



Subject:	Motion – Rights of Nature
Date:	24th September, 2021
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 bring to Members' attention a motion in relation to Rights of Nature, which was referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1st September.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the motion and, if adopted, agree that a report on how this would be facilitated, resourced and managed be submitted to a future meeting.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Council, at its meeting on 1st September, considered the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor Smyth and seconded by Alderman Copeland.</p> <p>“This Council notes the legal and social movement globally for the ‘Rights of Nature’, which aims to strengthen protections for people, place and planet.</p> <p>It believes that ‘Rights of Nature’ can help inspire an innovative rethinking about how to create regenerative, not extractivist, economies while also making human and other living communities safer, stronger and more resilient.</p> <p>The positive work already being done by Council staff and groups on the climate emergency and biodiversity crises are commendable, but we recognise the need for a rights-based approach to nature.</p> <p>It is proposed that, over the next twelve months, the Council will collaborate with civic society to explore what rights of nature mean for the people and economies of the region and to investigate how Rights of Nature could be expressed in community plans, corporate plans, improvement objectives and other strategic frameworks. In particular, the Council will, in the next twelve months, hold community workshops and work with the local community and stakeholders to draw up a Declaration for the Rights of Nature for the City, to be brought back before the Council for adoption.</p> <p>It is also requested that a report, authored in collaboration and with input from the local community, be brought to the Council in relation to embedding ‘Rights of Nature’ as a keystone concept into the Council’s operational practices, planning processes and long-term decision-making.</p> <p>Mindful of our mutual environmental obligations under the Espoo Convention, we call on all councils in Northern Ireland to also explore ‘Rights of Nature’ for their council areas.”</p>
3.2	<p>In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.</p>
	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.3	<p>None.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.4	<p>This 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	Documents Attached
	None