



Subject:	Motion – Belfast Zoo
Date:	21 st February, 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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"/>
Sometime 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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider a motion on Belfast Zoo, which was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 3 rd February.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the motion and if the proposal is agreed, to: (i) Refer matter for initial party group briefings, focusing on Zoo operations and management; (ii) Invite Members to participate in a site visit to Belfast Zoo; (iii) Bring a report back to the committee on how the motion could be facilitated, resourced and managed.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	At the Council meeting on 3 rd February, the following motion was proposed by Councillor Maskey and seconded by Councillor Murphy:
3.2	<i>“This Council agrees to an ambitious plan to transform Belfast Zoo into a world-class visitor attraction by 2025. The display of caged animals in enclosures is wrong and unethical, it doesn’t mirror in any way their natural habitat and has no place in modern society.</i>
3.3	<i>The ratepayers of this City have to subsidise the zoo to the sum of £2.5 million per year. The savings from the Zoo site could provide substantial funding for the much-needed regeneration of the City, create jobs, opportunities and attract more visitors. The five-year transitional period will enable the Council to safely return animals to their natural habitats in a carefully crafted phased approach.</i>
3.4	<i>Furthermore, the Council will retain on-site an animal conservation programme for indigenous animals. The five years will also enable the Council to consult with trade unions, staff and residents of the City through direct engagement and consultation. The Council will commit to securing all jobs currently on the Zoo site, with the options of retraining and redeployment. This will create an opportunity for the Council to develop the site, create jobs and to promote the City ethically.”</i>
3.5	<p>In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred without debate to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.</p> <p>The proposer of the motion has indicated that he wishes to amend the notice of motion into the following form:</p> <p><i>“The council agrees to undertake a feasibility study with a view to producing an ambitious plan to transform Belfast Zoo into a world-class visitor attraction by 2025. The display of caged animals in enclosures doesn’t mirror in any way their natural habitat and has no place in modern society.</i></p> <p><i>The five year transitional period will enable the council to explore how best to facilitate the most ethical, safe and appropriate future environment for the animals which are currently housed at the zoo.</i></p> <p><i>The ratepayers of the city have to subsidise the zoo to the tune of £2.5 million annually. The feasibility study will consider if the savings could be re-invested in the site to create a world class visitor attraction. The study should include the feasibility of incorporating a conservation facility and programme for indigenous animals. In doing so the council will seek to commit to securing all jobs currently at the Zoo site with the options of retraining and redeployment if required. The feasibility study to inform the transformation plan would include consultation with staff, trade unions and the residents of the city.”</i></p>
3.6	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None</p>

4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	None