

Report of the Assistant Director Governance & ICT

Pre-Decision Called-In Item – Arboricultural Policy for the Management of Public Trees & Woodland

Summary

1. This report provides background to the pre-decision call-in of the Arboricultural Policy for the Management of Public Trees and Woodland, setting out the reasons for the call-in and inviting the Committee to consider what feedback, if any, it may wish to make.
2. It also sets out the role of and options available to this Committee, under the agreed pre-decision call-in arrangements.

Pre-Decision Call-in Arrangements

3. At its meeting in August 2015, the Executive agreed some operational guidelines for enabling and supporting a pre-decision call-in process. This supplements the pre-existing arrangements for post-decision call in and is intended to provide all backbench and scrutiny Members with opportunities to comment upon relevant upcoming Executive or Executive Member decisions.
4. In accordance with the arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny call-in, three Members (Councillors Craghill, D’Agorne & Kramm) have called in the intended decision in relation to the Arboricultural Policy for the Management of Public Trees & Woodland, for the following reason:

We do not have an issue with the proposal to formalise policy in relation to the day-to-day management of trees on land owned or managed by the local authority or its partner agencies such as Museums Trust and schools. However we believe this has to be underpinned by and related to an overall Tree and Green Infrastructure Strategy that supports One Planet York, Treemendous, and the Biodiversity Action Plan. This would set a clear framework for longer term planning to maintain species and age profile diversity in the context of the emerging Local Plan and taking account of climate change, on both public and private land across the city.

Consultation

5. In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the calling-in Members have been invited to attend and/or speak at the Call-In meeting, as appropriate, together with the appropriate Executive Member and officers.

Analysis

6. Members need to consider the reasons for call-in and any comments made at the meeting by speakers, as well as have regard to the information in the officer's report to the Executive Member on this matter, attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

Options

7. The following options are available to this Committee in relation to dealing with this pre decision call-in, in accordance with the new agreed arrangements:
 - Agree comments or recommendations for submission to the Executive Member, to take into account when making his decision; or
 - Decide not to make any specific comments/recommendations to the Executive Member on the issue in hand

Council Plan

8. There are no direct implications for this call-in in relation to the delivery of the Council Plan and its priorities for 2015-19.

Implications

9. There are no known Financial, HR, Legal, Property, Equalities, or Crime and Disorder implications in terms of dealing with the specific matter before Members; namely, to consider and handle the pre decision call-in. However, if it became clear to the Committee from information received that there were implications associated with any comments/recommendations it wished to make then it would be appropriate for the Committee to also recommend that any such implications be looked into, prior to the Executive Member making a decision which might be affected by those implications.

Risk Management

10. There are no direct risks associated with considering the call in of this matter. However, the Committee would be advised to invite the Executive Member to take account of any risks associated with any comments/recommendations which the Committee may wish to make on this matter, prior to implementing any decision.

Recommendations

11. Members are asked to:

- (i) Consider the reasons for calling in this matter prior to decision, together with all submissions made and decide whether they wish to make any specific comments/recommendations for consideration by the Executive Member; and
- (ii) Invite the Executive Member to make his decision at a future Executive Member Decision Session in light of (i) above.

Reason: To enable the called-in matter to be dealt with efficiently and in accordance with the new pre-decision call in arrangements.

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Wards Affected:

All



Annexes:

Appendix 1 – Report to Executive Member on the Arboricultural Policy for the Management of Public Trees and Woodland