

## **South Lanarkshire's Nature Emergency**

### **Notice of Motion**

Motion received in terms of Standing Order No 20 on 16 January 2024, proposed by Councillor Kirsten Robb, seconded by Councillor Ross Clark, as follows:-

#### **"Council:-**

- 1) Notes the body of evidence which outlines the alarming extent of the global nature and biodiversity crisis due to species extinction, climate breakdown, habitat loss, pesticide use, pollution, invasive species and soil degradation.
- 2) Recognises the inherent value of nature as an integral part of culture and society, as well as its crucial importance for our health, wellbeing, and economy.
- 3) Acknowledges the key role nature will play in meeting climate targets, and for climate adaptation and resilience.

#### **Further, Council:-**

- 4) Welcomes the Edinburgh Declaration, signed by South Lanarkshire Council, which recognised local authorities' important role in delivering biodiversity and notes there will be forthcoming statutory targets for public bodies to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and restore it by 2045.
- 5) Acknowledges the progress made in South Lanarkshire, with the designation and expansion of nature reserves and award of Nature Restoration Fund of £1million to date.
- 6) Recognises the role that the public have played and must play in the future to meet biodiversity targets and notes the important role of the council's Countryside and Greenspace team who between 2011 and 2022 facilitated around £2m worth of environmental volunteering.
- 7) Notes the results of the 2022 Grounds Participatory Budgeting exercise where the majority of respondents said they would like to see more areas developed for wildflowers and pollinators.
- 8) Congratulates young people in Holy Cross and Carluke High Schools for their work on the Scottish Curriculum and Qualification Framework accredited Forestry and Outdoor Learning Award (FOLA), preparing them for green economy jobs and enhancing their employability skills.

#### **Therefore, Council agrees:-**

- 9) To declare a Nature Emergency recognising the current state of nature, its value to society and the crucial role its recovery and restoration will play in ameliorating climate breakdown.

**Further, Council requests reports to appropriate committees to:-**

- 10) Ensure Council strategies, Resource plans and initiatives align with the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and address any changes, data and capacity required to develop and monitor action.
- 11) Adopt a partnership approach at a landscape scale, maximising opportunities for biodiversity improvement and external funding, and propose and support the link between the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership and the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership being reinstated.
- 12) Highlight council action which would improve biodiversity, such as: ceasing the use of peat and plastic grass in landscaping, reducing glyphosate use, planting only pollinator friendly species and incorporating nest boxes and minimising light pollution in the Residential Design Guide.
- 13) Ensure the current and future workforce understands the importance of biodiversity, how it impacts their role and how nature-connected organisations improve staff wellbeing. This would also determine additional skills or knowledge needed by the workforce, offer biodiversity training to all elected members, and promote and support FOLA in more schools.
- 14) Build on existing corporate communications highlighting changes that will be put in place to improve biodiversity, why they are happening and what benefits they will bring."