



TECC

Update on Local Nature Recovery Strategy

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Report for information



Key recommendations to TECC

- To **NOTE** the update report regarding next steps for the preparation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes
- The update report to TECC covers:
 - National policy background,
 - What a Local Nature Recovery Strategy is
 - Process to be followed
 - LNRS timeline and next steps



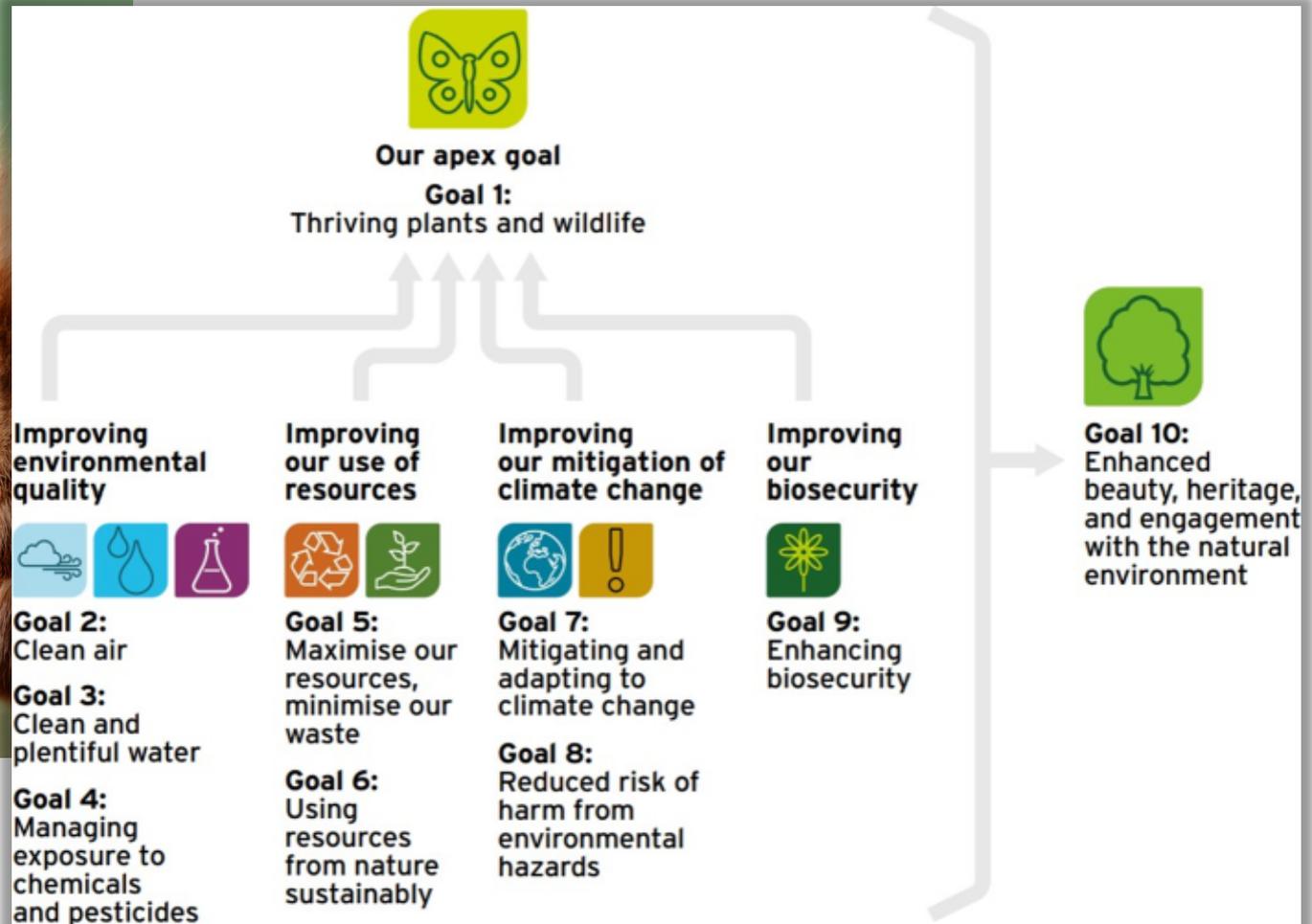
National Policy Context - Local Nature Recovery Strategies



National Policy Context for the LNRS

Environmental Improvement Plan 2023

First revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan



Local Nature Recovery Strategies: a new system of spatial strategies for nature

- Required by the Environment Act 2021
- Agree priorities for nature's recovery and wider environment
- Mapped "opportunities"
- 48 LNRSs will cover the whole of England
- Locally-led
- "Responsible Authorities" will lead their production
- Updates every 5 years



LNRs will identify both nature and wider environmental priorities

- LNRs will identify areas of potential importance for biodiversity as well as other environmental benefits
- To better align efforts to address all environmental issues e.g.
 - Climate change mitigation through tree planting and peat restoration
 - Natural flood management
 - Improved water quality
- LNRs will identify the places where, once action has been taken on the ground, will support the Nature Recovery Network to grow over time

How does government intend LNRs to be used?

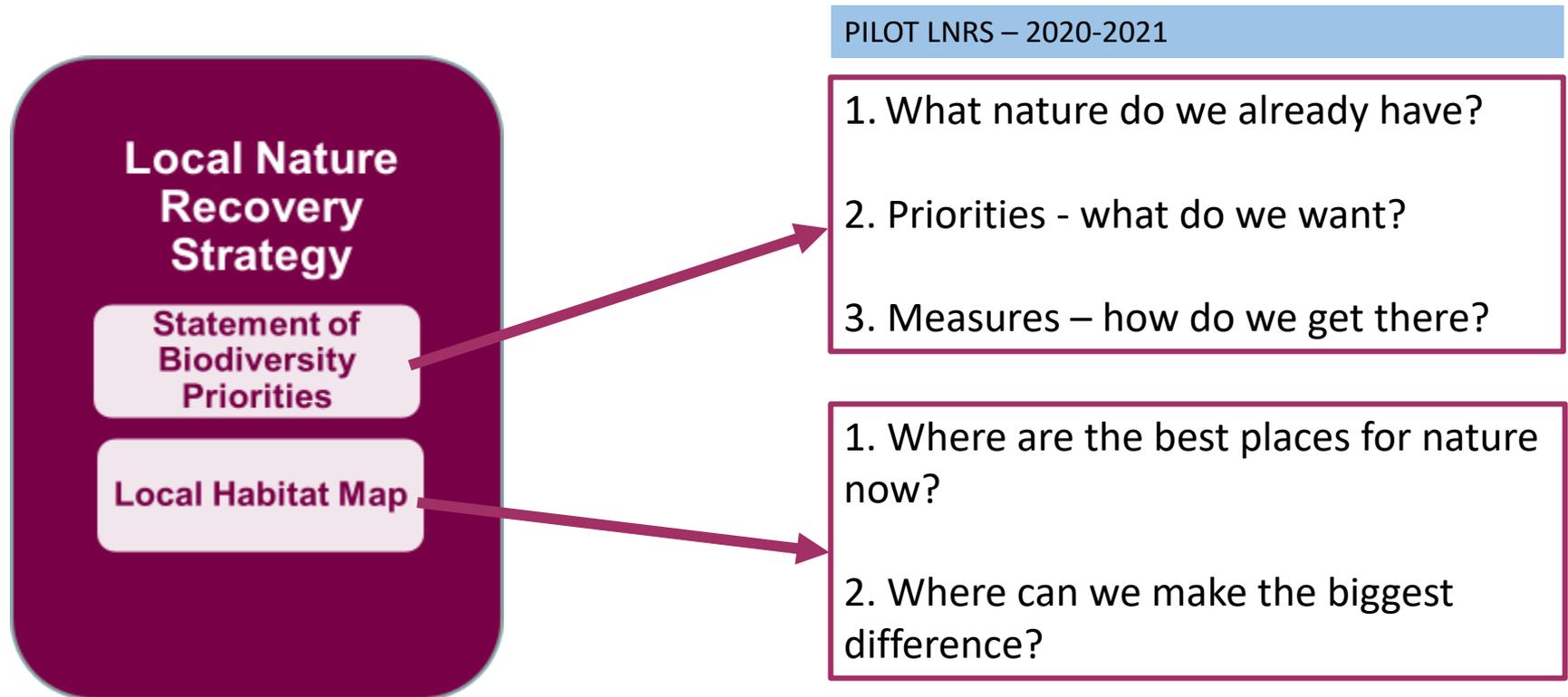
- A shared creation - encouraging local organisations and individuals interested in nature recovery to work together
- Guide mandatory biodiversity net gain investments. Uplift in biodiversity units created on sites identified by LNRs
- Strengthened biodiversity duty on public authorities
- Channel investment into local priorities for protection and enhancement e.g. nature for climate
- Planning White Paper: planning system will play a proactive role in environmental enhancement
- Help local planning authorities understand locations important for conserving and enhancing biodiversity.



Statutory Guidance and process of producing a LNRS



What will the Local Nature Recovery Strategy consist off?



LNRS Regulations

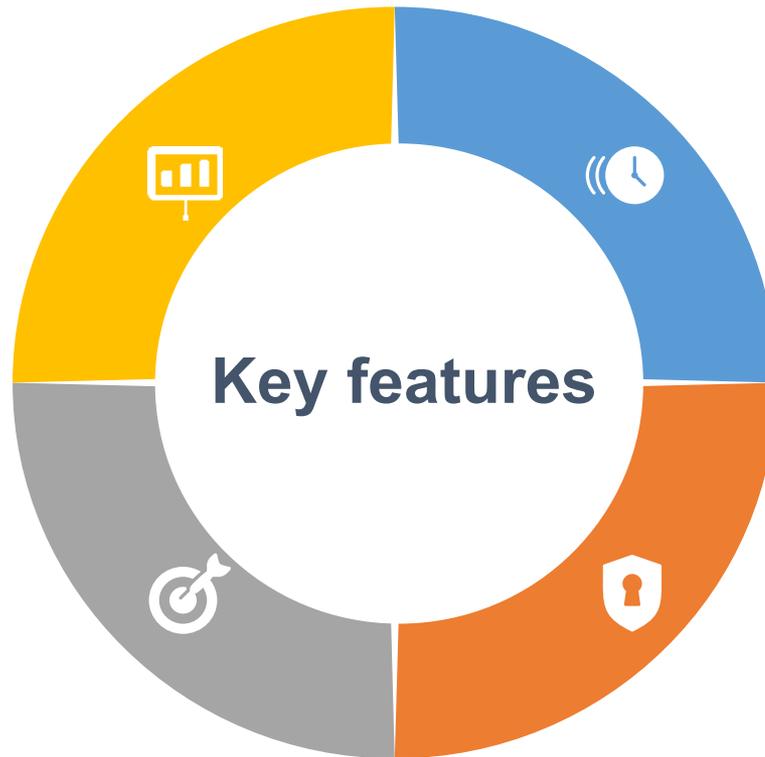
Powers come from Section 105 of the Environment Act, which is what creates the role of the Responsible Authority

Creation of 'Supporting Authorities'

Establishing the role of Supporting Authorities and how Responsible Authorities should work with them. A key part of making sure LNRSs are genuinely collaborative

Requirements for wider engagement

How to bring a far wider range of organisations and viewpoints into LNRS preparation, including publishing information online and the need for public consultation



Publication requirements, rules for review and republication

Must be published by the RA and provided to Defra. Reviews will be announced by the Secretary of State every 3-10 years

Dispute Resolution

How to resolve disagreement between RAs and SAs should they occur. Good engagement across LNRS preparation will likely prevent this

LNRS Statutory Guidance

Powers come from Section 106 of the Environment Act, which outline what must be in an LNRS



Stepwise process

Links all the required elements of the LNRS together into a logical series of steps that opens up preparation for stakeholder input



Other plans and strategies

When to draw on other pre-existing work, not reinventing the wheel and helping to draw together action for different objectives that benefit nature



Ambitious, but deliverable

LNRSs are meant to be practical and deliverable, rather than a vision of how we wish things to be. They are important, but not as important as the action on the ground we want them to lead to



'Areas of importance'

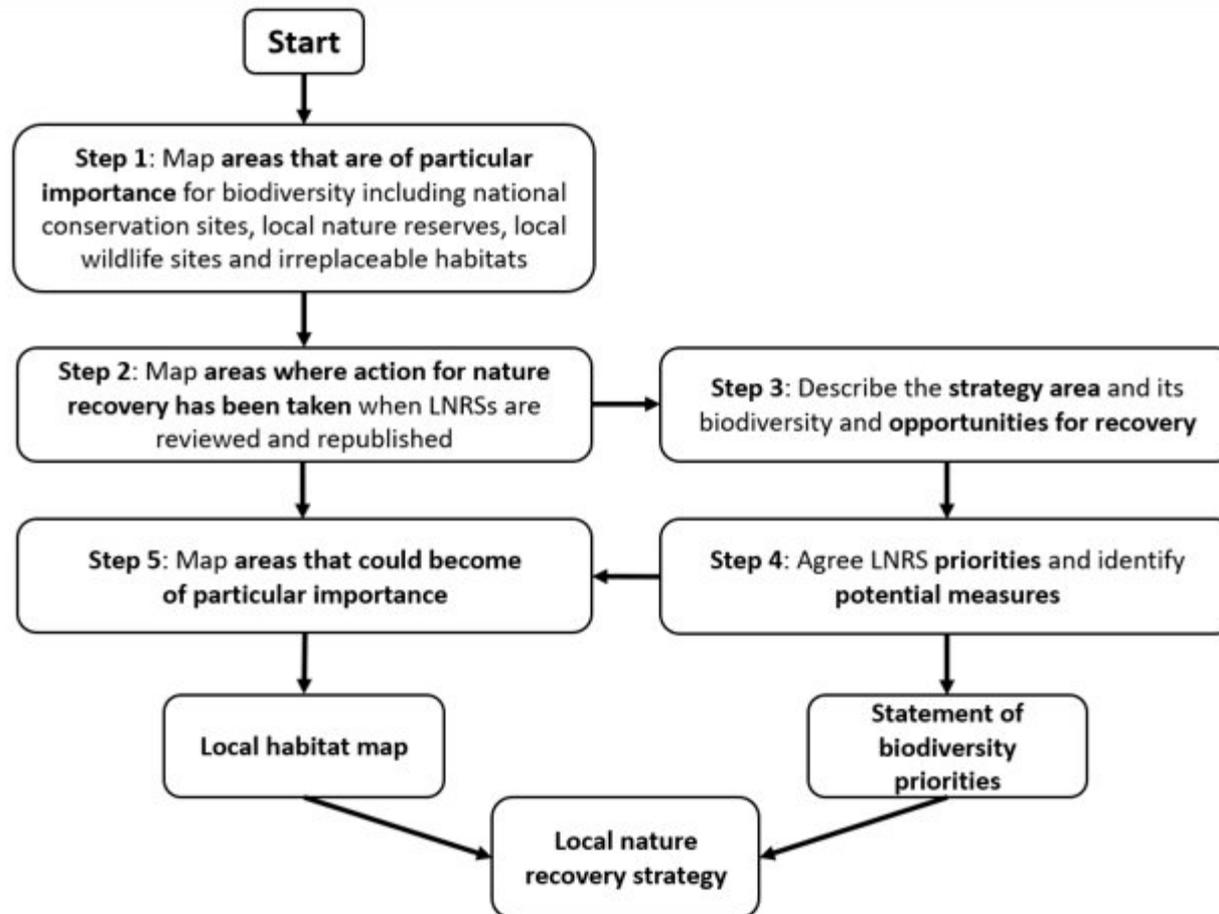
Defining what this means for Local Habitat Maps. Includes: national conservation sites (SSSIs and Local Nature Reserves)



Environment objectives

Helping guide LNRSs to focus on local opportunities that contribute to national targets

LNRS Stepwise Process





Our Responsibilities, Financial Implications and next steps



What are the financial implications for the council?

- Defra have confirmed new burdens funding of **£238,000 over next two financial years** for preparation of Bucks and MK LNRS
- £126,956 in 23/24 and £111,044 in 23/24
- **No revenue implications for Buckinghamshire Council budget** as a result of preparation of LNRS
- Delivery of LNRS priorities will be via biodiversity net gain, environment land management and other government funding streams related to nature recovery and climate change (i.e. woodland creation grants)

What are the implications for the council?

- Buckinghamshire Council appointed as **Responsible Authority for geographic area of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes**
- Responsible for preparing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy in accordance with **Regulations and Guidance**
- Responsible for **reporting** on progress to Defra every 5 years
- Responsible for **updating** the LNRS every 5 years (further new burdens funding will be provided for this)
- The government intends for local nature recovery strategies to inform the local planning process. **Local planning authorities must have regard to LNRS** in complying with the strengthened biodiversity duty. Further guidance is awaited from the government on this

Next steps

- **Formal appointment of Buckinghamshire Council as Responsible Authority** by Secretary of State - July 23
- Confirmation of **Service Level Agreement** between Buckinghamshire Council, MK Council and Bucks Natural Environment Partnership regarding preparation of LNRS. – August 23 - setting out roles and responsibilities
- Distribution of new burden funding by Defra to Responsible Authorities – **September 23**
- **Commencement of process** - expected to take 12-18 months. Series of 8 introductory webinars held in July 23 for stakeholders. Completion by Nov 2024
- **Formal public consultation** before consideration for approval/adoption and submission to Secretary of State.