



Environment Committee 11th September 2017

Title	Draft Barnet Tree Policy
Report of	Strategic Director Environment
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A: Draft Barnet Tree Policy
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Summary

The report sets out the development of a Draft Tree Policy for Barnet. This policy contributes to the delivery of the Environment Committee's Commissioning Plan 2015 to 2020. The draft policy has been developed by engaging subject matter expert services across the council and our partner organisations.

Following approval of the draft Tree Policy from Environment Committee, the policy will be finalised and published. Progress on the action plan will be reported back to Environment Committee as part of the Annual Report on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

Recommendations

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| 1. | That the Environment Committee notes the progress to date, approves the draft Tree Policy for Barnet and authorises the Strategic Director Environment to finalise the Tree Policy. |
| 2. | That the Environment Committee notes and approves the 5 year Tree Investment Programme and the making of bids for CIL and Mayor of London funding to finance the programme and refers the funding of the programme to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration as part of the Council's capital investment programme within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. |
| 3. | Subject to the approval of recommendation 1 and 2, that Environment Committee notes that the Strategic Director of Environment will finalise the Tree Policy which will then be designed and published online. The progression of the Tree Policy action plan will be reported back to Environment Committee as part of the Annual Report on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. |

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 A number of Local Authorities have approved Tree policies and strategies and it is seen as an appropriate time to implement Barnet's own Tree Policy, in particular to address the issues with air quality and with the increasing growth and development planned within the borough. In addition we have an ageing and declining tree stock, particularly amongst ornamental flowering trees resulting in the removal of 500 trees per annum on average.
- 1.2 The Tree Policy will support the Environment Committee's Commissioning Plan 2015 – 2020 which includes;
- Barnet is a green and leafy borough and this is one of the reasons people want to live here.
 - Ensuring that our parks and open spaces are among the best in London will help to attract more people to the borough.
 - Highways are maintained to a high standard and areas of high growth and strategic importance being progressively upgraded and improved.
 - Meet the highest standards of air quality possible and develop policies to support this
- 1.3 The aims of the Tree Policy are:
- To provide a service which supports our changing and growing borough whilst also maintaining and improving the borough's tree stock and natural environment.

- To contribute to biodiversity;
 - To be a leader in tree planting and maintenance in London.
 - To contribute to the health of residents in the borough by bringing about improvements to air quality; by sequestration of carbon dioxide and reduction in levels of nitrogen dioxide. By carrying out targeted tree planting to reduce air temperatures and the urban heat island effect.
- 1.4 The Tree Policy (Appendix A) has been produced to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the management of trees in the borough. This includes trees owned and directly managed by the council in different locations including parks, woodlands and street trees. The policy will be made publically available for partner organisations and the public.
- 1.5 The Tree policy includes the following sections;
- Introduction and overview covering; detail on the importance and benefits of trees, subsidence, biosecurity and funding
 - Specific Tree Policies, including;
 - Tree planting, management of the current tree stock and established maintenance programmes. Refusal of works, vehicle crossovers and tree removal.
 - Policies for trees in an number of different locations and environments; street trees, parks and open spaces, woodlands, cemeteries and closed churchyards, privately owned trees and trees on land which is subject to planning and development
 - Barnet's vision for trees in the borough and five year action plan

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Environment Committee is being asked to note the development of and approve the draft Tree Policy and five year action plan. Implementing Barnet's own Tree Policy will help to address the issues with air quality and with the increasing growth and development planned within the borough. In addition, we have an ageing and declining tree stock which will be supported by the proposed strategic investment tree planting programme.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Consideration was given to not producing a Tree Policy, however it was decided that to support the Environment Committee Commissioning Plan and other council strategies i.e. the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, a Barnet Tree Policy was required.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following approval from Environment Committee, the Strategic Director of Environment will finalise the Tree Policy, which would then be designed and published online. The progression of the action plan will be reported back to Environment Committee as part of the Annual Report on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Corporate Plan 2015-2020 is based on the core principles of fairness, responsibility and opportunity to make sure Barnet is a place:
- Of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life
 - Where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure
 - Where responsibility is shared, fairly
 - Where services are delivered efficiently to get value for money for the taxpayer

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 A funding bid will be made to support the action plan and strategic planting investment programme. Details of the funding bid can be found in the table below.
- 5.2.2 The total funding request is £450,000 per annum for the next five years. This is broken down as;
- £300,000 per annum for street trees
 - £100,000 per annum for trees in Parks & Open Spaces (P&OS)
 - £50,000 per annum for response to urban heat island, air pollution.
- 5.2.3 Currently we have estimated funding of £50,000 from the Greater London Authority (GLA) which will need match funding, this funding to go towards P&OS strategy targets.
- 5.2.4 There are potentially other funding sources including CIL, Mayor of London / GLA funding, commuted sums for highway schemes which are being investigated.

- 5.2.5 The capital requirements for the balance of the funding will be considered as part of the council's capital investment programme within the council's medium term financial strategy, overseen by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.2.6 The estimated annual capital financing costs of the proposed tree planting programme amount to £68,560 which can be contained within the annual revenue budget for tree planting.
- 5.2.7 An overview of the strategic planting investment programme can be found below, detailing the stretching target for number of trees to be planted within the borough.

Strategic Tree Planting Investment Programme

Activity	Year 1 (2018/19)		Year 2 (2019/20)		Year 3 (2020/21)		Year 4 (2021/22)		Year 5 (2022/23)		Totals (2018/19 to 2022/23)	
	No of trees	Estimated cost	No of trees	Estimated cost	No of trees	Estimated cost	No of trees	Estimated cost	No of trees	Estimated cost	No of trees	Estimated cost
Street trees: replacement of dead stock and stock removed due to disease, damage, health/safety concerns etc.	500	250,000	500	250,000	500	250,000	500	250,000	500	250,000	2,500	1,250,000
Street trees: replant existing empty tree pits	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	500	250,000
Parks & Open Spaces trees: replacement of dead stock and stock removed due to disease, damage, health/safety concerns etc.	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	500	250,000
Parks & Open Spaces trees: plant additional trees in response to Parks & Open Spaces Strategy recommendations	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	500	250,000
Urban heat island and atmospheric pollution response: plant additional trees on additional sites	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	100	50,000	500	250,000
	900	£450,000	900	£450,000	900	£450,000	900	£450,000	900	£450,000	4,500	£2,250,000
Existing Funding Streams		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		250,000
Capital Funding required		400,000		400,000		400,000		400,000		400,000		2,000,000

Note: The average cost of planting and maintaining a new tree is £500 per tree.

5.2.8 For the implementation of the policy, the authorisation for spend and reporting of spend will be undertaken in line with the council budget monitoring and reporting process. In addition, current contracts will be used and at this stage no additional procurements are required.

5.2.9 At this stage there are no implications on property, staffing or IT.

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. This report does not relate to the procurement of services contracts. Our current contracts have considered social value.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 There is no statutory duty for the council to produce a Tree Policy. However, Appendix 1 of the Policy sets out the various legislative powers the Council has in relation to trees, including protecting trees within conservation areas and subject to TPOs, planting and maintenance.

5.4.2 The Council's Constitution (Part 15, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A) gives the Environment Committee specific responsibilities for commissioning in relation to Streetscene including Trees, parks and open spaces, pavements and all classes of roads.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 All risks are managed using the risk management procedure, as set out by the Corporate Risk Management Framework. In addition, risk is considered within the draft Tree Policy.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups.
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.6.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies, and the delivery of services. The nine protected

characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or civil partnership

5.6.3 The Corporate Plan 2015-2020 sets the Strategic Equalities Objective, which is: that citizens will be treated equally, with understanding and respect, and will have equal access to quality services which provide value to the tax payer. Changes to policies and services are analysed in order to assess the potential equalities impacts and risks and identify any mitigating action possible before final decisions are made.

5.6.4 The policy has been reviewed against the protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act. Due regard has been considered within the policy. At this stage no specific impacts have been identified. As proposals develop we will continue to take due regard to equalities.

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

5.7.1 Engagement with key stakeholders within the council and partner organisations has been undertaken. There is no intention to undertake a formal consultation.

5.8 Insight

5.8.1 Research on legislation and guidance has been undertaken along with discussions with key stakeholders. This has been used to inform the policy and this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, Environment Committee, 12th May 2016.
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=695&MId=8337&Ver=4>