

Washington Tree Management

Following the presentation of information detailing what was required to make a Woodland Improvement Grant application to the Forestry Commission at the July Place Board, it was determined by the Board that further intelligence was required before the methodology for progressing a Tree Strategy for Washington is agreed. Given the vast amount of trees and plantations in Washington, the Place Board requested that Ward colleagues identify 3 or 4 key areas in their Ward that would be deemed a priority for 'management'. This can be based on resident's complaints, health and safety issues, local knowledge, customer service network reports.

Information has been received from Councillors and a meeting with relevant Environmental Services Officers took place in August to bring together Cllr proposals with reports of works identified and scheduled in the mitigation of danger already submitted, outstanding inspections, and any other plantation priorities Environmental Services have been asked to deal with. The discussion also considered the agreed 'Plantations Management' work programme for the remainder of the Clean and Green Project. Some Councillors have also submitted their 'hotspot' areas for 'Tree Management' for consideration, as requested by the Board.

The Area Committee is requested to consider the following:

- From the list submitted by Councillors, Environmental Services Officers will identify those areas that fit the remit of SCC 'Plantation Management'
- It is proposed that a pilot approach be adopted addressing those areas - subject to the following:
 - Environmental Services Officers will submit a specification for what can be carried out throughout this pilot
 - All proposals to recognise requirements of SCC Carbon Neutrality approach
 - Capacity of both Arbor teams/Environmental Services to be considered – additional resources may need to be procured (in line with SCC Policy)
 - Where possible some of the areas identified may be able to be dealt with via normal grounds maintenance, tree works and response to health & safety (dead/dangerous single trees)
 - SCC dead/dying/dangerous list already has 243 outstanding initial inspections city wide (team capacity/limited resources) – only urgent public safety issues will individual trees be dealt with as an emergency
 - Clean & Greens current Plantation Programme
 - On-going discussions with the Woodland Trust
 - Members are also asked to note the requirement to consult with residents and any stakeholders, relevant to each 'pilot' area or site – before any work can be commissioned/carried out. Environmental Services will not be responsible for that consultation and anticipate Members will need to lead that consultation and only agree sites that have been subject to the required processes.
 - Place Board also asked for follow up with Environmental Services Officers to determine what, if anything is happening from a strategic point of view in terms of tree management across the City and how Washington could fit into that approach). To take this forward and Washington Place Task Group will be established.

Officer Recommendation: Approve £30,000 Neighbourhood Fund to Environmental Services to progress a Tree/Plantation Pilot in Washington, as detailed above