



Lee Valley
Regional Park Authority

LEE VALLEY REGIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

23 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 11:30

Agenda Item No:

11

Report No:

E/529/17

LEE VALLEY BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Presented by the Head of Parklands

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plan was approved by Members and launched in 2000. This plan provided a framework for focused biodiversity enhancements and awareness-raising across the Regional Park alongside key partners. A review of this document has taken place and an updated plan produced, taking into account both existing and new priorities and opportunities for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the Regional Park.

This paper seeks Member approval for the draft Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plan in order to commence partner consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

Members Approve: (1) the draft Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plan for consultation.

BACKGROUND

- 1 Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) were launched in the UK in 1994 in response to the 1992 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro. Extensive consultation led to the production of the first report, entitled 'Meeting the Rio Challenge', establishing the framework and criteria for identifying species and habitat types of conservation concern. BAPs were widely produced by a range of organisations including private companies, local authorities and charities to provide targeted action for biodiversity. The first Lee Valley BAP was adopted in 2000.
- 2 Devolution led the four nations of the UK to develop their own country strategies for biodiversity. The Lawton Review 'Making Space for Nature' in 2010, and the Government White Paper 'The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature' in June 2011, led to the most recent England biodiversity strategy 'Biodiversity 2020' published in 2011 which saw a shift in the approach to biodiversity action to landscape scale conservation strategies. The work of the Authority is considered an appropriate landscape scale for the purposes of the White Paper.
- 3 Following this change in emphasis to landscape scale conservation strategies

many of the BAP were not reviewed, however they still provide a valid framework for conservation work within their area. The merits of the BAP process; the review of key habitats and species, the setting of SMART targets and the drawing together of key partners for targeted action are still considered to be an effective method enabling conservation action. The existing Lea Catchment Nature Improvement Area which itself is a landscape scale partnership, will provide an excellent forum for engagement and delivery of the BAP.

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- 4 The first Lee Valley BAP was adopted in 2000 and identified habitats and species within the Regional Park that would benefit from specific programmes of action to conserve and enhance them. The BAP habitats targeted for action were:

- wet woodland;
- standing open water;
- rivers and streams;
- floodplain grassland and fen;
- urban habitats.

The BAP species were:

- Otter;
- Water Vole;
- Early Marsh Orchid;
- Bittern; and
- Kingfisher.

- 5 The Lee Valley BAP has provided an excellent framework for biodiversity action drawing in a range of delivery partners, however the plan needed to be reviewed and the targets reassessed in light of changes in national and regional priorities.

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- 6 The revised Lee Valley BAP (draft) targets all land within the Authority's boundary and therefore working with partners is key to delivery of targets and ultimately the success of the plan.

- 7 Following a review of national targets in relation to the habitats and species of the Regional Park the following key habitats have been targeted for action:

- woodland;
- standing open water;
- rivers and streams;
- grassland and fen;
- built environment and brownfield.

Some of these habitats have broadened in their scope to encompass all the habitats of note within the Regional Park and reflect changes in national priorities.

The following key species have been targeted for action:

- Otter;
- Water Vole;
- Early Marsh Orchid;
- Bittern;
- Kingfisher;
- Bats;
- Creeping Marshwort*;
- Invasive non-native species*;
- and
- Barbel*.

Three new species action plans have been included (noted with an asterix above). These reflect either new species identified since the launch of the previous BAP or species that following review are now regarded as additional priorities.

The work on delivery of the Habitat Action Plans will provide benefits to a range of species, providing a more robust and inter-connected habitat across the Regional Park which is fundamental to the success of the plan. The delivery of the Species Action Plans will target very specific work requirements of key species, these species are also an excellent tool for community awareness and engagement.

- 8 For each habitat or species action plan highlighted in the Lee Valley BAP a suite of SMART targets will be drawn up over the coming year to deliver the aims and objectives set out in the draft BAP. These will be drawn up in collaboration with key stakeholders who will also assist in their delivery.
- 9 The Park Development Framework (PDF) sets out the Authority's aspirations for future development and management of the Regional Park. The PDF has six key strategic aims, one of which is biodiversity. The delivery of the Lee Valley BAP will be fundamental to the successful delivery of this element of the PDF.
- 10 Engagement and awareness raising with landowners, partners and the general public is key to success of the BAP. The BAP document will be publicly accessible on the Authority's website and progress on the targets will be reported annually and made available on the website. There will be an on-going series of events taking place to highlight the BAP and the wildlife of the Regional Park.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11 There are no specific environmental implications arising from this report. Work carried out through delivery of the proposed Lee Valley BAP will enhance the biodiversity value, appreciation and understanding of the key habitats and species within the Regional Park.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. It is anticipated that the allocated annual BAP capital budget of £50K will enable delivery of many of the BAP targets.
- 13 It is anticipated that any additional funding could be sought through the

planning system, for example through S106 or Community Infrastructure Levy or grant applications as necessary.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14 If approved delivery of the BAP will be co-ordinated by existing staff in the Conservation Team.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 16 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 16 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

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PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Authority	3259	A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Lee Valley Regional Park	21 January 1999
Authority	3479	Biodiversity Action Plan – Progress Report	12 July 2001
Authority	3530	A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Lee Valley Regional Park: Progress report for 2001 – 2002	11 April 2002
Authority	3618	A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Lee Valley Regional Park: Progress report for 2002 – 2003	15 May 2003
Authority	3730	A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Lee Valley Regional Park: Progress report for 2003 – 2004, programme for 2004 – 2005	27 May 2004
Authority	3807	A Biodiversity Action Plan for the Lee Valley Regional Park: Progress report for 2004 – 2005, programme for 2006 – 2007	26 May 2005
Authority	3865	Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plan: 2006/07	20 April 2006
Authority	A/3916/07	Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plan: 2007/08	22 February 2007
Authority	A/3987/08	Lee Valley Biodiversity Action Plan: 2008/09	22 May 2008

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
PDF	Park Development Framework