

Appendix A
Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of
the Climate and Environment Panel of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Climate and Environment Panel on 27 February 2024 concerning the Biodiversity Net Gain item presented at the meeting. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That the Council coordinates with the other Oxfordshire Districts to establish basic Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring guidance for certain habitats to ensure a consistent set of principles and processes across the county.	Yes	There is no statutory requirement for the Council to produce guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain monitoring and this area of policy and practice is still in early stages of development. However, when resources allow, officers will seek to work with the other Oxfordshire local authorities to produce limited guidance on this.
2) That the Council, through its project to identify Council-owned land with the potential to provide biodiversity units, seeks to identify sufficient sites so as to establish itself as a key provider of biodiversity units locally, thus strongly encouraging the uptake of biodiversity units in Oxford or as close to Oxford as possible.	In Part	Officers are currently taking through internal project governance a proposal for funding that will assess the feasibility of using a number of Council-owned land assets to provide Biodiversity Net Gain units. This would involve baseline ecological assessments. If feasible, it is expected agreement will be sought to designate the land for this purpose, which would need to involve a conservation covenant or planning obligation for at least 30 years, to meet statutory requirements. However, the initial focus would be on demonstrating BNG delivery for the Council's own development needs and for that of its wholly-owned housing company OX Place. Only then would consideration be given to whether the Council should seek

		to expand the scale of its BNG work to establish itself as a provider of biodiversity units for other developers.
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