



Cabinet 2 December 2009

Report of the Policy Development Committee: Tree and Woodland Strategy (Dec 09/04)

1. The Committee considered a Tree and Woodland Strategy, which was intended to provide a clear direction for the Borough's trees and woodlands. The Strategy identified that there was a need for additional funding to ensure that the Borough's trees and woodlands were maintained in a safe and sustainable manner.
2. The Committee was advised that there was a division of responsibilities for management of the majority of trees in the public realm in the St Edmundsbury area, between the Borough Council, the County Council and Havebury Housing Partnership. This could cause confusion and frustration for the local community, and the Strategy therefore set out to provide clarity on how the Borough Council proposed to manage the trees and woodland it was responsible for, and how it aimed to work better with the other public bodies in the future.
3. The funding currently available under the Highways Agreement for the management of Bury St Edmunds' highways and trees located therein was only sufficient to cover the most pressing of essential statutory works. For this reason, options for future funding for highway trees were presented to the Committee, which was also advised that any commitment to topping up the funding would be subject to review when the Highways Agreement was renegotiated, or as part of local government review, whichever came soonest.
4. A wide ranging discussion on the Strategy took place, covering issues including routes for members of the public to advise officers of problems concerning trees, enlisting the help of partners in identifying such problems, and dealing with squirrels deer were also mentioned. The Committee also considered the options for future funding for highway trees, and the following recommendations are made to Cabinet.
5. It is **RECOMMENDED** that:-
 - (1) **the Tree and Woodland Strategy, as appended to Report A292, be adopted;**
 - (2) **the sum of £90,000 needed to deliver the improvement plan be committed as a revenue growth item for 2010/2011 onwards;**

- (3) option 2, including a revenue growth item of £17,500 for 2010/2011, as set out in Section 3 of Report A292, be agreed as the Council's approach to the replacement of street trees until the renewal of the Highways agreement with Suffolk County Council; and**
- (4) notwithstanding (3) above, negotiations with Suffolk County Council regarding the cost of replacing street trees be continued, and delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director for Environment and Economy, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Portfolio Holders for Culture and Sport and Transport and Planning, to resolve this issue, which may include consideration of a revenue growth item for 2010/2011 onwards.**

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