

<b>Agenda Item; Grass Management</b> <b>Submitted by; Cllr M. Dwyer</b>
<b>Approval / Noting</b> For approval
<b>Purpose of the Report</b> To open up the discussion and arrive at a plan to leave some areas of the grass areas for which BTC are responsible unmown.
<b>Background Information</b> <i>Dr Paul Evans, Lead Pollinator Advisor at Buglife said:</i> <i>"We are not advocating abandoning areas of council land but introducing a new less intensive form of grassland management. Effectively cutting grass less in the right places will not only help to counter pollinator decline it will benefit wildlife and people too. The message is a win, win, win for councils save money, help nature, enrich people's lives."</i> There has been so much research on leaving areas of grass unmown to encourage diversity as well as save Belper Town Council's time and therefore money.
<b>Legislation</b> None
<b>Accessibility Implications</b> – As long as the planning takes into account pathways that need to be kept clear so that they are completely accessible for all there should be no negative implications for anyone, only the bonus of all the attractive wildflowers and insects the unmown areas will create/attract.
<b>Climate Emergency Implications</b> - 15 per cent of species within the UK are threatened with extinction, and since 1970 the abundance of UK priority species has declined by 60 per cent. The National History Museum has observed that, when compared to other G7 countries, <b>the UK is at the very bottom in terms of how much biodiversity survives.</b> 30 Jun 2021  BTC declared a Climate Emergency in May 2019. This is one of the things we should now develop a plan for, working to stop the decline in biodiversity in Belper and the UK.
<b>Financial Implications</b> There shouldn't be any negative financial implications. Once a plan is agreed the time that the ground staff spend on mowing will be less, therefore saving money.
<b>Recommendation(s)</b> That the Committee agree to have a plan devised by 1 or 2 nominated Councillors from the Facilities Committee in consultation with the Town Clerk and the Outdoor Team Supervisor, once advice has been sought from the 'Wilder' group who are part of Transition Belper. This plan will be presented to the next Facilities, Environment and Local Economy meeting on the 25 <sup>th</sup> October for

agreement.

**Reasons for recommendation(s)**

This council has declared a Climate Emergency.

Leaving unmown areas encourages biodiversity of plants and insects

These areas can be very attractive if planned for and provide interesting areas to walk by.

This will demonstrate that this Council did not just declare a Climate Emergency but is acting to alleviate it.