

## **A REPORT FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL – 6<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2018**

### **BIRMINGHAM TREE POLICY**

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMENTARY**

On behalf of the Executive, I would like to thank all Members who have shown an interest and taken part in this important and timely cross party Task and Finish Overview and Scrutiny Review into the Birmingham Tree Policy.

The benefits of trees and greenery to this city are many, not just visually but also for their positive impact on air quality, flood alleviation and contributions to health and wellbeing. The City Council has a responsibility, along with our partners, to ensure that not only do we promote a green environment for the people who visit, live and work in Birmingham today, but also as a legacy for the generations to come.

This review is a welcome addition to work already underway in the Council on a robust tree policy for the future. I am keen that any new policy is co-terminus with not just the current Birmingham Development Plan, but also future development plans and I am pleased that this suggestion has been agreed and incorporated into the recommendations in the review.

However, in Recommendation 6, whilst I agree that Ward Members should be involved and consulted fully in tree replacements, I am concerned that individual Members should not be in a position to stop the planting of trees beyond their ward should local opportunities not be available.

The benefits of trees and greenery have no physical boundaries. I therefore welcome the agreement to include the suggestion by the Executive to explore an independent Forest Group on a regional basis and work with the Combined Authority to ensure that this is progressed.

Although this review has concentrated primarily with the urban landscape, it has recognised the importance and value of greenery and trees in our parks and any policy going forward should ensure that this value is recognised and incorporated

This is an excellent example of Overview and Scrutiny adding value to an important issue and working closely with officers to ensure that a timely and informative review with robust recommendations is brought back for consideration by Council.

I welcome this report and will work closely with the Cabinet and Planning Committee to ensure that the recommendations are explored and implemented.

Councillor Ian Ward  
Leader