

Report of: Interim Executive Director City Services

To: Executive Board

Date: 17th March 2008

Item No:

Title of Report : The Management of Trees Under Oxford City Council's Control



Summary and Recommendations



Purpose of report: To propose an operational policy in respect of the management of trees which sets out the circumstances under which major tree works will be undertaken, who will make such decisions, a review process for decisions which are challenged and the notification which will be given to ward members and the public.



Key decision: No



Portfolio Holder: Cllr Caroline Van Zyl

Scrutiny Responsibility: Environmental

Ward(s) affected: All

Report Approved by: Councillor van Zyl, Portfolio Holder
Jeremy Thomas, Legal,
Andy Collett, Finance.



Policy Framework: Green Spaces Strategy



Recommendation(s): That the Operational Policy on the Management of Trees under the Control of Oxford City Council (Appendix 1) be approved.



1. This operational policy has been drafted in order to be clear about: -
 - a) In what circumstances major works to trees under the control of the City Council will be undertaken
 - b) Who will make the relevant decisions, what the review mechanism will be if those decisions are challenged, and
 - c) Who will be notified of the intention to carry out major tree works.
2. The policy also re-affirms the commitment to replace all trees removed as a result of the tree inspection programme and to produce a programme related to the budget approved by Council.
3. Interest in this aspect of the operation of the Council has been heightened following a relatively high level of felling recently due to the impact of the tree inspection programme. It can be expected that the rate of felling will reduce once the programme becomes established and the backlog of defective trees has been cleared.
4. The resources necessary to implement this policy fall to departments across the Council including Parks, Property and Oxford City Homes which funds tree works from the Housing Revenue Account.
5. The Parks Manager has responsibility for overall co-ordination of the implementation of the policy and is required to ensure that the policy and programme of surveys and resulting work happens corporately.
6. Members of the Executive Board will be aware that Council approved additional funds in setting the budget for 2008/09 that will enable a larger programme of replacement in the coming year.
7. Officers will be working with Friends Groups and seeking external funding to maximise the impact of the tree replacement budget.
8. The policy has been refined following public consultation and review by the Environment Scrutiny Committee.
9. The proposed policy is set out in Appendix 1.
10. Appendix 2 contains the minutes of the relevant item of the Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting.
11. Appendix 3 contains the summary report of the results of the public consultation.
12. Recommendation
That the Operational Policy on the Management of Trees under the Control of Oxford City Council (Appendix 1) be approved.



Name and contact details of author:

Tim Sadler Interim Executive Director City Services
Tel: 01865 252101 Email tsadler@oxford.gov.uk

Background papers:

None not attached or previously published.

