

# Decision Notice

## Delegated Decision

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<b>Decision No:</b>	<b>DD44</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>KENT AND MEDWAY LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY – PUBLIC CONSULTATION</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>12 March 2025</b>
<b>Notification Date:</b>	<b>12 March 2025</b>
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	<b>12 March 2025</b>
<b>Decision taken by:</b>	<b>Louise May, Director of Environment and Place (Deputy Chief Executive)</b>
<b>Delegated Authority:</b>	<p><b>Authority delegated by Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 June 2024 (Cabinet Decision CAB 10):</b></p> <p><b>(b) That the Biodiversity Duty Objectives and associated initial actions set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and the proposed reporting timescales, be approved.</b></p> <p><b>(c) That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director (Place and Environment) to progress the delivery of the objectives and initial actions.</b></p> <p><b><i>The relevant objective and initial actions in Appendix 1 referred to in CAB 10 (b) above are as follows:</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Objective: To ensure Dover District Council contributes to the preparation of, and implementation of, the following relevant strategies:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b><i>• Local Nature Recovery Strategy</i></b></li><li><b><i>• Species Conservation Strategies</i></b></li><li><b><i>• Protected site strategies</i></b></li></ul> <p><b><i>Proposed initial actions: 1.1 To continue to be involved with and cooperate with KCC who are preparing the LNRS; 1.2 Further actions related to the LNRS will be identified once it is finalised in 2025, and incorporated into DDC strategies, where possible.</i></b></p>
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>Non-Key Executive Decision</b>
<b>Call-In to Apply?</b>	<b>No (<i>Call-in does not apply to non-Key Officer decisions</i>)</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>

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<b>Reason for the Decision:</b>	<p>Kent County Council is required to undertake a public consultation on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy before it is published. Dover District Council is a Supporting Authority (under The Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023). Dover District is included within the LNRS, which is a Kent-wide strategy, and the Council will be a key user, so it is important for our comments to inform the final document.</p>
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Recommendation: To agree the comments to be submitted by Dover District Council on the draft Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The completed Consultation Questionnaire, including the Dover District Council response, is attached at Appendix 1.

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## **1. Summary and Background**

- 1.1 The Environment Act 2021 sets in place a requirement for the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) are a new, England-wide approach to targeting nature recovery. There will be 48 LNRSs covering the whole of England, with each LNRS agreeing priorities and actions for nature's recovery and broader environmental benefits in the relevant Strategy Area.
- 1.2 Responsible Authorities were appointed to lead on the preparation of these strategies, and for Kent and Medway this was Kent County Council. Dover District Council is a 'supporting authority' (as set out in the legislation) in the preparation of the LNRS. This role gives the Council the opportunity to help shape the LNRS, provide local data and information and periodically review and agree drafts of the LNRS.
- 1.3 It is important for the Council to be involved in the preparation of the LNRS because it will be a key user of the LNRS. The LNRS will, for example:
- Inform the roll out of Biodiversity Net Gain (helping to guide where off-site habitat is created and enhanced);
  - Be relevant to the Council's statutory duty to take action to conserve and enhance biodiversity;
  - Guide investment into local priorities for biodiversity protection and enhancement;
  - Shape how future funding for farming and land management such as the Environment Land Management schemes will be used;
  - Provide a source of evidence for local planning authorities, helping to understand locations important for conserving and restoring biodiversity
- 1.4 In November 2024, Kent County Council provided the Council with a draft LNRS and embarked on the pre-consultation review stage of LNRS preparation. On 12 December 2024 the Council agreed it was content for Kent County Council to proceed to public consultation.
- 1.5 The draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy is currently out for 8 weeks' consultation, with a deadline for comments of 12 March 2025.
- 1.6 The draft LNRS is made up of the following parts:
- a) Part 1: Setting the scene for Nature Recovery for Kent and Medway:  
  
This part provides the background to the strategy. It explains what the LNRS is and how was developed. It describes what makes Kent's and Medway's landscapes and nature so special, considers the changes in distribution and extent of habitats and species and the pressures, threats and challenges driving those changes. It identifies nature recovery opportunities.
  - b) Part 2: Kent and Medway LNRS priorities, potential measures and areas that could become of particular importance for biodiversity:  
  
This part of the LNRS explains the Local Habitat Map, the overarching principles for nature recovery and the strategy's ambitions for nature recovery. It proposes priorities and potential measures relating to connectivity; nature-based solutions; land management and land use; species, and habitats

(grassland, successional habitats, woodland, trees and hedgerows; freshwater habitats, urban habitats and coastal habitats).

c) Part 3: Kent and Medway LNRS mapping:

This part of the LNRS provides spatial mapping of the potential measures, as well as the Local Habitat Map. The Local Habitats map is made up of the areas of particular importance for biodiversity (APIB) and the areas that could be of importance for biodiversity (ACIB).

The APIB map includes national conservation sites, local nature reserves and local wildlife sites. It also includes a number of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland.

The ACIB map proposes the areas where effort should be concentrated to restore habitat and achieve the greatest gains for nature.

d) Appendices:

The appendices include technical documents and user guides, including methodology for mapping and data sources.

1.7 Dover District Council has completed the Consultation Questionnaire which accompanies the consultation. The questionnaire and consultation responses are attached at Appendix 1.

1.8 In summary the comments indicate that Dover District Council broadly agrees with the priorities and measures for nature recovery. Some comments express concern about the presentation of the mapping associated with the LNRS, and the data used to map potential measures. Dover District Council has requested a technical document which sets out how the LRNS should be used to inform decisions about a particular site and will request that Dover District Council data is used to ensure that protected open spaces in the Dover District Council are accurately represented.

## 2 Identification of Options

2.1 Option 1: To make comments on the draft Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

2.2 Option 2: To decline to make comments on the draft Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

## 3 Evaluation of Options

3.1 Option 1 is recommended. This is the opportunity for Dover District Council to make comments on the Draft Strategy. Not to make comments on the strategy may result in those matters remaining unaddressed.

## 4 Any Conflicts of Interest Declared?

4.1 None.

## 5. Supporting Information *(as applicable)*

5.1 None

## 6. Resource Implications

6.1 The Council's role as a supporting authority for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is being carried out within existing budgeted staff resources.

## **7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

7.1 The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is necessary for nature's sake and for a range of services that we rely on nature for. This includes managing and mitigating the impacts of climate change and making the natural environment more resilient and adaptable.

## **8. Corporate Implications**

8.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): No further comments.

8.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this decision notice and has no further comments to make.

8.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report seeking agreement for the comments to be submitted by Dover District Council on the draft Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy does not specifically highlight any equality implications. In discharging their duties Members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

## **9. Background Papers**

Pre-consultation Review draft of the LNRS, made up of the following parts:

- a) Part 1: Setting the scene for Nature Recovery for Kent and Medway;
- b) Part 2: Kent and Medway LNRS priorities, potential measures and area that could become of particular importance for biodiversity;
- c) Part 3: Kent and Medway LNRS potential measures mapping;
- d) Part 4: Appendices.

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