

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

Thursday 9th, February 2023

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in a Hybrid format in person in the Lavery Room - City Hall and remotely via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 9th February, 2023 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine matters**
 - (a) Apologies
 - (b) Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)
 - (c) Declarations of Interest
2. **Presentation on the Shared Island Initiative by the Shared Island Unit (Presenter - Eoghan Duffy)**
3. **Restricted Items**
 - (a) Update on Net Zero Belfast Project (Pioneer Places) (Pages 5 - 12)
4. **Update on UP2030 (Pages 13 - 18)**
5. **Update on the management processes and assessment criteria that are used by the One Million Trees Project (Presenter - Mura Quigley) (Pages 19 - 24)**

Climate and City Resilience Committee

Thursday, 8th December, 2022

MEETING OF THE CLIMATE AND CITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Walsh (Chairperson);
Councillors Bower, de Faoite, Donnelly, Ferguson,
Gormley, Maghie, McCabe, McCann, McKeown,
McLaughlin, Murray, Sandford, Smyth, Spratt
and Thompson.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Ms. D. Caldwell, Commissioner for Climate and City Resilience;
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti Poverty;
Ms. A. Diver, Climate Programme Manager;
Mr. J. McKearney, Project Support Assistant;
Mr. R. McLernon, Climate Programme Manager;
Ms. C. Young, Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for an inability to attend were received from Councillors Hutchinson and Newton.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Update on Belfast achieving an A listing from the Carbon Disclosure Project

The Climate Programme Manager referred Members of the Committee to the report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting, that outlined the 2022 CDP award of A status to Belfast, which followed the 2021 CDP award of B status to Belfast. He reminded Members of the Committee that in July 2021, the Council had made the first annual submission to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) – ICLEI reporting platform, and that an update was provided to the Council in October 2021. The submission was undertaken to support baselining of activity and emissions in Belfast, and to enable full participation by Belfast in

**Climate and City Resilience Committee,
Thursday, 8th December, 2022**

global climate action campaigns such as the Race to Zero, which linked to COP climate negotiations, the Cities Race to Resilience campaign, Cities Race to Zero campaign, the Global Covenant of Mayors, and the WWF One Planet City competition. All of these campaigns required members to have made a submission through a recognised reporting mechanism, of which CDP – ICLEI was the most well-known.

He explained that a city submission to CDP illustrated the level of ambition, activity and transparency each city adopted. Belfast had made its submission public in both submission years ensuring maximum openness and transparency around its plans. The Belfast submission in 2021 was the first time Belfast had participated in CDP, and were congratulated on having achieved a B ranking at such an early stage. In 2022, the second submission had achieved an A ranking and CDP officials had made a point of appearing on local media to mark the rapid advancement of the city in their framework.

In 2022 Belfast had updated on the adoption of city targets for achieving net zero which had been recommended in the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap (2020). These committed the city to a 66% reduction of emissions on 2000 levels by 2025, an 80% reduction by 2030 and a 100% reduction by 2050. In addition, Belfast was able to point to adaptation targets, including the planting of one million trees by 2035 and for the Living with Water Programme the delivery target of 2033, along with monitoring arrangements for both projects.

Belfast had made a strong link between the climate risks such as flooding and heat as set out in the Belfast Climate Risk Assessment and project delivery through initiatives including Belfast One Million Trees Project which addressed a range of targets, including carbon capture, avoided water runoff, reduced levels of heat, improved biodiversity and improved health and wellbeing for residents of Belfast having planted 65,000 trees in 2 years of delivery, funding the first Belfast I-TREE ECO report which provided an analysis of the benefits of the existing Belfast trees of Belfast, part funding the new Belfast Tree Strategy, funding new infrastructure including the development of a tree nursery at Grovelands, and funding The Conservation Volunteers and Belfast Hills Partnership.

A Member raised concerns in relation to the planting of trees through the One Million Trees Project and proposed that officers come back in February with a report on the management procedures and policies of the One Million Trees project. In particular, seeking focus on what, if any, ecological assessments were being made of sites on which trees had already been planted or going forward in the future that included site selection, bio security measures, monitoring work and what consultation was sought for specialist and technical advice on these matters. Officers agreed to bring a report to the February meeting of the Committee detailing the management processes and assessment criteria used for the 1000 trees project.

The Committee note the information which had been provided and agreed to support the annual submission by Belfast through this internationally recognised carbon and climate reporting framework.

Update on the Local Area Energy Plan for Belfast

The Climate and City Resilience Commissioner referred the Committee to the report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting and advised the Members that the purpose of the report was to update them on the current status of activities to develop a Local Area Energy Plan for Belfast.

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Proposed District Heating Network for Belfast

The Climate and City Resilience Commissioner referred the Committee to the report that was circulated in advance of the meeting and advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the current status of activities to develop a district heating network in Belfast. She advised that a further update would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee. Members raised the matter of the role of planning in promoting District Heat Networks and asked for an update from planning to be added as a regular item on the agenda. Members of the Committee asked officers to bring back a report outlining the options for community heating and what Belfast City Council can do in relation to this matter.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Innovate UK funding opportunity –
UK Net zero living: Pioneer places fund**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy referred members of the Committee to the report he had circulated in advance of the meeting and advised the Members of the Committee that the purpose of the report was to inform them of an application to the UK Net Zero Living: Pioneer Places Fund.

After discussion, Members of the Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Update on proposed climate literacy
Training for elected members**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy referred the Committee to the report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting. He advised the purpose of the report was to provide Members with information on the proposed Carbon Literacy Training.

He stated that the course was appropriate for all Councillors, whatever their political world view. By the end, elected members would understand the climate science that underpinned the action the Council had taken to speak confidently and knowledgeably on the subject. Most importantly, they would understand how to talk about the climate crisis in a way that resonates with their voter base, and in a way that is authentic to their own political position.

The training would cover climate change, carbon footprints, how every person could do their bit, and how this topic related to Elected Members and ratepayers. An Elected Members' Toolkit provided during and after the training had been designed to equip

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Councillors with the information they would need to mobilise change within their constituency and to communicate climate change effectively to hard-to-reach groups.

A full day was required to complete the training. This would be condensed slightly if completed remotely. It was proposed the training would be delivered via MS Teams on Thursday 12th January from 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm, and on Saturday 14th January from 9.00 am to 12.30 pm. The training would be interactive throughout and would be followed by a short exercise to complete. Following successful completion of the training and exercise, a Carbon Literate Certificate would be provided in a digital format. The training provider, Climate NI, were delivering the training as part of the Carbon Literacy Project.

The Committee agreed attendance on the proposed training dates.

Visit Belfast

The Committee agreed to invite Visit Belfast to a future meeting of the Committee to present on sustainable tourism.

Chairperson

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Subject:	Horizon Europe UP2030 funding update
Date:	9 February 2023
Reporting Officer:	Richard McLernon, Climate Programme Manager City
Contact Officer:	Richard McLernon, Climate Programme Manager City Callie Persic, Development Manager

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	The purpose of this report is to update Members on Belfast City Council's involvement in the UP2030 project, which is funded through Horizon Europe.
2.0	Recommendations
	The Members of the Committee are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note that Belfast, represented by Belfast City Council, is a pilot city within the Horizon Europe UP2030 project, which will focus on the development of a net zero neighbourhood framework and toolkit, the exchange of knowledge between cities and the use of climate tools which support analysis, mapping and engagement in local neighbourhoods.

	<p>II. Note that in the update brought to City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the 9th November 2022, officers proposed that the Linen Quarter District and neighbouring communities would be the initial focus within the project, however noted that no final decision had been taken regarding the location, and also that should the project focus on the Linen Quarter District, Donegall Pass, Market and Sandy Row areas, this would align with the Bolder Vision Strategy and the Belfast Resilience Strategy, while allowing us to consider issues such as the severance and climate issues brought about by the road infrastructure and other factors such as poor public realm and connectivity.</p> <p>III. Note that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee “noted the progress of a Horizon Europe Urban Planning 2030 bid to support development of a framework that integrated environmental sustainability and urban development aligned to the creation of a net zero neighbourhood as a pilot proposal and the offer of funding to further develop the project which was confirmed not to be definitive of any area at this stage; and approved the participation of the Council as an Associate Member of the Urban Planning 2030 consortium as identified in the report.”</p> <p>IV. Note that a further update on the Belfast pilot location will be presented to both City Growth and Regeneration Committee and Climate and City Resilience Committees in due course.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	The Belfast City Council Climate Unit and City Regeneration and Development Division are working together to ensure an integrated approach between urban planning, achieving net zero and aspects of resilience such as supporting play and environmental sustainability in the city centre through engagement with key stakeholders such as young people, families, communities and businesses.
3.2	A Bolder Vision for Belfast puts liveability at its core and aims to create a sustainable, connected and vibrant city, and the creation of a people-focused environment with playful streets and spaces for children and families to live and thrive. In December 2020, Belfast launched the Belfast Resilience Strategy alongside the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap and with the Belfast One Million Trees programme these form key elements of the city’s ambitions to achieve carbon neutrality (80% reduction by 2030 and 100% by 2050). Officers have been working collaboratively to align play, climate neutrality, tree planting and green

	<p>infrastructure by developing the award-winning Urban Childhood Framework and have been testing these new approaches in the design and implementation of the city centre Cathedral Gardens pop-up park and the new Grey to Green programme.</p>
3.3	<p>As a result of our membership in the Resilient Cities Network, Council was invited to participate in a Horizon Europe funding application from the UP2030 (Urban Planning 2030) fund which has been successful. The kick off meeting occurred on 1st and 2nd February 2023, focused on city matchmaking and identification of the tools to be used within participating pilot cities. Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion, which looks to tackle climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth and is focused on supporting cities achieve net zero.</p>
3.4	<p>UP2030 aims to guide cities through the socio-technical transitions required to meet their climate neutrality ambitions. It will do so by enabling a quantum leap from a 'business as usual', project-by-project decarbonisation approach to a vision-driven, strategy-based approach that is anchored on sound projects and renewed policy development. The approach uses urban planning and design as a vehicle to create better connected, more compact, net-zero neighbourhoods that promote liveability and, through designing with intent, promote mitigation actions.</p>
3.5	<p>The UP2030 consortium is made up of 46 partners (see Appendix 1) with a total budget of €11,956,686. Belfast was selected as one of the pilot cities, and has been nominated to receive €204,250 to support research, training and policy development related to the creation of a net zero district through enhanced tree planting, linking to the Resilience Strategy, Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, the recently formed Belfast Retrofit Hub, and Belfast One Million Trees project, green infrastructure, linking to the Bolder Vision and Council's Grey to Green initiative in the city centre, and play, linking to the Urban Childhood Framework, and Belfast's membership of the Real Play Coalition (a global initiative led by the Lego Foundation, IKEA, ARUP, UNICEF and National Geographic). The Belfast budget will fund staff costs, facilitation and workshop costs.</p>
3.6	<p>Through the UP2030 funding, we will create a framework that can be applied to regeneration projects that integrates stakeholder engagement, analysis of the neighbourhood through a net zero lens, potential green infrastructure, potential play opportunities and co-design with young people. The framework will support the integration of play and environmental</p>

3.7	<p>sustainability into city design, delivering on ambitions set out in the Belfast Resilience Strategy whereby young people would be involved in the design of places. To maintain alignment with A Bolder Vision and the Resilience Strategy Ambitions, it was proposed that the framework could be tested in the Linen Quarter District, which has the aspirations of becoming the first sustainable and net-zero business district in Northern Ireland. Should that be agreed as the area of focus representatives from neighbouring communities such as Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Market area would be invited to participate in the development and out workings of the Net Zero Neighbourhood framework. Lessons learned from this pilot will be used to identify opportunities in other neighbourhoods and bring forward the concept of net-zero districts across the city and the intention is to work across council departments and with city stakeholders to elevate and embed the learning and approaches.</p> <p>As referred to previously, project delivery will take place over a three-year period, following kick off meetings in February 2023. Belfast has been assigned a liaison partner; an organisation called Mapping for Change who will support the city throughout the project lifespan. Further reports will be brought to this Committee as the project progress.</p>																				
4.0	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>																				
4.1	<p>The Horizon Europe UP2030 Project is 100% funded. No additional funding is required from Council however a small team drawn from the Climate Unit and City Regeneration and Development will work together to oversee development and support implementation. The funding is for revenue and does not include any capital costs at this stage.</p>																				
5.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>																				
5.1	<p>Officers are currently developing the Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Screening and will incorporate within the emerging proposals.</p>																				
6.0	<p>Appendix 1</p>																				
6.1	<p>Horizon Europe UP2030 project consortium partners:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="272 1621 1461 2000"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="272 1621 1273 1653">Participating Organisation</th> <th data-bbox="1273 1621 1461 1653">Country</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1653 1273 1720">FRAUNHOFER GESELLSCHAFT ZUR FORDERUNG DER ANGEWANDTEN FORSCHUNG EV</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1653 1461 1720">Germany</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1720 1273 1751">Belfast City Council</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1720 1461 1751">UK</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1751 1273 1783">ADELPHI RESEARCH GEMEINNUTZIGE GMBH</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1751 1461 1783">Germany</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1783 1273 1814">Buro Happold GmbH</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1783 1461 1814">Germany</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1814 1273 1845">Design Clips P.C.</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1814 1461 1845">Greece</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1845 1273 1877">GreenAdapt Gesellschaft für Klimaanpassung mbH</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1845 1461 1877">Germany</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1877 1273 1908">I-CATALIST SL</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1877 1461 1908">Spain</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1908 1273 1939">STICHTING ISOCARP INSTITUTE CENTER OF URBAN EXCELLENCE</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1908 1461 1939">Netherlands</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="272 1939 1273 1971">Thomas Stellmach Planning & Architecture</td> <td data-bbox="1273 1939 1461 1971">Germany</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Participating Organisation	Country	FRAUNHOFER GESELLSCHAFT ZUR FORDERUNG DER ANGEWANDTEN FORSCHUNG EV	Germany	Belfast City Council	UK	ADELPHI RESEARCH GEMEINNUTZIGE GMBH	Germany	Buro Happold GmbH	Germany	Design Clips P.C.	Greece	GreenAdapt Gesellschaft für Klimaanpassung mbH	Germany	I-CATALIST SL	Spain	STICHTING ISOCARP INSTITUTE CENTER OF URBAN EXCELLENCE	Netherlands	Thomas Stellmach Planning & Architecture	Germany
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TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITEIT DELFT	Netherlands
UNIVERSITAT INTERNACIONAL DE CATALUNYA	Spain
Global Green Growth Institute	Hungary
ICLEI EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT GMBH (ICLEI EUROPASEKRETARIAT GMBH)	Germany
STICHTING GLOBAL RESILIENT CITIES NETWORK	Netherlands
Urban Climate Change Research Network – European Hub	Italy
AQUATEC PROYECTOS PARA EL SECTOR DEL AGUA SA	Spain
CETAQUA, CENTRO TECNOLÓGICO DEL AGUA, FUNDACION PRIVADA	Spain
PRAVO I INTERNET FOUNDATION	Bulgaria
LABORATORIO NACIONAL DE ENGENHARIA CIVIL	Portugal
ANAPTYXIAKI MEIZONOS ASTIKIS THESSALONIKIS AE - ANAPTYXIAKOS ORGANISMOS TOPIKIS AUTODIOIKISIS	Greece
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY	Turkey
MAPPING FOR CHANGE CIC	UK
THE CHANCELLOR MASTERS AND SCHOLARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE	UK
UNIVERSITY OF STUTTGART	Germany
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL	Belgium
ETHNIKO KENTRO EREVNAS KAI TECHNOLOGIKIS ANAPTYXIS	Greece
FUNDACION CIRCE CENTRO DE INVESTIGACION DE RECURSOS Y CONSUMOS ENERGETICOS	Spain
STICHTING DELTARES	Netherlands
DRAXIS ENVIRONMENTAL SA	Greece
ODTU Gunes Enerjisi Uygulama ve Arastirma Merkezi	Turkey
K3Y	Bulgaria
FONDAZIONE LINKS - LEADING INNOVATION & KNOWLEDGE FOR SOCIETY	Italy
MAGGIOLI SPA	Italy
UNIVERSITAT POLITECNICA DE VALENCIA	Spain
Vesela Motika d.o.o.	Croatia
BUDAPEST FOVAROS ONKORMANYZATA	Hungary
AJUNTAMENT DE GRANOLLERS	Spain
Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality	Turkey
CAMARA MUNICIPAL DE LISBOA	Portugal
LISBOA E-NOVA - AGENCIA DE ENERGIA E AMBIENTE DE LISBOA	Portugal
COMUNE DI MILANO	Italy
STADT MUNSTER	Germany
GEMEENTE ROTTERDAM	Netherlands
DIMOS THESSALONIKIS	Greece
GRAD ZAGREB	Croatia
EIDGENOESSISCHE TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE ZUERICH	Switzerland

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Subject:	Update on the management processes and assessment criteria that are used by the One Million Trees Project
Date:	9 th February 2023
Reporting Officer:	Mura Quigley – Adaptation & Resilience Advisor (Climate Team)
Contact Officer:	Alan Wardle – Project Support Officer (Climate Team)

Restricted Reports	
<p>Is this report restricted?</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">After Committee Decision</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">After Council Decision</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">Some time in the future</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">Never</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of the report is to give members an update on the One Million Trees programme and to respond to the request that officers come back to this committee with a report on the management procedures and policies of the One Million Trees project.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the agreed site assessment criteria and process undertaken to identify if a site is suitable for tree planting including the expertise used across the Delivery Team and specialist expertise determined on a site by site basis; II. Note that the monitoring of planted sites by the Delivery Team includes surveys within the first three years of planting and identification of survival rates; III. Note that the programme has to date planted 63,500 trees with programme of community engagement underway that includes tree planting, business

	<p>involvement, schools engagement, give a tree a home events, hedgerow and ancient woodland restoration; and</p> <p>IV. Consider an invitation to by the Delivery Team to visit some of the sites already planted under the Million Trees Programme later this year.</p>
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Background</p> <p>In the Climate and City Resilience Committee on 8th December members requested a report on the management procedures of the One Million Trees project. In particular, a focus on any ecological assessments, site selection, bio security measure, monitoring work and who is sought for specialise and technical advice on such matters was requested.</p> <p>As members will be aware, the One Million Trees Programme has been running since 2020 and is a city-wide partnership and ambition to plant one million trees in Belfast by 2035. It is one of the ambitions of the Belfast Resilience Strategy, and has three key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create an inclusive structure and processes which enable tree planting and the growth of green infrastructure and biodiversity in Belfast; • To plant at least one million trees within the next 15 years- delivering a step change in our approach to climate adaptation and environmental improvements; and • To protect the city and the people of the city by increasing carbon capture, reducing harms from air pollution, weather impact and loss of nature and improving health and well-being. <p>Since the project began 63,500 trees have been planted across the city. A programme of community engagement is underway that includes tree planting, business involvement, schools engagement, give a tree a home events, hedgerow and ancient woodland restoration.</p>
3.2	<p>Governance and implementation arrangements</p> <p>Belfast City Council agreed it would coordinate the initial phase of the project, liaise with partners and set out recommendations for project implementation. In terms of governance procedures, the Million Trees Steering Group leads the project and is made up of twenty one partners that meet on a biannual basis and agree the strategic direction of the project including to include processes and procedures. The delivery of the project is then taken forward by the Million Trees Delivery team which consists of Belfast Hills Partnership, The Woodland Trust, BCC Climate Team and BCC Trees Team.</p> <p>The Delivery Team meets fortnightly to coordinate activities under the programme and support the partners to bring forward sites for planting, offering expertise and specialist knowledge on trees, woodland and climate resilience.</p>
3.3	<p>Management procedures and site assessment process</p> <p>One of the key aims of the Delivery Team is to establish procedures, processes and ensure specialist knowledge and expertise is being used to identify, assess, prepare, plant and monitor sites that are being planted across the city by Million Trees partners.</p> <p>An agreed site assessment process is applied whenever a potential site comes forward and has been initially scoped for potential suitability by the Delivery Team. This is attached in Appendix 6.1. If the site is over 4 hectares, it is agreed that an Environmental Statement is prepared and in line with the EIA (Forestry) Regulations (NI) 2006. This ensures the impacts of planting the site have been fully identified and assessed before any planting is agreed.</p>

	<p>Should the site be identified as having special protections or statutory designations, specialist expertise and/or consultation around wildlife and protected species, habitats, invasive species is used. Along with the specialist expertise and knowledge within Belfast Hills Partnership, the Woodland Trust, and BCC City and Neighbourhood Services team, Million Trees has previously worked with The Conservation Volunteers, John Morris Aborcultural Consultant, Clive Richardson Ecological Consultant, Treeconomics, and RJ Woodland Services.</p> <p>3.4 Availability of sites for tree planting</p> <p>Whilst ancient woodland restoration works are ongoing at strategic sites such as Cave Hill, there have been limited sites coming forward for tree planting in Belfast City Council's Estate, with the majority mainly linking in with new capital works and planting existing green spaces and parks. Million Trees Programme is currently supporting the delivery of the Draft Tree Strategy, and it is intended that once this plan is in place that a list of potential sites for planting can be brought forward, appropriate assessments carried out, and planting plans produced. Council officers are currently scoping potential sites and will be working across CNS, Estates, Physical Programmes and Planning teams to bring forward potential sites by September 2023 in time for the next planting season.</p> <p>3.5 Supply of trees</p> <p>A current priority of the Million Trees programme is to establish a native and sustainable tree supply for Belfast to ensure provenance of trees can be traced and address biosecurity issues such as the spreading of disease. Grovelands tree nursery which was developed under the MT Programme currently supplies some planting on Council land, but this is not at the scale required to meet the targets of planting one million trees by 2035. Council is currently undertaking some work to scope the feasibility of re-establishing its tree nursery at Beechvale, to ensure trees are being grown locally from seeds, to reduce the risk of disease, improve tree health across the city and create a local supply chain that is resilient and climate proofed.</p> <p>3.6 Monitoring planted sites</p> <p>In terms of monitoring planted sites, the Delivery Team currently carries out 'beat up surveys' to check planted sites, monitor the rate of survival on sites and ensure accurate counting of planting numbers is achieved. These usually take place within the first 3 years of planting and are currently reporting an average of less than 5% failure of trees planted. Maintenance and monitoring on sites are the responsibility of the landowner once the site is planted. For any Council planted sites, Park Managers monitor whip planting, with the larger trees planted by the Tree unit maintained by BCC contractors and written into tender specifications from the outset.</p> <p>To monitor where trees are being planted across Belfast, an annual count is carried out at the end of each planting season with MT partners. The Climate Team is currently developing a Million Trees monitoring page so that trees planted are able to be mapped, logged and monitored across the city. This will be launched as part of this year's tree count and used ongoing as part of the Programme. As part of the Million Trees community engagement plan, best practice guides around planting and maintenance are planned for roll out in the next year.</p> <p>3.7</p> <p>To aid with members engagement in the Million Trees Programme and to gain further information on the issues raised in the report, the Delivery Team can facilitate a half day site visit for members later this year to view some of the work of the Million Trees programme across Belfast and gain feedback from Members to help shape the future programme for Million Trees.</p>
4.0	Financial & Resource Implications
	There are no financial implications

5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications There are no direct equality and good relations implications.
6.0	Appendices
6.1	Site assessment criteria for Million Trees attached.

**Belfast One Million Trees Programme
Site Assessment Process – June 2020**

1. Site identification (responsibility of landowners)

- Location
- Size of site
- Map/image/coordinates

2. Initial walkabout (BCC/Conversation/landowner)

- Assess suitability for planting and identify site characteristics that make it attractive for planting, for example:
- air quality zone,
- proximity to water feature,
- location in relation to the prevailing wind,
- impact on sightlines,
- proximity to buildings,
- proximity to existing woodland,
- is it visible and accessible,
- will it support wayfinding opportunities,
- is the area within a community,
- does it provide a link to the city centre,
- is it in the city centre,
- will it support flood alleviation,
- is it in close proximity to younger/older people,
- it is an area affected by poor mental health, deprivation,
- is it an area with low canopy cover...

3. Site assessment (undertaken by agents, conversation organisations?)

- Use existing habitat survey methodology – Belfast Hills/Woodland Trust/Others?
- Impact on local biodiversity
- Opportunity to increase and support local biodiversity
- Is the site suitable for woodland creation or enhancement, tree planting, creation of species rich grassland, wetland or wildflower meadow
- Does the site support temporary or long term use
- Could the site be used as a nursery
- Identify preferred options
- Estimate costs

4. Review and produce planting plan (review group – membership to be determined)

- Submit to landowner via BCC and agree next steps

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