



Oxfordshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment

Tree Care Framework Contract

12/5/2026

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Environment & Highways, Countryside & Tree Service – Implications across all directorates
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Award of the Tree Care Framework Contract
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing function, although new contract
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>The Tree Care Framework Contract enables the continued delivery of planned and responsive tree care across the county’s highway network and wider estate. The framework is required to support the management of a very large tree stock, including an estimated 400,000 trees within the Highway Maintainable at Public Expense (HMPE) and additional trees on council-owned land, through a proactive inspection and maintenance regime. Without a replacement Framework, the council would need to tender individual works separately, which would increase costs, delay response times, reduce service resilience, place additional pressure on officer capacity, and create greater risk of non-compliance with procurement and duty-of-care obligations.</p> <p>The assessment has considered all aspects of this process and no negative impacts to people, communities or individuals have been highlighted. The award of the contract should support some of the most vulnerable areas assessed by potentially offering employment opportunities and / or spending council funds within communities that they serve both directly and indirectly via social value provision.</p>
Completed By	Andy Lederer

Authorised By	Teresa Kirkham 13 May 2026
Date of Assessment	12/5/2026

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>Tender a new Tree Care Framework Contract that takes advantage of and leverages the new Procurement Regulations, under Procurement Act 2023, that took effect from 24 February 2025.</p> <p>Tree Care in Oxfordshire is a perennial requirement. It comprises a range of annual planned works according to a maintenance schedule and a range of unplanned works required on an ad-hoc basis in response to service requests and natural events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All services are required to be carried out in accordance (where applicable) with the most recent iteration of British Standard 3998 (and/or equivalent European standard). OCC considers this to be a minimum standard and requires all contractors to set standards more than this, to deliver high quality tree care operations. <p>The framework supports the ability for OCC to complete any tree related operations across the entire OCC estate. This enables OCC to respond more effectively and efficiently to any tree related enquiry, thus improving customer service, simplifying processes and increasing officer output.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>OCC can only achieve the following requirements via the procurement process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adhere to our Duty of Care; • adhere to responsibilities in the following legislation and regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highway Act ○ Health & Safety at Work Act ○ Management of Health & Safety Regulations ○ Occupier's Liability Act ○ Local Government Act ○ Town and Country Planning Act ○ Wildlife and Countryside Act ○ Procurement Act 2023 ○ Public Services Act 2012 • value for money;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high quality works; • professional standards; • ensure adequate resource is available, when required; • ability to adapt and manage impacts of extreme weather events.
<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our equality commitments.</p>	<p>Quarterly meetings were arranged with the previous contractors to capture positives and negatives of the previous framework and identify where improvements could be made from both an OCC and contractor perspective. These meetings were undertaken face to face with the owner and senior partners of each business all present at the meetings.</p> <p>Topics covered as part of the market engagement exercise with current and potential contractors were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Framework Benefits 2. Tree Care Specifications 3. Pricing 4. Lots 5. Potential Improvements / Innovation <p>More specific details available.</p>

<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>All options considered and discounted.</p> <p>Option 1 - Doing nothing was considered but this would leave the council unable to fulfil statutory commitments / requirements in line with legislation / regulation.</p> <p>Option 2 - Undertake procurement for a single term contractor for all tree care related operations. We liaised Cherwell DC regarding their current contract which is a single provider for tree work and grounds maintenance. The tree aspect of the contract is not working, and they do not have the capacity to deliver the necessary requirements for tree care operations. A single contractor leaves the council limited to achieve resilience and significantly increases risk if contract is defaulted or unfulfilled.</p> <p>Option 3 – Create an in-house tree care team. This would require significant financial investment, well in excess of the budget allocated for tree care. Additional and specific site would be required in addition to insurances, equipment and staff that would need to be secured.</p>
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Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review

Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review

Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistency of tree care and aligned with urban communities		Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opportunities for employment through Social Value commitment		Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Areas of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opportunities for employment through Social Value commitment.		Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Refugees, Asylum seekers and Undocumented migrants (i.e.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opportunities for employment through Social Value commitment		Tree Service Manager	Annual review

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
vulnerable migrants							
Socio-Economic Duty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opportunities for employment through Social Value commitment		Tree Service Manager	Annual review

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opportunities for employment through Social Value commitment		Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Other Council Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offers consistency of tree care for all service areas		Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	We don't foresee any impacts on any communities or groups, regardless of which contractor is used because they all have the same requirements and standards to fulfil.	We will continue to monitor any impacts relating to works, separately at the appropriate time, and will ensure appropriate mitigations to reduce or eliminate any differential impact.	Tree Service Manager	Annual review
Social Value ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrated significant benefits from previous contract. (>£900k value across 6 contractors)		Tree Service Manager	Annual review

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	12 months after contract award (estimated 01/07/2027)
Person Responsible for Review	Andy Lederer, Tree Service Manager
Authorised By	Teresa Kirkham, Head of Countryside & Waste