

WEST AREA COMMITTEE FINAL – 14th March 2012

Title of paper:	Urban Forestry Strategy	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Hugh White Director of Sport, Culture and Parks	Wards affected: ALL
Report author(s) and contact details:	<p>Eddie Curry Head of Parks and Open Spaces 0115 8764982 eddie.curry@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p> <p>John Pell Horticultural Service Manager john.pell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p> <p>Paul Fountain Tree Services Manager. paul.fountain@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p>	
Other colleagues who have provided input:	<p>Edmund Hopkins Tree Service Planning Services john.pell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p> <p>Steve Ross Financial Analyst 0115 8763738 steve.ross@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p> <p>Vincent Bryce Equality and Diversity Consultant 0115 8764954 vincent.bryce@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</p>	
Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:		
World Class Nottingham		
Work in Nottingham		x
Safer Nottingham		x
Neighbourhood Nottingham		x
Family Nottingham		
Healthy Nottingham		x
Leading Nottingham		
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>This draft Urban Forest Strategy has been prepared for consultation prior to a final document being produced later in 2012.</p> <p>The Strategy proposes a number of policies for consideration which have been prepared in response to the following key issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large tree species • maintenance of trees 		

- Risk Management
- Responsible Neighbours Guide
- Factors to be considered with development areas

Recommendation(s):

- 1** Area Committees are requested to consider the Draft Urban Forest Strategy for consultation and to comment as appropriate.

1. BACKGROUND

The Executive Board approved the adoption of the revised Breathing Spaces-Strategic Framework in January 2011. Included in the Framework is a timetable of future works which recognises the need to produce and Urban Forest Strategy in 2012.

The Urban Forest is a term that refers to all trees growing in an area regardless of land ownership.

This Strategy sets out a plan to enhance the Urban Forest within the boundaries administered by Nottingham City Council. It seeks to enhance the urban forest through influence, leadership and regulation if necessary.

Recognising that the trees growing in the City have a wider value, the Strategy considers opportunity to maximise the benefits of a wider network of trees and woodland corridors of local and regional importance. In this way the Urban Forest Strategy supports the City Council's "Ambitious for Wildlife" Biodiversity Statement, Breathing Spaces - Strategic Framework 2010-2020 whilst contributing to the wider social and climate change agendas.

1.1 KEY ISSUES

Large tree species planted in Victorian and Edwardian times are now out of scale with their localities. The lack of tree removal and replacement is concerning to many citizens. A tree survey recently commissioned will provide data to identify risks to current tree populations and identify suitable areas for new planting in the future.

At the moment over 50% of the Council's resources allocated to the maintenance of trees, is committed to ad-hoc one off tree works. Cyclical surveys provide an opportunity to move towards more planned maintenance programmes of the tree stock that will utilise resources more effectively.

In response to the risks posed by trees to people and property the Council has reviewed and revised its approach to the management of trees. The Urban Forest Strategy sets out a cyclical system of inspection and remediation to manage risk as far as is reasonably practical.

In response to over 2000 enquires made by citizens to the Council each year the "Responsible Neighbours Guide" clarifies the response that the Council will make to a range of enquires which are commonly made by citizens. The purpose is to embed an understanding of what is affordable and deliverable by the Council when responding to these concerns.

Trees sometimes become a factor when considering the development of areas. Increase in density of residential development, commercial developments and improvement to transport infrastructure all place pressure on existing trees and often provide opportunity for increased tree planting. The Urban Forest Strategy will seek to provide a balance to reduce the potential for conflicting policy objectives to ensure that trees continue to be considered in all aspects of the future development of the City.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

The report and associated appendices are presented to Committee as draft reports for consultation. It is hoped that the feedback received from the consideration of this report will add value and inform the final Urban Forest Strategy.

The strategy and appendices can be found online at <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13308>

Comments should be sent by 30th March 2012 to ufs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or:
UFS, Tree Services,
Woodthorpe Grange,
Woodthorpe Drive,
Nottingham.
NG5 4HA

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that a co-ordinated and consistent approach is needed in dealing with enquiries from citizens regarding tree related issues. The policies set out in the draft Urban Forest Strategy will help to ensure that the service is delivered equitably. Without the suggested policies the tree service will not be able to move to a more structured approach to service delivery.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report, as it is requesting consideration of and comment on the draft Urban Forest Strategy. A further report will be needed if issues involving financial implications are identified at a later stage.

Steve Ross Finance Analyst 6.2.2012

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)

Legal Implications - The production of the Urban Forest Strategy is authorised by s. 111 Local Government Act 1972 in conjunction with various statutes and the common law as it provides a framework for action by the Council both as landowner and the authority responsible for tree protection under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
John Pickstone Team Leader Legal Services 6,2, 2012

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAs)

The attached Equality Impact Assessment (**Appendix 2**) notes the relevance of this strategy to advancing equality of opportunity.

Vincent Bryce, Equality & Diversity Consultant 3,2,12

7. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

7.1 None

8. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

8.1 None

APPENDIX 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Name and brief description of proposal / policy / service being assessed Urban Forest Strategy Consultation Document

The document which has been prepared for extensive consultation sets out the draft strategic approach to manage the urban forest sustainably whilst maintaining and expanding the quality of existing tree cover city wide.

Information used to analyse the effects on equality Discussions with the Equality and Diversity Team.

	Could particularly benefit (X)	May adversely impact (X)	How different groups could be affected: Summary of impacts
People from different ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The consultation document aims to engage a wide range of people, groups and organisations in developing a comprehensive Urban Forest Strategy. It is not anticipated that this strategy will have a disproportionate or adverse affect on any groups of people, however if this becomes apparent during consultation follow up discussion will be organised with any groups identified so that appropriate adjustments can be made to the Strategy and can be included in any future actions plans prior to final approval and adoption.</p> <p>Steps to manage tree growth and avoid disruption of walkways and pavements may particularly benefit disabled people, older people, expecting mothers and parents with young children in pushchairs by minimising trip hazards and ensuring pavements are level and clear of obstructions.</p>
Men, women (including maternity/pregnancy impact), transgender people	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Disabled people or carers	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
People from different faith groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Lesbian, gay or bisexual people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Older or younger people	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (e.g. marriage/civil partnership, looked after children, cohesion/good relations, vulnerable children/adults)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

As a component of the Council's Breathing Spaces Strategy the Urban Forest Strategy will follow the same good practice already developed for consultation.

IF POSSIBLE NOTE THAT TREE WORKS WILL BE PRIORITISED WHERE THERE IS AN ADDITIONAL HAZARD RELATING TO AREAS FREQUENTLY USED BY OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE OR PARENTS WITH PUSHCHAIRS (OR IF THIS PRIORITY WILL BE BUILT INTO A PARTICULAR PLAN)

Outcome(s) of equality impact assessment:

No major change needed Adjust the policy/proposal Adverse impact but continue Stop and remove the policy/proposal

Arrangements for future monitoring of equality impact of this proposal / policy / service:

The Urban Forest Action Plan will be developed from the Urban Forest Strategy and will include Ward Action and Priorities Plans for the Urban Forest. The Council provides tree works as a responsive service, so obstructions potentially affecting older or disabled people or pushchair users can be prioritised as they occur.

Approved by (manager signature):

Eddie Curry Head of Parks and Open Spaces

Date sent to equality team for publishing:
3,2,2012

