



SCRUTINY PANEL: To what extent does Charnwood Borough Council's Tree Policy empower officers to respond to quality of life issues for residents in respect of concerns relating to trees that are the responsibility of the Borough Council?

**TREE POLICY SCRUTINY PANEL
THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH 2015 AT 6 PM
IN THE BOARDROOM, SOUTHFIELDS, LOUGHBOROUGH**

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. ACTION NOTES AND SCOPE

To agree the action notes of the meeting of the Panel held on 17th February 2015 and the updated Scope Document, attached at page 3.

3. DRAFT SCRUTINY PANEL REPORT

To consider the draft report of the Panel, attached at page 15.

Membership of this Panel:

Cllrs Campsall (Chair), Grimley, Harper-Davies, Newton, Parton, Smidowicz, M. Smith, S. Smith and Sutherland.

TREE POLICY SCRUTINY PANEL - ACTION NOTES

MEETING 4: 17th February 2015

ATTENDED BY: Councillors Campsall (Chair), Harper-Davies, Newton, Parton, Smidowicz, M. Smith, S. Smith and Sutherland
(*Councillor Sutherland left at 7:20 pm*)

Officers: R. Bennett, D. Carter, C. Traill, N. Greenhalgh, A. Goodall, M. Hopkins and M. Hooper

APOLOGIES: Councillor Grimley

MATTERS CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING:

DOCUMENT OR MATTER	ACTIONS AGREED
Action Notes and Scope document	Noted. An updated Scope Document including actions from this meeting is attached as an Appendix.
<p>Evidence was received from the following witnesses:</p> <p>R. Bennett – Head of Planning and Regeneration and D. Carter – Landscape Officer</p> <p>N. Greenhalgh – Head of Waste, Engineering and Green Spaces and A. Goodall – Senior Green Spaces</p>	<p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>That the report and presentation be noted.</p>

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY R. BENNETT – HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION AND D. CARTER – LANDSCAPE OFFICER

In addition to the information detailed in the report filed with these notes, the following responses were provided to questions raised by the Panel:

- The Council was still faced with the legacy of ill-informed decisions taken 30-40 years ago, such as the planting of Ash Trees on residential properties. However, lessons had been learned and both a Landscape Officer and a Landscape Architect had been employed to work in unison for over 15 years now. Both were involved with planning applications and assisted the Green Spaces team, through its Planning Liaison Officer, in ensuring that suitable planting schemes were implemented.
- It was the role of the Landscape Officer to check that the correct species of trees were planted on major developments. The post was currently vacant

but the previous incumbent maintained a monitoring scheme that assessed all major sites and ensured that developers were fully aware of their commitments.

- Developers could not be required to fund replacement planting following the conclusion of a five year planting scheme. This was addressed through ten year management and biodiversity plans.
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) were usually prompted through reports made to the Council by the public. The key elements to applying a TPO were that the tree needed to be in good condition and of high visual amenity.
- In the event that a protected tree was cut down, a fine of up to £20,000 could be issued plus the cost of the tree. The Council would also ensure that a suitable replacement tree was sourced. However, gaining sufficient evidence to implement such sanctions could prove difficult and no prosecutions had occurred since the current Head of Planning and Regeneration had taken up post in 2011.
- There were examples whereby trees had been adopted by residents and then cut down following the conclusion of the five year protection period. However, the hope was that in most cases the trees would have grown enough in that period to encourage the owners to retain them.
- With regard to trees that pre-dated the development on which they stood, the Landscape Officer would have been consulted on the risk of building within such close proximity to the tree and a judgement sought on whether or not a TPO was required.
- The minimisation of maintenance was a key consideration when agreeing planting schemes and tree species.
- It was acknowledged that some developments may not require significant planting schemes and would be better served with grassed areas. However, the location and type of development dictated need ie landscaping could be necessary to soften the blend of the urban environment and the countryside.

The Head of Waste, Engineering and Green Spaces and the Green Spaces Officer added the following in response to questions raised by the Panel:

- The new Open Spaces Strategy, implemented in 2011, had ensured closer links between the Open Spaces team and Planning and Regeneration Services. Elements of the previous strategy had not been fit for purpose, such as the classification of criteria for adopting land. There were also examples whereby developers had negotiated to make lump sum payments rather than agree to ongoing maintenance of developments.
- With regard to land with mixed ownership, it was maintained by the developer or a third party. Once the requirement for ongoing maintenance expired it was possible for land to be adopted by the public if it was retained for public use.
- The British Standards in relation to arboricultural work had recently been revised. The changes had been reflected in the protection measures implemented through the planning process.
- Reserves were retained to ensure that funds were available to deal with

emergencies.

- Leicestershire County Council's Highways department had its own budget to remove fallen trees.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE HEAD OF WASTE, ENGINEERING AND GREEN SPACES AND THE GREEN SPACES OFFICER

In addition to the information contained within the report filed with these notes, a presentation was given which reiterated the following information provided at previous meetings:

- The Council's Tree Policy had been approved by Council in February 2013.
- The Policy detailed the Council's approach to the maintenance of its tree stock.
- It provided a consistent approach for officer recommendations when inspecting and dealing with tree related enquiries.
- It was consistent with the policies of neighbouring authorities.
- It prioritised essential health and safety works above other nuisance issues, in accordance with budget pressures.
- Any proposed changes to the Policy would require Cabinet approval.
- There was a recognised need to expand current policy to include a clear priority system and to provide a full framework for the future management of trees within the Borough.
- The Council, as a landowner, had a duty of care to ensure that all trees on its land were in acceptable condition.
- Tree assessments were undertaken before appropriate maintenance work was specified and ordered.
- Assessment factors were: tree safety implications, risk of potential claims relating to actionable nuisance, proposed remedial work, the long term health of trees and the most efficient and cost effective courses of action.
- Different tree enquiries were categorised into priority work areas to ensure that current resources were utilised in the most effective and efficient ways.
- The arboricultural sector standard was adhered to when indicative response times were incorporated.
- Officers were confident that the tree survey would be completed within the next twelve months and approximately £80,000 would ensure that all necessary additions could be met.
- There were concerns that the number of quality of life issues that could be raised with the Council was an unknown quantity.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by the Panel:

- Any professional tree surgeon employed by residents would have to meet the British Standard. However, it would be preferable for the Council to have its own budget to carry out such works.
- Due to the nature of tree maintenance works they were heavily governed by health and safety rules, making volunteerism difficult. However, opportunities already existed for the clearing of leaves and branches and maintenance of the areas around trees.

FURTHER ISSUES RAISED/DISCUSSED AT THIS MEETING:

In addition to the discussions referred to above, Members expressed the following views:

- There was a consensus that whilst the table detailing the tree management budgets of local authorities was interesting, it would not assist the Panel in forming recommendations as there were so many varying factors ie size and population of the district and their total tree stock.
- Any recommendations made by the Panel would need to be accompanied by the caveat of '...where resources allow'.

DRAFT SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel considered some draft recommendations with a view to them being included in its draft report, to be considered at its meeting to be held on 5th March 2015. Following discussion at the meeting, the Panel agreed the following recommendations for inclusion in its draft report:

Recommendation 1

That the Cabinet note the overall conclusion of the Panel that the Council should aspire to fund a comprehensive maintenance programme for its trees.

Reason

The Panel concluded that such an approach would represent a responsible approach by the Council to address the backlog of maintenance issues identified by the Panel while also addressing the quality of life issues it was set up to investigate. The Panel concluded that there was likely to be an overlap between the work to trees carried out through such a programme and the requests it currently received from the public for work to problem trees. The Panel acknowledged the increased budget that this would require at a time when future Council funding streams were uncertain and therefore proposed the following more detailed recommendations.

Recommendation 2

That the Council undertake a pilot project during an appropriate period in the 2015/16 financial year during which a fixed budget would be available to enable it to offer to undertake a greater range of work to its trees and in particular where the Council's trees are having a negative impact on the wellbeing of residents. The pilot project should take place across the Borough and test different possible approaches, for example increased cyclical pruning as well as responding to a greater number of requests from the public for work to nuisance trees. Data held by the Council on past requests for work to trees and the

results of the ongoing tree survey should be used to inform the type of approaches that are tested.

Reason

To assess the demand for work to Council trees and the costs and practical implications of providing different levels of work.

Recommendation 3

That the results of the pilot work and the ongoing tree survey be used to inform a review of the Council's Tree Policy to include consideration of a wider range of types of tree work that would be offered including the aspiration of responding positively to requests to undertake work to trees that are affecting people's wellbeing and the feasibility of meeting that aspiration. The review should result in a report being submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet setting out a full range of costed options for the Council's approach to its responsibility for the trees on its land. In undertaking this review the Cabinet's attention is also drawn to the prioritisation table provided by officers to the Panel at its meeting on 17th February 2015, which the Panel supported.

Reason

To provide a means of prioritising work to trees and identifying the appropriate level of resources required that meets the aspirations of the public particularly in relation to work to trees that are affecting people's wellbeing identified by the Panel.

Recommendation 4

That the Cabinet report referred to in the recommendation above include an assessment of the potential impact on the Council of upcoming issues and how these might affect the resources required to manage the Council's trees in the future. This should include the spread of Ash Dieback to the Borough and the impact of the ageing of the Borough's tree population (based on the results of the ongoing tree survey).

Reason

To address matters that may affect the future management of the Council's tree stock and the resources required.

Recommendation 5

That, during the time the work referred to in the recommendations above is taking place, the Council makes full use of the provision in the current Tree Policy to respond positively to requests to prune trees which are obstructing light to houses and gardens in exceptional circumstances to deal sympathetically with such requests where trees are negatively affecting people's wellbeing.

Reason

To provide a means of responding to situations where the Council's trees are having a serious negative impact on people while a review of the Tree Policy is underway.

Recommendation 6

That the Council publish on its website, make available in printed form on request, and keep regularly updated, guidance for the public on the following matters:

- The responsibilities of landowners for trees on their land
- The responsibilities of the Borough Council
- The purpose of Tree Preservation Orders and encouragement for the public to suggest trees which deserve protection through an Order
- The responsibilities of the County Council
- The rights and options available to the public for seeking redress if these responsibilities are not fulfilled
- Good practice in respect of planting and caring for trees.

Reason

To provide information to the public and encourage good practice.

Recommendation 7

That the Council continue to promote volunteering opportunities related to the management of open spaces, including that measured by the performance indicator in the open spaces contract.

Reason

To promote the benefits to volunteers and the Council that such opportunities provide while acknowledging that much of the work undertaken to the Council's trees is specialist in nature.

ACTIONS

That the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Officer, in liaison with the Chair, produce a draft report of the Panel, to include the draft recommendations detailed above, to be considered at its meeting to be held on 5th March 2015.

<p>Timetable for Review</p>	<p>The final meeting of the Panel will be held at 6pm on Thursday, 5th March 2015 in the Boardroom, Council Offices, Southfields, Loughborough.</p> <p>The Panel will consider and agree the its final report for submission to the Scrutiny Management Board.</p> <p>An updated Scope document reflecting the decisions taken at this meeting is attached as an Appendix.</p>
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SCRUTINY REVIEW: SCOPE

<p>REVIEW TITLE: To what extent does Charnwood Borough Council's Tree Policy empower officers to respond to quality of life issues for residents in respect of concerns relating to trees that are the responsibility of the Borough Council?</p>
<p>SCOPE OF ITEM / TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>The Panel will review whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the current policy and its application sufficiently considers quality of life issues for local residents the current budget for tree management, including spending both reactively and proactively, is adequate and used in the most effective way the current policy and/or budget could be amended to address the concerns of local residents.
<p>REASON FOR SCRUTINY</p> <p>To review the Council's current Tree Policy, to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to allow officers to address the concerns of residents in respect of issues relating to their quality of life and well-being, for example problems with light and connection to television signals and wireless connection to the internet.</p>
<p>MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP</p> <p>Councillor Campsall (Chair)</p> <p>Councillors Grimley, Harper-Davies, Newton, Parton, Smidowicz, M. Smith, S. Smith and Sutherland</p>
<p>WHAT WILL BE INCLUDED</p> <p>The Panel will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the impact trees can have on the quality of life of residents, for example with regard to nuisance/light issues and how this can be assessed and balanced against the benefits trees provide details of the ongoing tree survey and whether issues relating to the quality of life of residents can be included in this work the current approach to allocating the budget for work to trees and the balance of the

<p>Council's activity between proactive maintenance and reactive work in response to issues raised by residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the current policy works and whether it is flexible enough to support residents • how the Council can be a 'good' / 'better' neighbour in addressing complaints regarding trees • the role of the Council as landlord in managing trees on housing land • the consequences of trees inappropriately planted on new developments, causing problems for homes and residents as they grow • the cost implications of any amendments to the Council's policy.
WHAT WILL BE EXCLUDED
<p>Trees which are the responsibility of other agencies, for example Leicestershire County Council, or are privately owned.</p>
KEY TASKS * * including consideration of efficiency savings
<p>The evidence to be considered by the Panel will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of the types of requests for service and complaints that are currently received • breakdown of the expenditure of the current budgets • examples of the approaches adopted by other councils, including Leicestershire County Council • the draft Risk Management Protocol that is being prepared by officers • a background paper detailing tree ownership in the Borough and associated issues, as well as information on Tree Preservation Orders • seeking the views of the public.
STAKEHOLDERS, OUTSIDE AGENCIES, OTHER ORGANISATIONS *
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charnwood Borough Council Officers: C. Traill – Strategic Director Neighbourhoods and Community Well-being N. Greenhalgh – Head of Cleansing and open Spaces C. Ansell – Head of Landlord Services • Relevant officers from Quadron Services
EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS
<p>Is an impact needs assessment required? – to be considered at the Panel's penultimate meeting</p>
LINKS/OVERLAPS TO OTHER REVIEWS
<p>The Panel's work could lead to future scrutiny work with other agencies.</p>
RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS
REPORT REQUIREMENTS (Officer information)

REVIEW COMMENCEMENT DATE	COMPLETION DATE FOR DRAFT REPORT
28th October 2014	5th March 2015

* Key tasks and stakeholders may be subject to change as the review progresses.

PROGRESS OF PANEL WORK

MEETING DATE	PROGRESS TO DATE
28th October 2014	<p>Considered the Panel's scope and terms of reference, Tree Policy reports previously considered by the Policy Scrutiny Group and Leicestershire County Council's Tree Management Strategy. Received verbal reports from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing and the Senior Green Spaces Officer.</p> <p>Agreed upon information to be considered at future meetings as detailed below (this is subject to change as the Review progresses).</p>
24th November 2014	<p>Considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and Community Wellbeing, the Head Of Cleansing and Open Spaces, the Senior Green Spaces Officer and a representative from Quadron attended to discuss unmet and suppressed demand for tree services and how a change in policy could affect demand to include more detail on current levels of complaints and contacts from the public and use of budgets. • Briefing note on issues relating to tree ownership. • Briefing note on Tree Preservation Orders
19th January 2015	<p>Considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from residents affected by problematic trees. • A presentation of photographs of areas affected by inappropriate and unmaintained trees submitted by members of the Panel.
17th February 2015	<p>Considered the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Landscape Officer attended to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Policy issues, including the difference between policy and guidance and the approach to when planting schemes are adopted by the Council and when a

	<p>commuted sum is required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is required of developers, including in respect of planting schemes and their maintenance • the roles of the various teams in the service area and between the Planning service and other services • the requirements of five year maintenance of planting schemes – can this be extended through the use of TPOs or other means • the potential for the Council to expand its tree maintenance service through the adoption of more sites • the potential for S106 monies to be utilised for tree maintenance of schemes required by condition • feedback to Plans Committee members of successful developer applications to amend planning conditions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Head of Waste, Engineering and Green Space and the Senior Green Spaces Officer attended to provide details of what neighbouring and comparable authorities spent on tree work and the extent of their stock of trees. • Draft recommendations for inclusion in the Panel's final report.
5th March 2015	To agree the Panel's final report for submission to the Scrutiny Management Board.

REPORT SUBMITTED TO SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD	
18th March 2015.	

DRAFT**REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY PANEL: To what extent does Charnwood Borough Council's Tree Policy empower officers to respond to quality of life issues for residents in respect of concerns relating to trees that are the responsibility of the Borough Council?****Foreword by Councillor Campsall, Chair of the Scrutiny Panel**

Trees can have a massive impact on the quality of life of residents, both positively and negatively. For example, the barriers that they can provide around residential properties can be both aesthetically pleasing and provide privacy. However, such benefits have to be balanced against issues that can have a negative effect on residents' quality of life, such as a lack of direct sunlight to a property or the capacity to maintain trees. To ensure that such matters are adequately addressed it is essential that the Council's knowledge base is sound and that its Tree Policy is fit for purpose.

In forming its recommendations, the Panel obtained evidence from all appropriate services within the Council, local residents, Ward Members and comparable local authorities.

The conclusions reached by the Panel will be submitted to the Council's Cabinet for its consideration, support and implementation.

The Panel wishes to acknowledge and thank all those who acted as witnesses or provided written evidence to assist the Panel with its deliberations.

1. Background

At its meeting on 8th October 2014, Scrutiny Management Board resolved that a Scrutiny Panel be formed with a focus upon the extent to which the Council's Tree Policy empowered its officers to respond to quality of life issues for residents in respect of concerns relating to trees. It was agreed that the Panel would be chaired by Councillor Campsall. The Panel held an informal meeting on 28th October 2014, with the first formal meeting being held on 24th November 2014. The Panel concluded its business at its fifth and final meeting on 5th March 2015.

2. Panel Membership

The original Panel membership consisted of Councillors Campsall (Chair), Grimley, Harper-Davies, Newton, Parton, Smidowicz, M. Smith, S. Smith and Sutherland.

3. Terms of Reference and Reason for Scrutiny

The Panel's Terms of Reference, agreed by the Scrutiny Management Board, were as follows:

'The Panel will review whether:

- the current policy and its application sufficiently considers quality of life issues for local residents
- the current budget for tree management, including spending both reactively and proactively, is adequate and used in the most effective way
- the current policy and/or budget could be amended to address the concerns of local residents.'

The reason for scrutiny was 'To review the Council's current Tree Policy, to ensure there is sufficient flexibility to allow officers to address the concerns of residents in respect of issues relating to their quality of life and well-being, for example problems with light and connection to television signals and wireless connection to the internet.'

The Scope Document for the scrutiny review undertaken by the Panel is attached at Appendix 1. This sets out the above Terms of Reference and Reason for Scrutiny. The document outlines the position at the conclusion of the Panel's work and, therefore, includes additional stakeholders and resources identified by the Panel as its work progressed, notes added to assist the Panel and a summary of the progress made by the Panel, which was reported to meetings of the Policy Scrutiny Group.

4. Evidence, Stakeholders and Witnesses

The Panel received information from the following stakeholders and witnesses:

- Charnwood Borough Council:
C. Traill – Strategic Director Neighbourhoods and Community Well-being
N. Greenhalgh – Head of Waste, Engineering and Green Spaces
A. Goodall – Senior Green Spaces Officer
N. Clarke – Quadron
P. Oliver – Principal Officer – Tenancy and income Management
R. Bennett – Head of Planning and Regeneration
D. Carter – Landscape Officer
- Local residents:
Mr D. Thompson
Mr S. Hutchinson
Mrs F. Hutchinson
- Panel members submitted photographs of problematic trees in their wards.

Copies of the following were also made available to the Panel:

- Charnwood Borough Council's Tree Protocol and Tree Policy
- Leicestershire County Council's Tree Management Strategy
- Aboricultural Practise Notes 11 Trees in Focus – Practical Care and Management - Trees and Hedges in Dispute
- Communities & Local Government – Trees in Towns II – A New Survey of Urban Trees in England and their Condition and Management
- House of Commons Library - Dealing with Nuisance Trees and Hedges

Technical Support was provided to the Panel by Michael Hopkins, Democratic Services Manager.

The Panel wishes to thank all stakeholders, witnesses and officers for the assistance provided with its work.

5. Summaries of Panel Meetings

Summaries of the work undertaken at each meeting of the Panel are set out in the "Progress of Panel Work" section of the Scope Document at Appendix 1.

Full details of the information provided by witnesses and the issues considered by the Panel are detailed in the action notes of the Panel's meetings listed in Background Papers section of this report, also attached at Appendix 2.

6. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The Improvement & Organisational Development Manager stated that the need for an Equality Impact Assessment would be considered following the final submission of the report.

7. Key Findings

The Panel obtained evidence from a range of sources, both internal and external as described in section 4, above, and the Panel's Scope Document, attached as Appendix 1.

Based on this evidence the Panel has made a number of findings in relation to its terms of reference.

To be considered by the Panel on 5th March 2015.

9 Panel Recommendations and Reasons

Having reached the above key findings, the Panel makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

That the Cabinet note the overall conclusion of the Panel that the Council should aspire to fund a comprehensive maintenance programme for its trees.

Reason

The Panel concluded that such an approach would represent a responsible approach by the Council to address the backlog of maintenance issues identified by the Panel while also addressing the quality of life issues it was set up to investigate. The Panel concluded that there was likely to be an overlap between the work to trees carried out through such a programme and the requests it currently received from the public for work to problem trees. The Panel acknowledged the increased budget that this would require at a time when future Council funding streams were uncertain and therefore proposed the following more detailed recommendations.

Recommendation 2

That the Council undertake a pilot project during an appropriate period in the 2015/16 financial year during which a fixed budget would be available to enable it to offer to undertake a greater range of work to its trees and in particular where the Council's trees are having a negative impact on the wellbeing of residents. The pilot project should take place across the Borough and test different possible

approaches, for example increased cyclical pruning as well as responding to a greater number of requests from the public for work to nuisance trees. Data held by the Council on past requests for work to trees and the results of the ongoing tree survey should be used to inform the type of approaches that are tested.

Reason

To assess the demand for work to Council trees and the costs and practical implications of providing different levels of work.

Recommendation 3

That the results of the pilot work and the ongoing tree survey be used to inform a review of the Council's Tree Policy to include consideration of a wider range of types of tree work that would be offered including the aspiration of responding positively to requests to undertake work to trees that are affecting people's wellbeing and the feasibility of meeting that aspiration. The review should result in a report being submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet setting out a full range of costed options for the Council's approach to its responsibility for the trees on its land. In undertaking this review the Cabinet's attention is also drawn to the prioritisation table provided by officers to the Panel at its meeting on 17th February 2015, which the Panel supported.

Reason

To provide a means of prioritising work to trees and identifying the appropriate level of resources required that meets the aspirations of the public particularly in relation to work to trees that are affecting people's wellbeing identified by the Panel.

Recommendation 4

That the Cabinet report referred to in the recommendation above include an assessment of the potential impact on the Council of upcoming issues and how these might affect the resources required to manage the Council's trees in the future. This should include the spread of Ash Dieback to the Borough and the impact of the ageing of the Borough's tree population (based on the results of the ongoing tree survey).

Reason

To address matters that may affect the future management of the Council's tree stock and the resources required.

Recommendation 5

That, during the time the work referred to in the recommendations above is taking place, the Council makes full use of the provision in the current Tree Policy to respond positively to requests to prune trees which are obstructing light to houses and gardens in exceptional circumstances to deal sympathetically with such requests where trees are negatively affecting people's wellbeing.

Reason

To provide a means of responding to situations where the Council's trees are having a serious negative impact on people while a review of the Tree Policy is underway.

Recommendation 6

That the Council publish on its website, make available in printed form on request, and keep regularly updated, guidance for the public on the following matters:

- The responsibilities of landowners for trees on their land
- The responsibilities of the Borough Council
- The purpose of Tree Preservation Orders and encouragement for the public to suggest trees which deserve protection through an Order
- The responsibilities of the County Council
- The rights and options available to the public for seeking redress if these responsibilities are not fulfilled
- Good practice in respect of planting and caring for trees.

Reason

To provide information to the public and encourage good practice.

Recommendation 7

That the Council continue to promote volunteering opportunities related to the management of open spaces, including that measured by the performance indicator in the open spaces contract.

Reason

To promote the benefits to volunteers and the Council that such opportunities provide while acknowledging that much of the work undertaken to the Council's trees is specialist in nature.

Draft Conclusions Not Requiring Further Action

Conclusion Not Requiring Further Action 1

That the Panel welcomes the completion of the tree survey before the end of March 2015.

Reason

The information provided by the survey would provide a sound evidence base for decisions about managing the Council's trees.

Conclusion Not Requiring Further Action 2

That the Panel welcomes the improvements introduced by the Council in relation to tree planting on new developments relating to the species of trees that are recommended for planting schemes and the requirement for schemes to be of a standard such that they can be adopted by the Council.

Reason

The improvements address problems that had existed in the past and minimise the future negative impact and maintenance costs of planting schemes.

10. Background Papers

Agendas and notes of Panel meetings are available on the Council's website at: http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/committees/tree_policy_scrutiny_panel

Meeting 1 – 28th October 2014

Meeting 2 – 24th November 2014

Meeting 3 – 19th January 2015

Meeting 4 – 17th February 2015

Meeting 5 – 5th March 2015

Note: Appendices have not been attached to this draft report.