



Title of Report:	All Ireland Pollinator Plan
Committee Report Submitted To:	Environmental Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	10th May 2022
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Protecting and enhancing our environment and assets
Outcome	Promotion of Biodiversity
Lead Officer	Head of Estates

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Cost Neutral
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Council have been asked to join many other organisations and sign up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan to help protect pollinators and local food producers.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In 2015 the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan was launched with sixty-eight governmental and non-governmental organisations agreeing a shared plan of action to tackle pollinator decline and make the island of Ireland a place where pollinators can survive and thrive. Delivering the 81 actions has been shared out between the supporting organisations, which include Northern Ireland Environment Agency, National Trust, RSPB, Transport NI, Ulster Farmers' Union, Ulster Wildlife along with organisations in the Republic of Ireland. Nine of Northern Ireland's 11 Councils have signed up to the scheme and there are now over 90 organisations involved in delivering the Plan.
- 2.2 The Plan identifies actions that can be taken on farmland, public land, and private land. These include creating pollinator highways along transport routes, making public parks pollinator friendly and encouraging the public to see their gardens as potential pit-stops for bees and other pollinators.
- 2.3 Declines in wildflowers are subjecting our pollinators to starvation. Fertiliser application has resulted in increased crop yields, but in strong declines in wildflowers in managed fields and in adjacent semi-natural habitats. The tendency to tidy up the landscape rather than allowing wildflowers to grow along roadsides, field margins, and in parks and gardens is also playing a big part in fewer of these resources being available. It's not just crops; about three-quarters of wild plants also require insect pollinators.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 Council are already carrying out many of the actions included in the plan such as the provision of wild-flower beds, meadows and the Don't Mow Let It grow Scheme. By signing up to the Plan Council will benefit from:
1. Partnership with an internationally renowned strategy to reverse declines in biodiversity.
 2. A framework outlining options with the flexibility to choose from a variety of low/cost-neutral evidence-based actions that will have a positive impact.
 3. Access to training, guidance documents, support materials, case studies, etc. to help Council decide on appropriate actions.
 4. Helps demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements such as the Council's Biodiversity statutory responsibilities.
 5. Enhancing the local landscape for pollinators supporting local food producers

6. A framework to help support the delivery of key plans such as the Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland.
7. A demonstration of Councils' biodiversity credentials to residents who are increasingly concerned with supporting environmentally friendly initiatives.
8. Actions to support community engagement and strengthen relationships with local groups who are also working to protect our pollinators, e.g., Ulster in Bloom.
9. Actions to support Eco-Schools (NI)
10. There is no cost to join the Scheme.

3.2 In return Council commit to:

1. Supporting the ethos of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and will consider the Plan in their policies, plans, and management decisions where possible.
2. To consider the evidence-based actions in the guideline document *Councils: Actions to help Pollinators*, and to carry out one pollinator-friendly action in the first year of signing up and plan to carry out at least three more within the following five years. The guideline document lists 30 possible actions, many of which are low cost or cost neutral.
3. To update the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan Team (within the National Biodiversity Data Centre) on the positive pollinator actions Council have planned, implemented, or maintained at the end of each year, when contacted, to help promote our work.

4.0 **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Environmental Services Committee recommends that Council Sign up to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan as a Partner.