

TREE PLANTING, INCLUDING COED CAERDYDD: POLICY REVIEW
SCRUTINY

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides Members with background information on the Council's work to plant trees, including those funded through the Coed Caerdydd project funding.

Background

2. The Council has a small core annual budget, circa £10,000, for new and replacement tree planting on all Council land, excluding schools. Where trees are required on new developments, this forms part of the planning process and is included as a planning condition and in Section 106 agreements, where applicable. Depending on conditions, s106 monies can also be used for supply and/ or planting.
3. In 2019, Full Council declared a Climate Emergency. This, linked with the Cabinet's response to the Environmental Scrutiny Committee's Bio-Diversity Inquiry (2019), set the scene for a motion to Council in January 2021, '*Let's Make Cardiff Greener, Healthier and Wilder*' motion¹, which was agreed by Full Council. The motion stressed its aim was to '*enhance the Council's One Planet Strategy in terms of combatting climate change and increasing biodiversity in Cardiff*' and noted '*the Council is developing an ambitious and major programme that seeks to increase tree canopy across the city from 18.9% to 25% by 2030.*'

¹ Available [here](#)

4. The motion included the following regarding tree planting:
'To publish a plan for the mass planting of trees in the city. So that local groups, Cardiff schools and schoolchildren have opportunities to plant within the public realm.'
'To establish a new Public Tree Nursery at Forest Farm. The Council benefits from a team of qualified and experienced Arboricultural Officers and Arborists who will provide advice and guidance to residents and community groups. The nursery will focus on propagating stock of local provenance.'
5. In May 2021, Cabinet approved the following recommendation²:
'Confirm support for the development of an overarching plan for the mass planting of trees and the production of an enhanced annual programme for delivery.'
6. The report to Cabinet set out that land in public ownership was being assessed to see if it was suitable for tree planting, that a project manager would be appointed to develop a mass planting plan, that all ward members would be consulted to inform the planting programme, and that a Local Tree Wardens scheme would be developed, providing new volunteering opportunities and extending opportunities for Cardiff schools and schoolchildren to be involved.
7. The report to Cabinet identified that funding was in place till June 2023 and that the project team would work to identify solutions that ensure the commitment to canopy expansion continues beyond that.
8. In addition, the report to Cabinet set out proposals to establish a small tree nursery at Forest Farm, to develop and increase the availability of local provenance trees. The report stated that additional land/ satellite sites may be required for the operation to scale up as demand increases over time.

Progress Update

9. In 2021, Cardiff Council secured funding to support the Coed Caerdydd 10-year programme, which aims to increase canopy cover in Cardiff from 18.9% to 25% by 2030, equating to a 30-hectare increase:

² 'Lets' Make Cardiff Greener, Healthier and Wilder' Report to Cabinet, available [here](#)

- a. £753,000 grant offer of funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government
 - b. £228,000 grant offer from the Emergency Tree Fund from Coed Cadw/ The Woodland Trust in Wales
 - c. £21,000 grant offer from Trees for Cities
10. The above funding is in addition to the Council's core annual budget, donations through its memorial tree scheme, use of s106 monies and other small grants.
11. Coed Caerdydd aims to create new woodland, orchards and hedgerows in addition to standard tree planting, using mostly native trees, helping to tackle climate change and enhance biodiversity. In September 2021, a comprehensive public consultation exercise began, which included seeking view on locality planting, resulting in over 1,700 responses. Since then, there have been numerous community meetings as well as meetings with local ward members. There has also been engagement with schools, with a specific consultation exercise undertaken in December 2021.
12. The first project planting season commenced in November 2021 through to March 2022, with 700 volunteers helping to plant 8-hectares of new trees. The second planting season commenced in November 2022 through to March 2023, with 11.5-hectares of new trees planted. The programme for 2023-24 is now underway, with 62 tree planting events scheduled and a target to plant circa 30,000 trees.
13. Coed Caerdydd is underpinned by volunteering, with opportunities to volunteer for tree planting, being a tree guardian, and assisting at the tree nursery.
14. Further information is available at: [Coed Caerdydd - Outdoor Cardiff](#)

Way Forward

15. During their meeting, Members will have the opportunity to hear from Cllr Burke, Cabinet Member – Culture, Venues and Parks, Jon Maidment, Head

of Parks & Cardiff Harbour Authority, and Chris Engel, Project Manager - Coed Caerdydd. Officers will provide a presentation outlining the 2023/24 programme and the opportunities and challenges moving forward. The whole panel will be available to answer Members' questions.

Legal Implications

16. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review, and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review, and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note the contents of the attached report, and
- ii. Consider whether they wish to pass on any comments to the Cabinet following scrutiny of the item.

LEANNE WESTON

Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

6 December 2023