</p>	<p>1. Adaptation required for Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>Schools built as part of the 21st Century Schools programme built to excellent Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standard.</p> <p>Further development and implementation of the Ecology and Education Action plan, in line with the following key themes:</p>	Yes – One (Education transformation)	Green

	<p>4. Engage young people with the environment through the youth service</p>	<p>which, is to extend provision throughout the school estate.</p> <p>2. Update provided in newsletter. An Engagement Plan and regular meetings are in place between the Natural Environment team and Education, which includes the development of a School Engagement and Communication plan.</p> <p>3. Via School Eco Councils and SLA with Natural Environment Team. In addition, projects and priorities will be developed and agreed as part of the joint action planning process with Education</p> <p>4. Ongoing, this work will also form part of the action planning process (referenced above).</p> <p>Schools built as part of the 21st Century Schools programme built to excellent Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of Education (including schools and Youth Service) business (i.e. procurement, planning, projects, programmes etc.) and grounds (i.e. maintenance, management, development etc.) – creation of a Education Ecology Policy • Engagement – children, young people, partners and schools • Links to the curriculum and future employment opportunities • Connection to nature and wellbeing • Training, awareness and communication 		
--	--	---	---	--	--

		Method (BREEAM) standard. In addition, remodelling and maintenance projects factor in ecological and environmental enhancement considerations.			
Councillors	N/A	N/A	Update briefing on Activity Plan and funding outputs. Virtual or in person.	Yes – Nature Champion Cllr Lee Parsons	Green