

## **REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT**

### **LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAM**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To confirm that the final version of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham has been produced in accordance with the relevant legislation, regulations and guidance.
2. To seek approval for the amendments made to the draft LNRS following the public consultation and for the County Council to send the final version of the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham to the Supporting Authorities for a 28-day period.
3. Subject to no formal objections being received from the Supporting Authorities during the 28-day period, to seek approval to inform the Secretary of State of intention to publish the final version of the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.
4. This is a Key Decision as it will have a significant effect on two or more electoral divisions.

#### **Information**

5. The Environment Act 2021 established a requirement to produce Local Nature Recovery Strategies for “areas” within England and that these strategies should cover the whole of England. The core purpose of a LNRS, as defined by DEFRA, is to help reverse the ongoing decline of nature and biodiversity in England through coordinated, practical and focused action.
6. The Council was formally appointed as the Responsible Authority for preparing, publishing, reviewing and re-publishing the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 26th June 2023. This was followed by confirmation of “new burdens” funding, through a Section 31 (S.31) grant for the preparation of the LNRS in July 2023.
7. The LNRS must be evidence based, locally led and collaborative. It must include a statement of biodiversity priorities and a local habitat map. The statement covers:
  - the existing biodiversity;
  - opportunities and priorities, in terms of habitats and species, for recovering or enhancing biodiversity; and
  - proposals for potential measures relating to the agreed priorities.

8. The LNRS must be published and be publicly available, with the evidence base against which it has been formulated, in accordance with the format prescribed by Government. It must then be reviewed and republished as part of an ongoing cycle of appraising what the strategy has achieved and identifying what further work is needed for nature to recover.
9. The County Council has worked closely with the Supporting Authorities (SAs) and a wide range of stakeholders to produce a draft LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, in accordance with the Regulations and Guidance. The production of the draft LNRS included both in-person and online events and workshops to inform development of the Priorities and Measures and the subsequent Mapping of Measures. The SAs for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham comprise the 7 District and Borough Councils, the City Council, the East Midlands Combined County Authority and Natural England. Stakeholders engaged through events and workshops have included planners, ecologists, environmental and land-based Non-Governmental Organisations, organisations that operate at landscape scale, green space and partnership groups, Parish Councils, farmers and landowners, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University. All of this stakeholder input informed the production of the consultation draft of the LNRS and the accompanying digital mapping of Measures.
10. The process for adoption of the LNRS is set out in *the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023* which came into effect on 13 April 2023. Under the Regulations, the County Council must prepare a consultation draft LNRS, undertake a public consultation on the draft, and publish responses to the consultation within a reasonable time.
11. The County Council undertook a 6-week public consultation on the draft strategy which ran from 6 May to 16 June 2025. This included in-person and online events and an online survey. These were publicised by email sent to all contacts on the LNRS database, Parish Council clerks and via social media posts by County Council channels, as well as dissemination via partner newsletters and networks. Links to the draft LNRS and the online survey were also sent to all County Councillors.
12. The public consultation included attendance by the LNRS team at a number of in-person and online events, webinars or meetings. A total of 320 people attended. An online survey was made available on the Notts Nature Recovery website. 409 responses to the online survey were submitted, and 51 email responses submitted.
13. A summary report of the public consultation has been prepared by our appointed engagement consultants, RSK Nature Positive and is available at our Notts Nature Recovery website – [www.nottsnaturerecovery.co.uk](http://www.nottsnaturerecovery.co.uk). A list of all comments received has been published and has been made available on this website in line with section 12 of the LNRS Regulations. The Executive Summary of the report on the public consultation is attached at Appendix 1.
14. The report of the public consultation revealed broad support for the LNRS and the proposed Priorities and Measures, with a clear understanding of the LNRS's aims and commitment to nature recovery. Specific concerns included interpretation of the Local Habitat Map, the need for clearer delivery policy, and omissions of some important local sites and species.

15. The responses to the consultation have been analysed and amendments have been made to the draft written Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and two of the appendices, and the Local Habitat Map as a result. The key amendments that have been made in response to comments are:

- Addition of new sub-section in section 3 of the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities to explain link between heritage and nature recovery.
- Addition of reference to Sport England Playing Field Policy in section 6.3 to clarify presumption for sporting use.
- Addition of mapped measures at Lowfield Lane, Balderton, south of the existing housing development site, for grassland and woodland measures in response to landowner and local resident comments.
- Additional grassland measures mapped in the eastern half of the county to address concerns about lack of measures for neutral grassland.
- Additional mapped locations for Bittern and Creeping Willow.
- Grizzled Skipper identified as a Priority Species for bespoke action, and locations identified for mapped measures.
- Amendments to mapping of some specific landowner sites – including removal of sites with planning permission or allocated for development in a Local Plan, or in exchange for identifying alternative land in their ownership.

16. In response to comments requesting clarification of the LNRS in terms of future delivery, User Guides will be prepared for different groups when the plan is published, including farmers and landowners, and planners and developers. A guide for local residents will also be prepared with advice on how they can help to recover nature in their own gardens and by supporting local environmental or community organisations.

17. In response to comments requesting clarification of how to interpret the Local Habitat Map an updated User Guide and video will also be prepared to explain how to access and use the mapping portal.

18. The final written Statement of Biodiversity Priorities is attached at Appendix 2. The Statement of Biodiversity Priorities provides a description of the main habitats and species in Nottinghamshire, the pressures and opportunities, and the Priorities and Measures for nature recovery. The foreword has been written by the LNRS Strategic Oversight Group.

19. The Local Habitat Map is attached at Appendix 3. The Local Habitat Map shows:

- the existing Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity, APIBs, which cover existing designated sites of national and local importance;
- the proposed Measures for different habitats and species;
- the Areas that Could become of Particular Importance for Biodiversity, ACBs.

The diagram in Appendix 3 shows the location of ACBs in the county. The link to the online map is included, where all the APIBs, Potential Measures and ACBs can be viewed in detail.

20. The final version of the LNRS must be sent to the Supporting Authorities before publication. Supporting Authorities have 28 days to raise an objection, which would be referred to the Secretary of State. A copy for information must also be provided to the four neighbouring Responsible Authorities of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and

the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority. The 28-day period is anticipated to run from 22 September to 21 October 2025.

21. If no objections are received, the County Council will then inform the Secretary of State of intention to publish on a date 14 days from the notification date.
22. The approved LNRS will remain in place until a review is undertaken, as directed by DEFRA. The review can be any time between 3 – 10 years after publication.
23. The County Council has received one additional year of funding from DEFRA to set up delivery and monitoring systems. It should be noted that currently there is no separate budget or funding programme from DEFRA for project delivery. Delivery of the LNRS will be funded through offsite Biodiversity Net Gain, externally funded landscape or habitat schemes by partners and stakeholder organisations or individuals own actions on their land.

### **Other Options Considered**

24. None. The County Council, as Responsible Authority, has a duty to produce an LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, in accordance with the relevant legislation, Regulations and guidance. The Supporting Authorities have been involved in the development process through the LNRS Advisory Group and the LNRS Strategic Oversight Group. The development of the LNRS was also supported by the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Economic Prosperity Committee in June 2024.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

25. To enable the County Council to fulfil its duties as the Responsible Authority for the production of a LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

26. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

27. The costs of preparing, publishing and delivering the LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, including consultation and public engagement, are covered by a Section 31 Grant from DEFRA.

### **Data Protection and Information Governance**

28. All information collected during the development of the LNRS, particularly in relation to stakeholder engagement and public consultation, has been managed in accordance with the County Council's policies, procedures and guidance for Information Governance.

## Implications for Residents

29. The LNRS seeks to achieve multiple environmental benefits for the residents of Nottinghamshire and Nottingham, including improved access to green space, natural solutions to managing flood risk, and improved water and air quality. It should also inform the delivery of environmental land management schemes across the County.

## Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

30. The LNRS will form part of the national Nature Recovery Network, which aims to:

- enhance sites designated for nature conservation and other wildlife-rich places
- create and restore wildlife-rich habitats, corridors and stepping-stones to help wildlife populations to grow, move, thrive and adapt to a changing climate
- improve the natural and urban environment's resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk
- sustain vital ecosystems that provide healthy soil, clean water and clean air
- protect the natural, geological, historical and cultural diversity of the natural environment
- provide more, better green spaces for us to enjoy and connect with nature where we live, work and play, improving our health and well-being.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approves:

1. That the draft LNRS be amended to reflect the issues raised through the consultation process (as set out in paragraphs 14-17 of the report) and be sent to the Supporting Authorities for the required 28 day period, commencing 22 September 2025; and
2. That, subject to no objections being received, the final version of the LNRS be notified to the Secretary of State in November 2025 and subsequently published.

**Councillor Bert Bingham**  
**Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Heather Stokes, Team Manager Conservation [heather.stokes@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:heather.stokes@nottscc.gov.uk) 0115 9932592

### **Constitutional Comments (EKH 21/08/2025)**

31. It is appropriate for Cabinet to consider this report under its Terms of Reference.

### **Financial Comments (PAA29 20/08/2025)**

32. The Council received a S31 grant of £285,268 from DEFRA to meet the cost of producing the LNRS. These costs include a Co-Ordinator post for 2 years, support from the Graduate Development Programme, the use of engagement specialists and various events as well as a webpage and other communication activity through to publication. There are no additional financial implications for the County Council or Local Government Reorganisation implications arising directly from the report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, 11 July 2022: *LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.*
- Report to City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee, 7 June 2024: *Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS*
- Report to Place Select Committee, 22 July 2024: *Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS.*
- Report to Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, 3 March 2025: *Consultation on LNRS for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.*
- Report to Place Select Committee, 12 March 2025: *Nottinghamshire and Nottingham LNRS.*

## **Electoral Divisions and Members Affected**

- All