

**TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**DELEGATED EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REPORT**

**Report to:** Executive Member for Environmental Services  
**Date:** 8 May 2023  
**Report for:** Decision  
**Report of:** Corporate Director, Place

**Report Title**

**Tree Management Policy**

**Summary**

**To approve the publication of the updated Tree Management Policy for consultation that will be used to manage and maintain Trafford’s tree stock.**

**Recommendation(s)**

**The Executive Member is recommended to:**  
  
**Approve the publication for consultation of the updated policy for the management and maintenance of trees in Trafford.**

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Sharon Walls  
Extension: 4592

Background Papers:

*Implications:*

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	This report supports the Corporate Priorities: By effectively managing tree stock in our urban and rural environments this contributes to reducing health inequalities and also supporting people out of poverty by providing free access to nature that can support and exercise and improved mental health opportunities. The management and maintenance of tree stock directly supports the Climate Emergency
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Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	Management of trees fits with the GM 5-year Environmental Plan
Financial	Tree management will be undertaken within existing resources. Failure to comply with legal obligations can result in payment of damages.
Legal Implications:	The Council has various legal obligations relating to maintenance of its trees such as Occupier's Liability, Nuisance and Negligence. If it breaches these obligations it could be liable for payment of damages relating to injury to persons and property.
Equality/Diversity Implications	No implications
Sustainability Implications	Effective management of trees can have an impact on sustainability of across the Borough. There are no adverse effects on biodiversity or climate as a result of this report but seeks to enhance where possible
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	None at present as a result of this policy however, as a result of increased statutory demand to inspect trees on other council land there is a review of staffing resource to be undertaken in 2023/24
Risk Management Implications	By not having an approved policy relating to management and maintenance of trees the authority could be at risk of increased demand to manage trees differently.
Health & Wellbeing Implications	Trees can have positive benefits to peoples' health and wellbeing
Health and Safety Implications	By not managing trees effectively there could be Health and Safety implications resulting from poor management and maintenance of the tree stock in Trafford.
Carbon Reduction	Well maintained trees will directly contribute to carbon reduction by providing an efficient stock of trees supporting reductions in CO2 emissions and the effects of climate change.

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has an extensive tree stock across the Borough that requires a form of continuous management and maintenance. There are trees present on council land including 18,000 highway trees, with 40Ha of woodland with a variety of species and trees in parks, open spaces and schools and in residential areas.
- 1.2 Trafford's Tree Policy has been in place for a number of years and required updating to ensure it meets with current tree management and maintenance principles and best practice. The Council has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act to have in place an effective system for managing trees that ensures trees do not present a risk to the public mainly from falling in their entirety or also from falling branches.
- 1.3 A range of relevant guidance has been produced by various organisations, including the National Tree Safety Group, the Arboricultural Association and the Forestry Commission. Their guidance provides advice to help duty holders such as Trafford to

comply with the Occupiers Liability Acts and other legislation relevant to trees. However, it should be noted that the guidance represents 'best practice' guidance for managing trees and each Authority is expected to have their own effective system for managing trees relevant to their land ownership and tree stock profile.

- 1.4 The updated Tree Management Policy 2023 covers how the Council will manage the tree stock in addition to ensuring that it is safe. The document also identifies how the council will respond to tree planting, requests for tree pruning, tree removal and other impacts that trees can have on the public, land or highway and endorses best practice procedures that have already been implemented as required during the life of the previous agreed policy.
- 1.5 Consultation on an updated Tree Management Principles document had been undertaken in June 2020. Due to the timing of this previous consultation coinciding with the onset of the pandemic there were no substantive responses received at that time. This policy has been reviewed following a subsequent audit of the service in 2021/22 and hence is also re-titled as a Policy document with more up to date information.

## **2.0 Other Options**

- 2.1 The option to continue to manage trees referring to the existing policy was considered however, it does not address the current issues facing the longer term management and maintenance of trees.

## **3.0 Consultation**

- 3.1 The Tree Management Policy will be published for consultation following approval by the Executive Member.

## **4.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 The existing tree policy is out of date and requires updating to reflect current issues surrounding the management and maintenance of trees.

**Finance Officer Clearance** *(type in initials)*.....PC.....

**Legal Officer Clearance** *(type in initials)*.....TR.....

**[CORPORATE] DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE** *(electronic)*.....

To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Corporate Director has cleared the report prior to issuing to the Executive Member for decision.