

8. DRAFT LINLITHGOW LOCH CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Council Executive considered a joint report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Planning and Economic Development and Head of Operational Services advising of the impending publication of the Linlithgow Loch Catchment Management Plan, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that in recent years there had been an appearance of seasonal blue/green algal bloom on the surface of the Loch which had led to concerns about potential public health issues and the serious deterioration in water quality which had led to the formation of these blooms. Therefore the Linlithgow Loch Catchment Management Group (LLCMG) had been established to initially tackle the algal problem and to provide a forum to explore other environmental issues related to the Loch.

The working group met quarterly and consisted of a wide range of stakeholders, including Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Water and Transport Scotland. The LLCMG had commissioned two wide ranging studies to look at water quality and catchment management issues. This in turn has resulted in the development of the Linlithgow Loch Management Plan and contained 13 recommendations that the Management Group would seek to advance.

The report continued to explore the potential for forming a Trust for Linlithgow Loch in order to move the agenda forward and raise awareness amongst local people and to secure external funding. Alternatively discussions had been undertaken with Linlithgow Community Development Trust.

The report concluded that the Linlithgow Loch Catchment Management Group had been working together to better understand the complex issues that had negatively impacted on the water quality of the Loch however as the various problems was so diffuse and no one organisation could be expected to bring about all the necessary improvements though each stakeholder organisation would continue to play a role.

The Council Executive was asked to approve and support the aims and objectives of the Linlithgow Loch Management Plan.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.