

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting23rd February 2023

1. Title of Item/Report

Scrutiny Review of Tree Asset Management - Final Report of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the Scrutiny Review of Tree Asset Management - Final Report of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee.

Cabinet thanked members of the Tree Management Service for their hard work.

RESOLVED that:-

1. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) refreshes its tree and woodland management policy and procedures, and as part of this:

- a) Reaffirms its mandatory (minimum) service requirements and where work is prioritised (e.g. high-use public areas).
- b) Reflects within it the realistic cycle of essential maintenance of the Borough's tree stock (and that this be updated as and when required).
- c) Emphasises a key message throughout this review regarding the planting of the correct species of tree in the right places (helping to minimise future maintenance requirements and revenue costs).
- d) Ensures the updated policy and procedures are published on relevant Council platforms, with an appropriate communications plan to ensure the local population can read its content and understand what future service it can expect.
- e) Utilises both print (e.g. Stockton News) and electronic mediums to raise awareness of the current issues around tree management within the Borough, including responsibilities in relation to trees on private land.

2. Tree Preservation Order (TPO) planning procedures be reiterated to all SBC Ward Councillors and relayed to residents periodically via the

Council's multiple communication mechanisms (emphasising the enforcement action that can be taken if processes are not followed).

3. Regular engagement continues between the SBC Tree and Woodland Management Service and other relevant Council departments (in particular the SBC Environment, Leisure and Green Infrastructure Team) regarding environmental projects and tree planting maintenance.

4. A detailed business case be produced for consideration by SBC management regarding a potential reinforcement team within Grounds Maintenance to undertake smaller scale routine maintenance, thereby allowing the existing Tree and Woodland Management Service specialist staff to focus on more technical operations.

5. Corporate funding be sourced for an ash tree survey to be undertaken as soon as possible to establish the potential extent of the looming arrival of ash dieback within the Borough, along with a plan on how this will be managed (including anticipated resource requirements).

6. Consideration be given to strengthening administrative support to the SBC Tree and Woodland Management Service to enhance communications between the team and Ward Councillors / residents regarding tree management enquiries / complaints (particularly around the responses to issues raised and plans / timescales to address them).

3. Reasons for the Decision

This topic was included on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2022-2023. Although not explicitly crime and disorder related, this piece of work was allocated to the Crime and Disorder Select Committee in order to balance the distribution of scrutiny topics across the five themed Select Committees. The review is now complete, and the recommendations have been endorsed by the Crime and Disorder Select Committee for submission to Cabinet.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight Friday 3 March 2023

Proper Officer
27 February 2023