



<b>Subject:</b>	BugLife Belfast's Buzzing Project
<b>Date:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Orla Maguire, Biodiversity Officer

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of the report is for Members to consider a request from BugLife Northern Ireland for the Council to support a funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>Members' views are sought on the request from BugLife to support and grant them permission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• for project work to occur on Council land and that Council will manage these project sites for the next ten years, maintaining their biodiversity value,</li><li>• for £5,000 funding contribution to the project, from existing resources</li></ul> <p>Members are advised that, if successful, a partnership agreement outlining roles and responsibilities will be developed.</p>

3.0	<b>Main report</b>
	<p data-bbox="272 210 421 239"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="165 309 1469 488">3.1 Insect pollination is essential to food production. ‘One out of every 3 mouthfuls’ is pollinated by insects. Wild bees pollinate between 85-95% of the UK’s insect pollinated crops, while honeybees pollinate between 5-15%. This free service is estimated to be worth £1.8 billion each year.</p> <p data-bbox="165 562 1377 741">3.2 More than half of our bee species have suffered declines over the past 50 years with over 250 UK pollinators in danger of extinction. Habitat loss is a major driver of pollinator declines and in Northern Ireland we have lost as much as 97% of our wildflower meadows in the last half century.</p> <p data-bbox="165 815 1461 994">3.3 Over the past year, Buglife have worked closely with several stakeholders including Belfast City Council, National Trust, Belfast Hills Partnership, Lagan Valley Regional Park and others to develop the Belfast’s Buzzing project with the shared goal of creating and restoring wildflower-rich habitats across Belfast.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1068 1410 1151">3.4 This 2-year project will address the catastrophic decline in pollinating insects by significantly increasing the amount of connected wildflower-rich habitats across Belfast.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1225 1449 1352">3.5 “Belfast’s Buzzing” project aims to promote insect pollinators in parks and open spaces as well as inform, inspire and engage local communities in the recovery of nature within their local area.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1426 1453 1554">3.6 In partnership with Belfast City Council, and working with landowners, schools, community groups and other NGOs, the project will restore 15 hectares of publicly accessible sites for pollinators and inspire landowners to restore a further 5-10 hectares of their sites.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1628 1374 1711">3.7 Potential sites for habitat restoration, creation and enhancement works have been identified including some Council sites for some of our most threatened bee species.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1785 1382 1912">3.8 Belfast’s Buzzing will provide an interesting and fun opportunity for local people and communities to learn about the importance of pollinators and their habitats and to get involved in enhancing their local parks and open spaces.</p>

3.9	The training and support provided by the project will also allow Belfast City Council to restore and enhance habitats and manage sites in a sensitive manner for pollinators, aiding delivery of local biodiversity initiatives such as the City of Wildflowers and the Rewilding our Wards Notice of Motion.
3.10	<p>BugLife are in the final stages of submitting an application to the HLF and are seeking support from Council. If Members are minded to support the request, Council would be agreeing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• permission for project work to occur on BCC land and that Council will manage these project sites for the next ten years, maintaining their biodiversity value (e.g. cut and lift wildflower meadows).</li> <li>• £5,000 funding contribution to the project.</li> <li>• work with Buglife promoting Belfast’s Buzzing across the city through our various communication channels.</li> </ul>
3.11	A provisional letter of support has been provided to HLF subject to member approval at Appendix 1.
3.12	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>BCC is asked to contribute £5,000 funding to draw down significant investment in BCC sites. This money would be funded form within existing revenue estimates.</p>
3.13	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no known implications with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1: BugLife letter of support for Belfast’s Buzzing Project.