

Division(s): All

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT DECISIONS – 25 JULY 2013**

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

**Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Commercial)**

#### **Introduction**

1. The report introduces the changes proposed to the revised tree policy and is attached to the report at Annex 1.

#### **Background**

2. The existing Tree Management Policy was approved by Cabinet in 2005. The document has been re-written to reflect changes within best practice, British Standards and Statutory legislation; and to reflect the extended scope of the council's property related assets beyond the original highways and transport remit.
3. The revised policy provides a more strategic overview of the Council's tree stock, and goes into more depth on specific themes to give greater clarity of the County Council's approach to tree management.
4. The following is a summary of topics which are covered within the document:
  - (a) Responsibilities of the Council
  - (b) Public Safety
  - (c) Problem trees on neighbouring properties
  - (d) Public amenities provided by trees
  - (e) Record keeping
  - (f) Tree protection
  - (g) Tree Management Strategy
  - (h) Construction, Maintenance and other works in the vicinity of growing trees
  - (i) Nature conservation and environmental issues
  - (j) Tree habitat and ecology
  - (k) Planting and re-planting
  - (l) Recycling
  - (m) Subsidence

5. The main changes introduced by the revised policy document are as follows:
  - The addition of policies relating to Council owned/maintained properties.
  - An explanation of how construction works adjacent to trees should be undertaken.
  - An explanation of how emergency tree works are covered.
  - The addition of the Council's requirements for approved contractors operating with the Specialist Arboricultural Framework.
  - The clarification that tree works will not be undertaken to alleviate problems relating to sap and photovoltaic cells.
  - Tree planting within the county.
  - The addition of a section that states how the Council will deal with threats posed by the rising number of pest and diseases that affects trees in the County.
  - Removal of the Timescale section for works (to give budget flexibility)
  - Removal of a specified method for Tree Risk Assessment
6. The policy re-write brings the document up to date and reflects the latest legislation and best practice. There has been no consultation associated with this work as the main principles remain the same.

### **Financial and Staff Implications**

7. There are no immediate budgetary implications associated with the introduction of this policy.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

8. **The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the revised tree policy attached as Annex 1 to this report.**

MARK KEMP

Deputy Director Environment & Economy - Commercial

Background papers:

Contact Officer: Tim Shickle, County Arboriculturist  
Tel: 01865 812651

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