

CABINET

Tuesday 23 June 2015

RESPONSE TO PETITION

The Petition

To ensure the independence of Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) and its ability to protect the County's Wildlife and its habitats by continuing to provide adequate funding for SWT's activities in managing social assets on behalf of the Community such as Special Protection Areas.

Details of petition:

The Surrey Advertiser has reported that the County Council has plans to withdraw all County funding from Surrey Wildlife Trust over the period to 2021. This may require SWT to work with commercial sponsors and supporters to find new sources of funding which has the potential to compromise its independence and conflict with its role as manager of Special Protection Areas within the Thames Basin Heaths. Surrey Wildlife Trust's website states, 'SWT is the only organisation concerned solely with the conservation of all forms of wildlife in Surrey.' The Wildlife Trusts website states, 'The Wildlife Trusts want to help nature to recover from the decline that for decades has been the staple diet of scientific studies and news stories. We believe passionately that wildlife and natural processes need to have space to thrive, beyond designated nature reserves and other protected sites.' Wildlife habitats across the County face the constant threat of encroachment by new development. Surrey needs an organisation which can champion the interests of Nature. Withdrawal of funding from SWT is inconsistent with SCC's pledge to protect the Green Belt.

Submitted by Mr Ben Paton
Signatures: 420

Response

To be tabled at the meeting

Mr Mike Goodman
Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning
23 June 2015

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