

Report To:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Date:	25 SEPTEMBER 2019
Heading:	SCRUTINY REVIEW: WILDLIFE PROTECTION		
Portfolio Holder:			
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject to Call-In:	NO		

Purpose of Report

Wildlife Protection was added to the Scrutiny Workplan in June 2019, following consultation with Elected Members. This report sets out a draft terms of reference for the consideration and approval of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members.

This will assist the Committee in planning and undertaking a robust review of Wildlife Protection. The draft Terms of Reference is attached to this report as Appendix A.

Recommendation(s)

Committee Members are recommended to;

- a) Discuss and agree the objectives of the review;
- b) Agree key information required to undertake this review;
- c) Discuss potential stakeholders to engage and consult with;
- d) Agree a review timeline;
- e) Approve a Terms of Reference to inform the review.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

Wildlife Protection was added to the Scrutiny Workplan in June 2019.

Alternative Options Considered

To be considered as part of the review.

Detailed Information

In approving Wildlife Protection onto the Scrutiny Workplan, Members of the Panel agreed that they were interested in considering the services available in the district to people reporting wildlife crimes and how effective this currently was. This includes;

- How reports of wildlife crime are reported and to who;
- Number of reports being submitted in Ashfield;
- Local charities within the area;
- Legislation in place to combat wildlife crimes;
- Partnership working between the Police and the RSPCA;
- Methods for raising awareness.

Wildlife Crime

Wildlife Crime includes the following;

- Hare coursing
- Deer poaching
- Fish poaching
- Badger persecution, including baiting, snaring, shooting and the disturbance of setts.
- Bat persecution, including the destruction of habitat and roosting sites
- Egg theft/collection
- Bird of prey persecution through poisoning, trapping, shooting, disturbance of nest and/or theft of chicks.
- The disturbance of breeding birds and nest destruction
- The trade in ivory, tortoises, rhino horn and other protected species covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) including caviar, traditional Chinese medicines and orchids.
- Non-registration of certain birds and animals that require licensing through DEFRA/Animal Health if kept in captivity or sold.
- Offences relating to the introduction and sale on non-native invasive species (flora and fauna)

Current Reporting Methods

When reporting a wildlife crime, Nottinghamshire Police currently ask for the following information;

- Any people involved in the incident, including descriptions of their appearance and clothing.
- Any vehicles involved or seen in the vicinity at the time of the incident, including details of the vehicle make, model and registration number.
- Any other animals – including dogs – involved in the incident.

RSPCA

The RSPCA prioritise all calls about cruelty, neglect or injured animals according to their severity and urgency. Due to the high volume of calls they receive and their limited resources they aren't always able to respond in the way that would be ideal or as quickly as the emergency services can with more resources.

They advise that if an animal is a wild bird or mammal smaller than the size of a rabbit, the quickest way to get help is to contact a local vet or rehabilitation centre as they will not usually charge for treating wildlife.

Local Charitable Organisations

Local animal charitable organisations often have to assist injured animals that fall outside the criteria for urgency, prioritization or criminal activity. Many of these organisations operate through volunteers and donations.

Next Steps

In carrying out this review Members should consider agreeing a clear Terms of reference with objectives and potential outcomes. A draft Terms of Reference is attached as Appendix A for Members of the Committee to discuss.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

This review is mainly outward focussed, however the Councils Corporate Plan 2016-19 states that Ashfield District Council will ensure the foundations for a good quality of life are in place; reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and facilitating cleaner and more attractive neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, the Council will work with partners to ensure we deliver services centred on the needs of people and places, rather than existing teams, agencies or institutions.

Legal:

Consideration of the legislation relating to wildlife crime will be considered as part of this review.

Finance:

There are no financial implications relating to this report.

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None
General Fund – Capital Programme	None
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
None at this stage of the review	None

Human Resources:

There are no Human Resources implications at this stage of the review.

Equalities:

There are no equalities implications at this stage of the review.

Other Implications:

None

Reason(s) for Urgency

None

Reason(s) for Exemption

None

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