

Subject:	Nature2020 – a celebration of biodiversity in the Biosphere		
Date of Meeting:	17 March 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Culture		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Sarah Dobson	Tel: 01273 294720
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Nature2020 programme of public events celebrating biodiversity within the Biosphere region throughout 2020.
- 1.2 The Living Coast is Brighton & Lewes Downs UNESCO World Biosphere Region and was designated as such in 2014. The city council is the lead partner.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee endorses the Nature2020 programme on behalf of the city council.
- 2.2 That the Committee encourages elected members to champion and support the Nature2020 programme in their wards, and promote participation by local community groups
- 2.3 That the Committee supports the organisation of a Nature2020 information and knowledge sharing session for elected members.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Living Coast, Brighton & Lewes Downs UNESCO World Biosphere Region was designated in 2014 as an international demonstration area for sustainability, part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of over 700 sites (including seven in the UK) that “inspire a positive future by connecting people and nature today”.
- 3.2 Biosphere Regions have three objectives: (i) Conserve and enhance nature (ii) Support human development that is sustainable (iii) Encourage environmental knowledge, learning and awareness and engagement.
- 3.3 The city council is the lead partner of the Brighton & Lewes Downs Biosphere Partnership, composed of over 40 local organisations active to pursue the Biosphere objectives.

- 3.4 The Biosphere programme is directed by the Biosphere Delivery Board, composed of 20 organisations that represent a range of sectors and areas, with a Chair and Vice-chair appointed from partner bodies. The Chair is currently held by Brighton & Hove Bus Company.
- 3.5 Biosphere Board members deliver projects meeting Biosphere objectives as part of the Biosphere programme. ONCA Gallery is the Board member leading on co-ordinating Nature2020. Nature2020 is delivered by a steering group consisting of representatives from: ONCA Gallery, Big Nature, the Biosphere, Sussex Wildlife Trust, University of Brighton, University of Sussex, the Royal Pavilion and Museums, Dorothy Stringer School, Butterfly Conservation Sussex and Brighton & Hove City Council.
- 3.6 2020 is the last year of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. Nature2020 has been developed to mark the end of the Decade, draw public focus to biodiversity both locally and globally, and provide information and improve public awareness of how biodiversity can be supported through individuals' and organisations' local actions. The goal of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity is to support the implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and to promote its overall vision of 'living in harmony with nature'.
- 3.7 The first year of the UN Decade on Biodiversity was marked in Brighton & Hove by a series of events co-ordinated by Big Nature with support from BHCC.
- 3.8 The Nature2020 programme consists of flagship events developed and delivered by steering group members and other key partners, and a larger programme of community-led events developed and delivered by public individuals, community groups, charities and other organisations via the Nature2020 framework.
- 3.9 The Nature2020 steering group developed a suite of tools for event planners to use to enable events hosted by a wide range of individuals and organisations to be developed, including those without any event management experience. The event planning toolkit also includes prompts to ensure planners are considering how they are delivering an event that:
- Connects people with their Biosphere;
 - Is accessible for as wide an audience as possible;
 - Is diverse and inclusive;
 - Has minimal environmental impact.
- 3.10 All Nature2020 events are requested to be free or very low cost to attend.
- 3.11 Nature2020 information including the event calendar, event planning toolkit, event registration form and general, background information is accessible to the general public and hosted on an external website – www.nature2020.org.uk – that was developed and is managed by ONCA Gallery.
- 3.12 The Nature2020 steering group has delivered 2 flagship events so far:
- A pre-launch event for potential event organisers held at the University of Brighton in October 2019.

- The purpose of this event was to publicise Nature2020, to provide practical event running information and to provide networking opportunities to facilitate event collaborations.
- A VIP launch event for stakeholders to publicise the start of the Nature2020 programme, held at the ONCA Community Barge in January 2020 to which all Brighton & Hove Councillors were invited. The event was opened by the Deputy Mayor of Brighton & Hove and attended by local MPs.

3.13 Future Nature2020 flagship events that are in development include:

- [Global City Nature Challenge](#), 24 – 27 April 2020;
 - This is a global bio-blitz and Citizen Science project. Individuals become wildlife recorders through using the global iNaturalist free app, taking photos of wildlife and plant species they see locally, uploading them to the iNaturalist platform where they are identified and registered as part of the Biosphere's biodiversity records.
 - The City Nature Challenge is in essence a competition between participating locations to see who can record the most observations, the most species, and engage the most participants.
 - The Biosphere is competing in the City Nature Challenge for the first time this year.
 - Wildlife recording and identification events – including an event led by a BHCC Park Ranger - will be held in the run up to and during the weekend of City Nature Challenge.
 - This event is led by the University of Brighton, University of Sussex, and the Biosphere.
- [The Brighton Festival Children's Parade](#), 2 May 2020;
 - This event is led by Brighton Festival and arts charity Same Sky, who are supporting Nature2020 by theming this year's Children's Parade 'Nature's Marvels'.
- Schools Biodiversity Conference, 8 July 2020;
 - This event is being led by students and teachers from Dorothy Stringer School.
- Youth Art Show, 8 – 26 July 2020;
 - This is a group art exhibition themed around biodiversity, featuring work by children and young people aged 4 – 18 from across The Living Coast Biosphere.
 - This event is led by ONCA Gallery.
- Wild Chalk Festival, 19 July 2020;
 - This is a family event celebrating the wildlife, history and water filtering properties of our chalk downland.
 - This event is led by the South Downs National Park and BHCC Park Rangers.
- Nature2020 closing event, date tbc, Autumn;
 - This event is planned to be a celebration of Nature2020, a summary of achievements and outputs and an introduction to any legacy outputs identified throughout the year.
 - This event is led by the Nature2020 steering group.

3.14 The full calendar of confirmed events can be found [online](#).

- 3.15 A specific Nature2020 information and knowledge sharing session for elected members is being arranged to take place in April 2020. This early evening session will provide information about the Biosphere and Nature2020, and detail further opportunities for elected members to engage directly with the programme. Invitations to this session will be issued to all elected members in due course.
- 3.16 The BHCC Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023 ‘A Fairer City, A Sustainable Future’, includes a priority to: ‘promote and protect biodiversity’.
- 3.17 At Full Council in December 2018 it was unanimously agreed to support the motion to ‘Declare(s) its recognition of global climate and biodiversity emergencies;’ and to ‘consider how the Council can strengthen local protection and enhancement of species, habitats and ecosystems services under available powers’.
- 3.18 The [WWF Global Futures report](#), published February 2020, estimates the ‘cost to the world economy from the loss of nature in a ‘business as usual scenario’ by 2050’ at ‘US\$10trillion’.
- 3.19 The 2019 [IPBES](#) Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services notes that: ‘Nature is essential for human existence and good quality of life’, that ‘Marine and terrestrial ecosystems are the sole sinks for anthropogenic carbon emissions’, and that ‘around 1 million species already face extinction, many within decades, unless action is taken to reduce the intensity of drivers of biodiversity loss’.
- 3.20 Supporting and enhancing biodiversity and nature locally, nationally and internationally will be an essential action in meeting the Council’s target to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 3.21 BHCC are supporting Nature2020 through staff time – a sustainability programme officer, the Biosphere programme manager and Royal Pavilion and Museums Officer sit on the steering group, as well as Park Ranger time in supporting several events – and with a financial contribution of £4k to support the co-ordination and communication requirements of the programme. BHCC are also lead partner in the Biosphere programme.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 No alternative options are deemed necessary for consideration currently.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Nature2020 concept and programme has been developed through close working with partner organisations and feedback obtained from the pre-launch event for organisers held in October 2019.
- 5.2 Specialist input has been sought from BHCC Outdoor Events Team, BHCC Communities Team and the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre.

- 5.3 Communication with wider stakeholders has also taken place via the Biosphere website, social media channels and e-newsletters; BHCC website; media channels of all steering group members and at least 3 press releases.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 To support, strengthen and enhance biodiversity across the city and contribute to climate change mitigation, the Committee is requested to help support and promote participation in the Nature2020 events programme.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Financial implications of supporting Nature2020 include a one-off financial contribution of £4,000 to support the co-ordination and communication of the programme, which will be funded from approved revenue budgets within the Sustainability service. It is also anticipated that existing officer time will be required to support steering group membership, communications support, and event planning and delivery by park rangers. Both events currently planned to be delivered by BHCC rangers are within their existing work programmes and would continue to be delivered without the Nature2020 programme.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steven Bedford

Date: 20/02/20

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Lawyer Consulted:

Alice Rowland

Date: 14.02.20

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 Accessibility, diversity and inclusivity are key considerations for Nature2020 event organisers and specific information is provided within the Nature2020 Event Toolkit to assist organisers in ensuring events meet these considerations. For example, it is requested that all events are free or very low cost to attend.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 The Nature2020 programme aim is to deliver benefits to biodiversity and sustainability. Minimising the environmental impact of events is a key consideration for Nature2020 event organisers and specific information is provided within the Nature2020 Event Toolkit to assist organisers in ensuring events meet this consideration.

Brexit Implications:

- 7.5 None

Any Other Significant Implications:

Crime & Disorder Implications:

7.6 None

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

7.7 None

Public Health Implications:

7.7 Spending time in natural environments has been shown to be beneficial to physical and mental health and wellbeing. Supported and well-functioning biodiversity and eco-systems provide a huge variety of public health benefits including air quality improvement, urban heat-island reduction, water quality and quantity improvements, food production amongst many others.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

7.8 Nature2020 supports the Council's priority to 'promote and protect biodiversity' and to be a carbon neutral city by 2030.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Background Documents

1. None