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Report to:	Community and Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 May 2018
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Implementation Plan
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:

- ◆ advise Committee on the development of a new South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and the Biodiversity Implementation Plan.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy 2018 to 2022 and the associated Biodiversity Implementation Plan 2018 to 2022 be endorsed;
- (2) that the matter be referred to the Executive Committee for approval; and
- (3) that, following approval by the Executive Committee, the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and the Biodiversity Implementation Plan be published.

3. Background

3.1. The South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy is produced on behalf of the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership and sets an agreed framework for furthering the conservation of biodiversity across South Lanarkshire.

3.2. The Partnership brings together various groups including Government agencies, advisory bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations with an interest in biodiversity in South Lanarkshire. Key partners include Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage and Central Scotland Green Network Trust.

3.3. The Council has a significant influence on biodiversity as a major landowner, as a Planning Authority and through the impacts of its wider service delivery. Direct Council delivery against the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy is managed and monitored through the Council's Biodiversity Implementation Plan (BDIP).

3.4. The existing South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and associated Biodiversity Implementation Plan were produced in 2010 and are due for refresh. As part of the development of the new documents, the following steps have been completed to date:-

- ◆ Development of the two strategy documents in association with members of the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership from January to July 2017
- ◆ Public consultation for the two strategy documents was from 18 July 2017 to 1 September 2017 – electronic, via the Council’s website.
- ◆ Following consultation, the final drafts of the Strategy and BDIP were presented to the Sustainable Development Members/Officer Group on 31 October 2017
- ◆ The Council’s report on the “Biodiversity Duty” for the period January 2015 to December 2017 was placed on the Council website in December 2017 and a link was sent to Scottish Government, in line with the required process.

4. South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Implementation Plan 2018 to 2022

4.1. The Biodiversity Strategy takes a pragmatic and proportionate approach to biodiversity conservation at a landscape scale and with a focus on the natural “ecosystems” that underpin much of human economic sustainability and quality of life. It sets outcomes and actions developed by the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Partnership. The vision for the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy remains unchanged from the previous strategy referred to above and states:

The future environment of South Lanarkshire will consist of a suite of robust ecosystems which can adapt to climatic changes without the wide scale breakdown of local ecosystem services, habitat fragmentation and species extinctions. In effect, our vision is: ‘Healthy nature, healthy people’

4.2. The strategy sets out ten strategic outcomes:

- ◆ Invasive non-native species are monitored and controlled
- ◆ Designated, locally important sites are conserved
- ◆ People have opportunities to connect with nature
- ◆ Freshwater habitats are protected and improved
- ◆ The biodiversity of low lying farmland is improved
- ◆ Peatlands are protected and improved
- ◆ Uplands are managed sustainably
- ◆ The urban environment benefits biodiversity
- ◆ Vacant and derelict land contributes to biodiversity
- ◆ Woodlands are restored and managed

4.3. Actions, targets, timescales and responsibilities have been set for each strategic outcome and agreed with delivery partners. These measures will be used to monitor delivery progress.

4.4. The Biodiversity Implementation Plan (BDIP) sets out objectives and outcomes that have been agreed with Resource representatives. The BDIP represents the Council’s statement of its delivery against the “Biodiversity Duty” and monitoring of the BDIP informs the Council’s statutory reporting to the Scottish Government.

4.5. The BDIP seeks to place biodiversity objectives clearly in the context of the following core Council objectives as set out in the Council Plan “Connect” and reflects guidance from the Scottish Government

- ◆ Improve the quality of the physical environment
- ◆ Develop a sustainable Council and communities
- ◆ Raise educational achievement and attainment

- ◆ Improve and maintain health and increase physical activity
- ◆ Strengthen partnership working, community leadership and engagement
- ◆ Achieve efficient and effective use of resources.

4.6. As noted in paragraph 3.4 both documents were subject to public consultation from 18 July to 1 September 2017 and the draft documents were also circulated to stakeholders across the Council, through the Sustainability Partnership Officer's Working Group. Recommendations and changes have been incorporated where appropriate.

4.7. Copies of the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Implementation Plan 2018 to 2022 have been placed in the members' libraries for reference prior to Committee.

4.8. On approval, the South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy and Biodiversity Implementation Plan 2018 to 2022 will be uploaded onto the Council web site, promoted through Social Media and circulated to partners and relevant bodies.

5. Employee Implications

5.1. There are no employee implications associated with delivery of either the Biodiversity Strategy or the BDIP.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. There are no additional revenue implications associated with delivery of either the Biodiversity Strategy or the BDIP.

7. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

7.1. The Biodiversity Strategy and BDIP were both submitted for Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Environmental Reports were made available as part of the consultation process.

8. Other Implications

8.1. Reporting requirements under the "Biodiversity Duty" have implications for all Resources. Targets and measures set out in the Biodiversity Implementation Plan are agreed with all Resources through their representatives on the Sustainability Officer's Working Group. The Countryside and Greenspace Section offer support and guidance for all Resources and undertake the collation of measures and preparation of the statutory reports.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

9.1. Equality impact assessments were carried out for the SL Biodiversity Strategy and the SLC Biodiversity Implementation Plan.

9.2. Both documents, along with their Environmental Statement, have been subject to public consultation from 18 July to 1 September 2017. The draft documents have also been circulated to stakeholders across the Council, through the Sustainability Partnership Officers' Working Group. Recommendations and changes have been incorporated where appropriate.

Michael McGlynn
Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

30 April 2018

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Ambitions/Values

- ◆ Improve the quality of life of everyone in South Lanarkshire
- ◆ Make communities safer, stronger and sustainable
- ◆ Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- ◆ Encourage participation in physical and cultural activities
- ◆ Work with communities and partners to promote high quality, thriving and sustainable communities
- ◆ Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent

Previous References

Executive Committee 7 March 2012

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Draft South Lanarkshire Biodiversity Strategy 2018 to 2022
- ◆ Draft South Lanarkshire Council Biodiversity Implementation Plan 2018 to 2022
- ◆ Report on delivery against the Biodiversity Duty 2015-17

Contact for Further Information

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