

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 30 June, 2021**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>APPOINTMENT TO MERSEY FOREST STEERING GROUP 2021/2022</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE</b>

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to request the Council to appoint a representative of the Council to serve on the Mersey Forest Steering Group in 2021/2022.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Policy and Resources Committee is requested to appoint an elected member to represent the Council on the Mersey Forest Steering Group.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is requested to appoint a member to the Mersey Forest Steering Group. Membership of the Mersey Forest will support the Council to deliver the requirements of the Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy. An expectation of our Mersey Forest membership is to be represented and contribute to the Steering Group's work

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 No other options were considered beyond those outlined in the report.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Mersey Forest ("the Forest") was established in 1991 by Central Government acting through the Countryside Commission (now Natural England) in collaboration with the Councils.
- 3.2 Wirral Council joined Mersey Forest in 2021 as part of a wider strategic approach to addressing the impact of the environment and climate emergency and delivering Wirral's Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy. Becoming members of Mersey Forest and participating in its strategic coordination through the steering group is regarded as a major step forward in the delivery of Wirral's Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy. As members Wirral will be able to access resources, funding and expertise to support's Wirral's significant tree planting objectives.
- 3.3 The other six Councils which currently make up the partnership are Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Liverpool City Council, St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council, Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council and Cheshire East Borough Council.
- 3.4 The membership of the steering group is made up of one member from each of the Councils, an officer from Natural England and an officer from the Forestry Commission. Steering group meetings will not usually be open to the public, but that is a matter of discretion for the member steering group. Council officers will attend in a supporting role.
- 3.5 The members steering group's role is primarily consultative, but it is expected and agreed that it will provide advice on all matters relating to the Forest Plan.
- 3.6 Decisions on what advice to give shall be based on a majority vote. In the event of a tie the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote.
- 3.7 The Mersey Forest Steering Group meetings are held quarterly and take place during the daytime.

3.8 The purpose of the Mersey Forest partnership is to work together in a spirit of mutual support and understanding and use reasonable endeavours to approve and implement the Forest Plan.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT; STAFFING AND ASSETS**

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 If Wirral fails to nominate a representative for the steering group there would be a risk of missing out on opportunities to support Wirral's tree planting objectives.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION**

8.1 Not applicable for this appointment request.

#### **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

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#### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Mersey Forest Steering Group Terms of Reference

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous reports on the appointments to outside organisations and amendments made during the year and the Council's Constitution.

**SUBJECT HISTORY** (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Cabinet – Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Strategy	July 2020