

TREE STRATEGY

Committee name	Residents' Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Stuart Hunt – Head of Green Spaces, Place Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix 1 – Tree Strategy
Ward	All

HEADLINES

The purpose of this report is to enable Members to comment on the draft of a new Tree Strategy, which will in due course go to the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services for formal democratic approval. The Cabinet Member has agreed that the Select Committee should have early sight of the proposed strategy before it is considered by him.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Residents' Service Select Committee provides any comments on the draft Tree Strategy prior to formal submission to the Cabinet Member.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This report is accompanied by:

Appendix 1 – Tree Strategy

Currently our tree stock is mainly managed on a reactive basis with best arboricultural practice in mind but no set guidelines as to our criteria for completing tree work. The Tree Strategy includes clear and unambiguous policy information and guidance on how officers will manage the Borough's trees to ensure that the Council meets its duty of care and legal and health and safety obligations. It also provides key information for residents and other stakeholders including contractors.

Inspection cycles

The Council aims to undertake walk-over inspections of trees in parks and open spaces every five years, noting works required in line with Green Flag management plans (for both Green Flag and non-Green Flag locations).

Highways trees will be inspected via a road hierarchy-based cycle.

Inspections of trees on housing estates are undertaken on a three-year cyclical basis; this inspection cycle has been in place for a number of years and is working well, with less resident enquiries, insurance claims and tree failure occurring within these areas.

With a set inspection cycle followed by work raised with our contractors in localised batches it will be easier for our contractors to stick to the priority levels set within their contract:

Category	Response time	Notes
Priority 1	7 days	
Priority 2	1 month	
Priority 3	2 months	
Emergency works	45 minutes	Office hours
Emergency works	90 minutes	Out of hours

Select Committee options

1. Any formal comments from the Select Committee on the proposed strategy can be agreed by the Committee (or delegated) and then incorporated into the Cabinet Member report when it goes up for decision in the usual way.
2. The Select Committee may also wish to suggest to officers any proposals to improve or enhance the strategy document itself, subject to Cabinet Member endorsement.

RESIDENT BENEFIT

The Tree Strategy has been written with the purpose of providing a clear guide of how we aim to manage our tree stock increasing the transparency of our service. It is also anticipated that a well-managed tree stock will result in a reduction in insurance claims and emergency tree work.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage. Implementation of an inspection cycle will likely unearth a high volume of required tree work in the short term but with proactive management of the tree stock saving money and officers time in the future.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

APPENDICES

Tree Strategy.