



Subject:	The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period and the Council's Tree Policy
Date:	4 June 2019
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director, City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Ryan Black, Director Neighbourhood Services

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

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	Members are advised of a 'Notice of Motion' from the Council meeting of the 4th March 2019 in regards to the 'Planting of one million trees initiative' and the agreement that this be referred to the People & Communities Committee for consideration. In addition Members are also advised of a request from Emma Little Pengelly MP, tabled at the February meeting of the People & Communities Committee to plant 5 small trees on Council land as part of the Queens Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project in March 2019. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a report to be submitted to a future meeting which would detail any policy for such requests. The purpose of this report is to consider the detail in relation to these requests.

	Recommendations
1.2	<p>I. The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period</p> <p>The Committee is asked to agree in principle that it becomes the lead partnership facilitator for this Project, with a goal to planting one million trees in the city over the next 15 years. The principle commitment is subject to further officer level discussions with Belfast Metropolitan Residents Group (BMRG) to clarify the level of officer resource required to support any facilitation role between the BMRG and the fore mentioned interested organisations. There is no Council financial contribution.</p> <p>II. Council’s Tree Policy & Request from Emma Little Pengelly, MP.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to approve the proposed policy position for future tree planting requests within our Parks and Open Spaces which mark significant occasions and events:</p> <p><i>‘Permission for future tree planting requests may be granted by the People and Communities Committee on a request by request basis. Any tree planting proposals/request received by the Council should fit in and be aligned with the Council’s ‘Tree Management Plan’ for that individual Park/Open Space as advised by Council Officers within City and Neighbourhood Services’</i></p> <p>Based on the noted policy statement above, committee is asked to accede to the request submitted by Emma Little Pengelly MP, to plant 5 small trees to mark Her Majesty the Queens’ Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>(i) The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period</p> <p>At the Council meeting on 4th March 2019 it was agreed under a ‘Notice of Motion’ that a request for the planting of one million trees over a 15 year period be referred to the People and Communities Committee and a report be submitted to a future Council meeting which would investigate ways in which the Council could help facilitate the planting of one million trees in Belfast over the next 15 years.</p>
3.2	<p>Officers from the City and Neighbourhood Services Department met with Peter Carr and Peter Diehl, two representatives from the BMRG on 11th April 2019. The group gave an overview of their proposal which is ultimately to see the planting of one million trees over the next 15 years. The BMRG indicated who they had been in communication with to date, with</p>

	<p>regards to supporting their initiative with possible financial/ material assistance and potential suitable areas of land for planting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harbour Commission • Department for Infrastructure • Housing Executive • Queens University • Translink • Urban Villages • Woodland Trust
3.3	The BMRG would want to explore a number possible funding avenues to support this Initiative.
3.4	The BMGR made reference to the Council's draft Local Development Plan (LDP) which recommends the inclusion of trees in new developments and to seek to develop the City's green and blue infrastructure network. The group stated that while these objectives are positive, more is needed by way of further extensive tree planting.
3.5	The BMRG would like to see the Council take ownership of the 'one million tree' project and act as the main facilitator, working in partnership with the city's people, landowners and service providers
3.6	The Council currently invests an annual sum of £20,000 towards replacement and new tree planting within its Parks and Open Spaces which continues to make a positive and lasting impact in our city's landscape. Some of the Council's tree planting could be aligned to fit in with the one million trees project.
3.7	<p>I. Council's Tree Policy & Request from Emma Little Pengelly, MP.</p> <p>At the People and Communities Committee meeting on 12th February 2019, the Committee was informed of a request received by Officers from Emma Little Pengelly MP to plant 5 small trees on Council land as part of the Queens Commonwealth Tree Canopy Project in March 2019. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a report to be submitted to a future meeting which would detail any policy for such requests.</p>
3.8	Officers have considered and drafted a policy position for dealing with any such requests as detailed below;

3.9	<p><i>Permission for future tree planting requests may be granted by the People and Communities Committee on a request by request basis. Any tree planting proposals/request received by the Council should fit in and be aligned with the Council's 'Tree Management Plan' for that individual Park/Open Space as advised by Council Officers within City and Neighbourhood Services'</i></p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>I. The Planting of One Million Trees over a 15 year period</p> <p>Officer time dedicated to this project will be determined after further discussions with BMRG.</p> <p>II. Council's Tree Policy</p> <p>There are no Financial or Human Resource implications other than officer time.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no known Equality/ Good Relation/Rural needs issues associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	None