

**Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision**

Work Programme Reference	I120554
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1. **TITLE:** Biodiversity Action Plan 2024-2029 – Consultation Approval

2. **SERVICE AREA:**

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To seek approval of the draft Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2024-2029 as the basis for a 4-week public consultation.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that the draft Bracknell Forest Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 2024-2029 and supporting summary document as the basis for a 4-week public Consultation is approved.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

1. The BAP forms part of the statutory duty for all public authorities to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
2. The recent Bracknell Forest Council declaration of a climate and biodiversity emergency reinforces the importance of action for biodiversity across the borough. The motion includes an item to “Revise the Biodiversity Action Plan to include audits of the state of nature in the borough and to highlight local biodiversity threats due to climate change” which has been taken into consideration in the revised plan.
3. The Bracknell Forest BAP demonstrates the commitment of the Council and local people to protecting and enhancing nature in the borough.
4. The draft plan for 2024-2029 builds upon the previous Biodiversity Action Plans. It is a partnership plan, having been co-produced with input from key stakeholders, including the Bracknell Forest Nature Partnership.
5. A full public consultation will allow the council to gather feedback more widely from anyone who lives in, works in or visits the borough. It will also allow those who have already contributed ideas to see how these have been incorporated into the draft plan and provide further feedback. Feedback will be used to refine and develop the final plan and a detailed action plan. The updated plan will then go to Executive with a recommendation to approve it.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

1. The alternative option is to rely entirely on external policies and strategies to help guide and shape the future support for our local biodiversity. This approach would not focus specifically on the needs of Bracknell Forest’s wildlife and residents. It may

reduce the opportunities to achieve the council's objectives.

2. There is also the alternative option to not go for wider public consultation on the draft BAP. To use the current copy of the plan, which has been created by wildlife specialists and key stakeholders, as the basis with which to present to Executive, with the recommendation it is approved. This would be a missed opportunity to engage communities in delivering wildlife action. There are many local residents and community groups with an interest in nature conservation. It would mean they would miss out on giving their views, and the plan would be published without their important input.
3. Wide-scale consultations are usually run for 6-weeks. The proposed 4-week length of the BAP consultation takes into account consultation that has already been undertaken with stakeholders. Consulting for too long will unnecessarily delay progression of the BAP.
9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration
10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
23 April 2024	1 May 2024