



Subject:	Responses from Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Communities re Notice of Motion – Street Tree Planting
Date:	8th March 2022
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Sara Steele, 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 note the correspondence received regarding the Notice of Motion re Street Tree Planting.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The Committee will recall that, at its meeting on 7th December, 2021, it had considered and adopted the following Motion, which had been proposed by Councillor McMullan and seconded by Councillor Long.</p> <p><i>“Noting this Council’s pledge to plant one million trees by 2035 and the ongoing work to deliver that commitment on our own land, its declaration of a climate emergency in October 2019 and our commitment to work towards being carbon neutral by 2050. However, as highlighted in the Belfast Carbon Roadmap Pathway to Net Zero we can close the gap by 2033 through a range of innovative interventions, including planting trees. Therefore this Council</i></p>

	<p><i>commits to drastically increasing the number of street trees across the Belfast City Council area.</i></p> <p><i>Recognising that street tree planting is a function of the Department for Infrastructure, we will write to the Minister to join us in making this commitment and partner with us in drastically increasing their number across the city.</i></p> <p><i>Working with our partners we will establish a strategy and action delivery plan (including maintenance), including setting a target for increasing the number of street trees in each of the 60 wards that comprise the 10 district electoral areas of Belfast City Council.</i></p> <p><i>We will also write to the Minister for Infrastructure, as well as Ministers for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and Communities, to establish a rolling funding scheme for tree planting, maintenance and accompanying structural works (e.g. footpath widening) to enable more sites to be viable for street tree planting.</i></p> <p><i>As a further commitment to our pledge in supporting the ‘One Million Trees Initiative’ on Council land, that the Council commit’s, in 2022, to planting a number of suitable living Christmas Trees in publicly accessible locations in each quarter of the City. Members of Area Working Groups will be consulted on the sites and scale of trees (which may include more than one) and the Council will illuminate, maintain and work with community organisations in each quarter of the City in the creation of annual Community Christmas focal points and events.</i></p> <p><i>This Council will also join the new call for pledges to the UN Economic Commission for Europe’s ‘Trees in Cities Challenge’ joining other cities around the world including Barcelona, Bonn, Victoria (Canada) and Mexico City to demonstrate our intent internationally and to learn from and share learnings with other cities.”</i></p> <p>3.2 Accordingly, Democratic Services wrote to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for Communities and a response has been received on behalf of the Minister for Infrastructure from her Private Secretary (appendix 1) and from the Minister for Communities from her Director of Belfast Regeneration (appendix 2).</p> <p>3.3 <u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.</p> <p>3.4 <u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> This Notice of Motion, if agreed, may have potential equality, good relations and rural needs implications and should be subject to our normal screening process as appropriate.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Response from Minister for Infrastructure</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Response from Minister for Communities</p>

