

EXTRACT from Briefing note and supplementary papers, Council meeting, Oxford City Council

Date: **Monday 22 March 2021**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

Pages 55-56

d) Support for a new Oxford National Park (proposed by Cllr Wolff, seconded by Cllr Simmons) [Amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes, seconded by Cllr Tarver]

Green member motion

Council notes that Bioabundance, a local community interest company, has put together a plan for a 36 sq mile National Park to the northeast of Oxford in response to a call from the Government, in its Environmental Bill and in its 10-point plan; the Green Industrial Revolution, for the creation of new National Parks.

Bioabundance is asking local authorities, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, businesses, charities and environment groups to work together to make this happen for Oxfordshire.

This nature recovery zone would halt the catastrophic loss of wildlife and reduce the detrimental effect of large new developments around Oxford. The right kind of trees would be planted to promote carbon capture and natural flood defences.

The proposed Park encompasses Otmoor and the ancient royal forests of Bernwood and Stowood. This is a beautiful area with few major roads, between Oxford, Bicester, Kidlington and Wheatley. Over a quarter of a million people live within 10 miles of this area. Easy access would be offered through a new network of sustainable transport links, including foot and cycle paths from train stations and from Park and Ride.

Council asks the Leader to issue a statement of support for the new Oxford National Park and ask the Interim Executive Director (Communities) bring a paper to Cabinet to discuss how the Council might get involved further. This should include an exploration of the value of extending the proposed Park to include adjoining land (for example, Shotover).

Amendment proposed by Cllr Hayes, seconded by Cllr Tarver

Add the words in *italics* and **delete** the words struckthrough so that the final text would read:

Oxford City Council has committed to increasing biodiversity and is supporting calls to double tree cover across the county, including developing Oxfordshire's first Local Nature Partnership in partnerships with others.

Oxford City Council takes an ambitious Natural Resource Management approach which will outline what we need to do to sustainably enhance biodiversity. It is important that we examine the needs of our varied ecosystems and maintain vitally important habitats and species in our city.

In the recommendations from the [Oxford Citizens Assembly on Climate Change](#), the first by a UK city, enhanced biodiversity was addressed as one of five themes and seen as central to the overall net zero vision of Oxford. It was recognised that tackling climate change and ecological breakdown together was important. Assembly Members were positive about creating more biodiversity and green space. The strong sentiment emerging from citizens was to make our communities among the greenest in the country, which is exciting ambitious and achievable.

The City Council owns and manages over 600 hectares of accessible green space in the city and surrounding area, including a country park, 33 nature areas and over 60 urban parks. The City has 12 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, covering 278 hectares and including Port Meadow (which has been meadowland for at least 4000 years), Wolvercote Common, Shotover Country Park, and Lye Valley Nature Reserve.

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Bioabundance is asking local authorities, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, businesses, charities and environment groups to work together to make this happen for Oxfordshire.

This ***Bioabundance say that the*** nature recovery zone would halt the catastrophic loss of wildlife and reduce the detrimental effect of large new developments around Oxford. The right kind of trees would be planted to promote carbon capture and natural flood defences.

This ***Bioabundance say that the*** proposed Park encompasses Otmoor and the ancient royal forests of Bernwood and Stowood. This is a beautiful area with few major roads, between Oxford, Bicester, Kidlington and Wheatley. Over a quarter of a million people live within 10 miles of this area. Easy access would be offered through a new network of sustainable transport links, including foot and cycle paths from train stations and from Park and Ride.

Council asks the Leader to issue ***consider*** a statement of support for the new Oxford National Park ***after more information can be gathered***, and ***to*** ask the Interim Executive Director (Communities) ***to*** bring a paper to Cabinet to discuss ***reflect on this information and consider*** how the Council might get involved further this should include an exploration of ***and explore*** the value of extending the proposed Park to include adjoining land (for example, Shotover).