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FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA FOR THE EXECUTIVE

Date: Tuesday, 21 September 2021

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Executive Members:

Councillor S D T Woodward, Policy and Resources (Executive Leader)

Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE, Health and Public Protection (Deputy Executive Leader)

Councillor I Bastable, Streetscene

Councillor F Birkett, Housing

Councillor S D Martin, Planning and Development

Councillor Mrs S M Walker, Leisure and Community

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 26 August 2021.

3. Executive Leader's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest from members in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct.

5. Petitions

6. Deputations

To receive any deputations, of which notice has been lodged.

7. References from Other Committees

To receive any references from the committees or panels held.

Matters for Decision in Public

Note: Where an urgent item of business is raised in accordance with Part 3 of the Constitution, it will be considered with the relevant service decisions as appropriate.

8. Housing

Key Decision

(1) External Redecoration Contract (ED0054) - Award of Tender (Pages 9 - 14)

A report by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

9. Planning and Development

Key Decision

(1) Council Tree Service Review (Pages 15 - 50)

A report by the Director of Planning and Regeneration.

10. Policy and Resources

Non-Key Decision

(1) Disposal of Trinity Street Public Conveniences (Pages 51 - 56)

A report by the Director of Planning and Regeneration.

(2) Citizen of Honour Award - Special Group Achievement Category (Pages 57 - 60)

A report by the Head of Democratic Services.

(3) Citizen of Honour Award Scheme - Special Achievement Category (Pages 61 - 64)

A report by the Head of Democratic Services.

(4) Covid Heroes Award Nominations (Pages 65 - 76)

A report by the Director of Leisure and Community.

11. Exclusion of Public and Press

To consider whether it is in the public interest to exclude the public and representatives of the Press from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters to be dealt with involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Exempt Matters for Decision

Note: Where urgent items of business are raised in accordance with Part 3 of the Constitution, they will be considered with the relevant service decisions as appropriate.

12. Policy and Resources

Key Decision

(1) Solent Airport Operator Contract (Pages 77 - 116)

A report by the Director of Planning and Regeneration.

P GRIMWOOD
Chief Executive Officer
www.fareham.gov.uk
09 September 2021

For further information please contact:
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FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Executive

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 26 August 2021

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Present:

S D T Woodward, Policy and Resources (Executive Leader)
T M Cartwright, MBE, Health and Public Protection (Deputy Executive Leader)
F Birkett, Housing
S D Martin, Planning and Development
Mrs S M Walker, Leisure and Community

Also in attendance:

R H Price, JP, for item 8(1)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor I J Bastable.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 09 August 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Executive Leader announcements made at this meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. PETITIONS

There were no petitions submitted at this meeting.

6. DEPUTATIONS

Deputations were received from Mr Neil Young and from Mrs Sally Young, representing St Mary's Church, in respect of item 8(1) – Draft agreement with English Heritage regarding charging at the Council's Portchester Castle car parks.

7. REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no references from other Committees.

8. HEALTH AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

(1) Draft agreement with English Heritage regarding charging at the Council's Portchester Castle car parks

Updated confidential Appendices A and B to the report were tabled at the meeting for consideration in respect of this item, containing updated information to the draft agreement proposals with English Heritage.

Deputations were received in respect of this item from Mr Neil Young and Mrs Sally Young.

At the invitation of the Executive Leader, Councillor R H Price, JP addressed the Executive on this item. As Councillor Price wished to comment on information contained in the confidential Appendices, it was proposed and agreed that the meeting move into private session.

RESOLVED that the public and representatives of the press be temporarily excluded from the meeting on grounds that the matters to be dealt with involve

the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

At the conclusion of the discussion on the confidential Appendices, the meeting moved back into open session.

RESOLVED that the Executive:

(a) approves the agreement with English Heritage, as detailed in the updated confidential Appendix B to the report, to allow hourly charging and season ticket use in the two Portchester Castle car parks; and

(b) delegates authority to the Director of Leisure and Community, following consultation with the Executive Member for Health and Public Protection, to agree any minor amendments to the agreement.

(The meeting started at 4.00 pm
and ended at 4.59 pm).

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision
21 September 2021

Portfolio:	Housing
Subject:	**External Redecoration Contract (ED0054) - Award of Tender**
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Corporate Priorities:	Dynamic, prudent and progressive Council

Purpose:
To consider the tenders received and to award a contract for external redecoration and associated repairs to council owned properties across the borough for financial years 2020/2021 to 2027/2028.

Executive summary:
This report provides the Executive with information on tenders received external redecoration and associated repair works for financial years 2020/2021 to 2027/2028.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Executive awards a contract to the contractor achieving the highest scoring tender based on quality and cost as detailed in confidential Appendix A to this report.

Reason:
To continue to manage and maintain homes and council owned assets by means of a cyclical programme of external redecoration and associated repairs.

Cost of proposals:
The costs of these proposals are outlined in confidential Appendix A to this report. They will be met from existing Housing Revenue Account budgets.

Appendices: Confidential Appendix A: Summary of tender evaluation

Background papers: None

Reference papers:

(a) Executive 1 February 2021 – Housing Revenue Account 2021/22

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	21 September 2021
Subject:	External Redecoration Contract (ED0045) - Award of Tender
Briefing by:	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Portfolio:	Housing

INTRODUCTION

1. The Council has a cyclical programme for the external redecoration of the entire housing stock over a seven-year period. A Vanguard intervention to the Responsive Repairs suspended the delivery of planned and cyclical programmes whilst the repairs service was being redesigned. Subsequently, Covid restrictions have now both resulted in a delay in the programme delivery, therefore those earlier in the programme may not have been decorated for up to 10 years.

2. The specification for this project provides for the external redecoration of approximately 2,900 (2429 + 460) dwellings (flats, houses and bungalows), including those which are leasehold within blocks (representing the 460 figure). A schedule of rates for repairs and renewals deemed to be necessary prior to redecoration are also included.

3. At its meeting on 1 February 2021, the Executive approved the HRA revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22. This included a provision for the cyclical external redecoration and pre-decoration repair projects.

TENDERS RECEIVED

4. Invitations to tender were published on the open market using the South East Business Portal on 2 November 2020. 16 expressions of interest were received.

5. On 9 April 2021, electronically three sealed tenders were opened by the Procurement Officers and a Building Services representative.

6. The tenders received were arithmetically and technically reviewed. An overall assessment was undertaken based on the pre-determined quality to cost ratio.

7. The results of the tender evaluation process are detailed in Appendix A to this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. The works will be funded annually through the Housing Revenue Account. Budgets are

approved by the Executive prior to the expenditure as part of the annual HRA revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22 report.

9. Properties within the schedule where secure tenants have commenced Right to Buy proceedings or will commence during the term of the contract will be omitted, unless it is a flat whereby the Council own the freehold. Should applications be revoked, work will be undertaken subject to programme and availability of finance.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

10. The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 will apply to this contract.

CONCLUSION

11. It is recommended that a contract be awarded to the contractor who submitted the best scoring tender for the value detailed in the confidential Appendix A to this report.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Robyn Lyons. (Ext 4305)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision
21 September 2021

Portfolio:	Planning and Development
Subject:	**Council Trees Service Review**
Report of:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Corporate Priorities:	Protect and Enhance the Environment Dynamic, Prudent and Progressive Council

Purpose:
This report sets out the results of the detailed review of the Council Trees Service, and provides options for the future delivery of the service.

Executive summary:

The Council is facing considerable financial pressures, worsened by the impact of COVID-19. Alongside this, our Trees Service had experienced a number of budget overspends.

Therefore, a review of the Council Trees Service was recently conducted, with the aim of identifying what options could be available to reduce the cost of the service whilst continuing to offer a good quality tree management function.

A Systems Thinking (Vanguard) approach was applied to the service, alongside legal and financial analysis and comparisons with the approaches adopted by other local Councils.

The results of the review and proposals for the future provision of the service are outlined in this report, alongside a proposed level of expenditure which reflects the increasing stock of trees that the Council now actively manages as well as incorporating options identified to reduce areas of spend.

To mitigate any future overspends it is also proposed that a full review of the Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for the Borough of Fareham excluding Welborne (SPD) takes place to allow the Council to recover the cost of tree maintenance when adopting land. The Executive is invited to note that an increased maintenance contribution for adopting land containing trees which will require active management by the Council upon adoption will be introduced with immediate effect.

Recommendation:

That the Executive approves:

a) The new approach to Council-owned trees which includes:

- Stopping Good Neighbour Works;
- Changes to Tree Planting;
- Changes to the inspection frequency of Council managed trees;
- Responsibility for low height tree works being brought in house;
- Reduction of other planned tree works
- Individual proposals for funding of Strategic Planting Sites being brought to future Executive meetings for consideration;
- Engagement with local communities and the building up of a volunteer resource.

b) A full review of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for the Borough of Fareham excluding Welborne (SPD) be conducted.

That the Executive note:

c) That an increased maintenance charge will be sought where land is being adopted which contains trees which the Council will need to actively manage upon adoption, of £500 per tree.

Reason:
The number of trees owned and/or maintained by the Council has risen significantly during the last ten years which has been creating a financial pressure. The proposals will help ensure a well-managed and safe tree stock that is financially sustainable.

Cost of proposals:

An interim budget of £230,600 was set for 2020/21 and 2021/22, while the Tree Review was undertaken. If the Executive agrees the new approach to Council-owned trees, this will create a new spending pressure, within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, of £28,400 in addition to the £80,000 growth already incorporated in the interim budget, and this will need to be considered during the budget setting process each year.

However, the proposals will help reduce future budget overspends which have previously been as high as £251,000.

Income from the increased maintenance charge, and potentially increased contributions following a review of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for the Borough of Fareham (excluding Welborne) will help ensure the service remains financially sustainable if we adopt more land in the future.

Appendices: **A:** Detailed Tree Review Results
Background papers: None

Reference papers: None

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	21 September 2021
Subject:	Council Trees Service Review
Briefing by:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Portfolio:	Planning and Development

INTRODUCTION

1. This report sets out the results of the detailed review of the Council Trees Service and puts forward options for the future delivery of the service.

BACKGROUND

2. The Tree Team is made up of 3 full time officers. Their work is split between:

- 60% of the time: Undertaking all planning functions in respect of trees
- 40% of the time: Managing all the trees on Council land

3. Whilst the chance of injury or damage from trees is very low, the Council has a legal duty to manage our stock so that they don't pose a significant risk.

AIMS AND METHODOLOGY OF THE REVIEW

4. The review of the Council's Trees Service was identified as an action in the Council's Opportunities Plan which aims to find ways to generate income or reduce expenditure to help bridge the funding gap identified in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

5. The overall aim of the review was therefore to identify the different parts of the service and how they contribute to the overall cost. This included identifying what options could be available to reduce the cost of the service whilst continuing to offer a good quality tree management function.

6. The review included a Systems Thinking (Vanguard) analysis of the service, research into legislative requirements, a survey used to identify the different approaches used by other councils and discussions with officers and partner organisations. Financial analysis of service spend was used to identify trends during the last ten years and modelling of the impact of different options.

7. Ash Dieback is a disease which is an important issue linked to the management of our tree stock. In order to allow a planned and considered response a separate report will be brought to the Executive on this subject for consideration.

OUTCOMES OF THE SERVICE REVIEW

8. The main results of the review are as follows:-

TREE NUMBERS, SPEND AND BUDGET

9. *The number of trees the Council controls has increased dramatically:* Through a pro-active approach to land adoption, the Council has taken on an estimated 210,000 to 220,000 mature trees. This can be through larger residential sites with areas of green space or exceptional sites such as Coldeast. Those trees actively managed by the Council i.e. regularly inspected and maintained increased by 110% from just under 10,000 in 2011/12 to just over 21,000 in 2020/21.

10. *Service costs have been increasing:* The average annual cost of each tree being managed has generally stayed around £19 during the last ten years, although it should be noted that not all the costs incurred in a year relate to the trees being managed (see sections below). However, the significant increase in tree numbers will have had an impact on the annual cost of the service. The total cost of the service grew from £151,785 in 2011/12 to £399,277 in 2019/20. The budget set in 2019/20 was £120,000 plus an additional £30,000 from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) meaning that there was a budget overspend of £251,233 that year. This year was chosen as the baseline for analysis as it was the last full year not to have been impacted by COVID-19.

11. *Planned tree works and good neighbour works make up around 75% of the total spend in 2019/20:* Around £211,000 was spent on planned tree work which mainly derive from recommendations made during tree inspections. Another £72,000 was spent on good neighbour works which is for the active management of the trees.

12. *An interim budget was set to help respond to financial challenges*: In both 2020/21 and 2021/22 an increased interim budget of £200,600, pending the outcome of the review of the service, was set for the management of the Council's trees with the challenge to stay within the budget provision. An additional £30,000 from Housing Revenue Account recharges, for works carried out on land controlled by Fareham Housing, was also agreed.

13. GOOD NEIGHBOUR WORKS

14. *We are the only Council in Hampshire to carry out good neighbour works:* We have traditionally responded positively to requests from residents whose property neighbours one of our trees, to carry out work to the tree. This could be as a result of issues such as overhanging branches or canopies blocking the light to a property.

15. As part of the response to the financial pressures faced by the Council, a temporary hold was placed on any new good neighbour works from June 2020 onwards. The temporary cessation resulted in three formal complaints to the Council and some further complaints by email and telephone.

16. Based on the evidence found, no other Council in Hampshire conducts good neighbour works. Based on this information and the continuing financial pressures faced by the Council it is hard to justify the continued provision of this service. It is therefore

proposed that this service does not resume.

17. Whilst there is generally no legal obligation to carry out “good neighbour” works if any essential works are identified where trees pose a threat to people or property, these would be carried out as part of the planned tree works programme.

18. Continuing to stop the service would reduce expenditure by £72,000 compared to the spend in the baseline year of 2019/20.

INSPECTION REGIME

19. The Council designates a risk category based on factors such as location, size and age to each of the trees we actively manage. The vast majority of trees (80%) are inspected using a three-year cyclical regime, with higher risk trees being inspected every two years and the highest risk trees annually. A small number of trees are deemed to be the lowest risk and are seen every 6 years.

20. An external contractor inspects each tree and may make recommendations for planned tree works. The external contractor charges are regularly subject to market testing.

21. *Only a small percentage of inspections generate planned tree works:* Based on the sample of trees analysed only 16% of inspections result in any planned maintenance works to the trees. Of those, 38% were on trees that had multiple maintenance works carried out over time.

22. *We inspect more regularly than many other Councils:* There is range of inspection regimes employed by Hampshire Councils with each inspecting their tree stock at different frequencies. From the evidence found, Fareham inspects its trees more regularly than most other Councils within the county.

23. Considering that only a small number of inspections generate planned tree works and that we inspect more frequently than many other Councils, there is the potential to make changes to our regime. It is therefore proposed that the inspections of low risk trees are moved to a five-year cyclical regime. Trees regarded as medium risk will be inspected every three years and the highest risk trees will be inspected every 1 ½ years. The small number of trees currently seen every 6 years will be added to the 5-year cycle. Feedback from the Council’s insurers will be sought before the proposed changes are implemented.

24. The annual cost of the contracted inspections under this regime is estimated to be £30,000 which would be £15,000 less than the actual spend in the baseline year of 2019/20 and could start to be realised from 2022/23 onwards.

PLANNED TREE WORKS

25. *There is potential for Streetscene to carry out some tree works:* The majority of tree works are as a result of planned tree inspection recommendations and are carried out by external contractors. The Council receives good value for money from these contractors. Much of the works are at height and require specialist equipment and knowledge. The capital costs and additional training and staff resources required for Streetscene to take on this work is prohibitive.

26. However, much of the lower height works including ivy clearance could be carried out by the Streetscene Team. As the skills and equipment are already in place, it is proposed that low height works be included in the ground’s maintenance work

programme from 2022/23 onwards. This would reduce spending by £11,700.

27. It is also proposed to reduce the spend on planned tree works by a further £19,500 compared to the actual spend in 2019/20. The expected level of spend on planned tree works is therefore £180,000 which is approximately £31,200 less than the actual spend in 2019/20. This is because a reduction in the frequency of tree inspections is likely to lead to some reduction in planned tree works.

REPLACEMENT AND PRO-ACTIVE TREE PLANTING

28. The Council normally plants around 140 to 150 trees in the Borough every year; all of which is carried out by external contractors. Around 60% of the trees planted are replacements for felled trees in urban areas e.g. parks. However, we don't tend to replace dead trees in areas with extensive tree cover e.g. woodlands, preferring the site to regenerate naturally. This means that we only replace around 20% of trees that die or are felled.

29. The remaining trees are planted in ad-hoc locations across the Borough that are identified by the Council's Trees Team. In addition, there has been large scale planting in sites such as Daedalus Common where around 21,000 trees have been planted.

30. *It is proposed that any pro-active new tree planting should be undertaken on* a *strategic basis:* Strategic tree planting i.e. block planting in fewer but larger sites can bring environmental benefits e.g. habitat creation. It also makes maintenance e.g. watering and mulching more efficient as there are fewer locations to drive to.

31. Whilst identified as a possible opportunity to explore in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, carbon offsetting accreditation is a costly, complicated and slow process. There is also likely to be greater potential for reducing our carbon footprint through other service changes and projects.

32. Another benefit of this type of planting is that it is more likely to benefit from external funding when compared with smaller ad hoc planting. However, this often requires applications coming forward from community groups or schools.

33. It is therefore proposed that whilst we continue with the same approach to replacement tree planting, proactively planting of trees only takes place in larger strategic areas.

34. Any potential new strategic site would require feasibility assessments carried out to fully understand the context of the site e.g. soil conditions and any potential constraints.

35. This would then allow the production of a proposed plan and associated cost of planting at the site to be established. The cost would include any enabling works required, as well as tree planting, watering and mulching costs. Options for external grant funding would also be explored for each potential site.

36. Potential sites deemed suitable following this work would then be presented to the Executive for approval, with the financial implications for each site.

37. Each site would represent a budget growth area and would need to be included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

38. There is currently not enough countryside volunteer resource to help manage the new planting sites. The long-term approach would be to build links with community groups and to work closely with them to apply for grant funding. Some of the schemes require

applications to come from organisations such as schools or residents associations. A team of volunteers would also be created to help maintain each site.

39. In addition to this, Streetscene are being asked to re-evaluate their priorities to accommodate tree planting, mulching and watering wherever possible in strategic planting areas. It is also appropriate for Streetscene to consider what scope exists to undertake the replacement tree planting as well. This approach has the potential to make future long-term savings. However, it will take time for these to become clear.

40. The proposed approach to tree planting could save £19,500 compared to the actual spend in 2019/20, leaving an annual spend of £25,000.

LAND ADOPTION

41. *We are in the minority of Councils that proactively adopt land*: We have traditionally sought to adopt land that has come through the planning process. Most other Councils in Hampshire either don't adopt land or only do so in exceptional circumstances. The trees adopted as part of this approach can range from fully mature trees to recently planted saplings, which have been agreed as part of a development scheme.

42. Of those that do, they generally include the cost of maintaining trees in Section 106 developer contributions, often over a prolonged period e.g. 25 years or longer. Fareham currently charges a flat rate for maintaining land, whether there are trees located on it or not.

43. *We will face significant budget pressures if we continue in the same way*: if Fareham continues to adopt trees at its current rate of 700 a year (not including those adopted at Coldeast or Daedalus Common) then the annual tree maintenance and inspection costs will increase by:

    - £67,070 in 5 years
    - £134,140 in 10 years

44. Considering the financial challenges faced by the Council, this is only a sustainable approach if maintenance contributions are secured.

45. It is therefore proposed that a more flexible developer contributions scheme is developed that reflects the full costs of maintaining land that has trees of varying sizes and ages and land that does not, over a prolonged period of time e.g. 25 years.

46. This proposal would require a full review of the Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for the Borough of Fareham excluding Welborne (SPD). If approved, it is anticipated that this would take around 12 months to complete. There is provision within the Council's current SPD to increase the maintenance contribution charges, where it is justified to do so.

47. At the present time the Council seeks a contribution of £6 per square metre (index linked from April 2015) for maintaining parks and amenity open space land it adopts. As a result of the detailed work that has been undertaken as part of the review of the Council's trees, it is clear that the cost of maintaining such land when it contains trees is considerably higher than the level of contribution presently secured. It is recommended that where the Council adopts land containing trees which it will be required to actively manage, a maintenance contribution of £500 (index linked from April 2021) should be secured for each tree, above the £6 per square metre (index linked). The introduction of

such an increase in cost in relation to maintenance contributions is justified within Paragraph C.16 of the adopted Supplementary Planning Document.

48. This additional income will help contribute towards the costs of the maintenance of additional trees being taken on by the Council before the new SPD is adopted.

49. **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

50. The Council Trees Service review is based on the analysis of the actual expenditure from the baseline year of 2019/20, when the spend was £399,480 compared to a budget of £120,000, plus £30,000 from recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), for works carried out Fareham Housing land.

51. As shown in the table below, the proposals in this review would reduce expenditure by £137,700.

	Reductions in Spend
	£
Stopping Good Neighbour Works	£72,000
Change in Inspection Regime	£15,000
Low level tree works brought in-house	£11,700
Reduction in Planned Tree Works	£19,500
Change to Tree Planting	£19,500
	£137,700

52. As mentioned previously, an interim budget of £200,600 plus the £30,000 HRA recharge, was set for 2020/21 and 2021/22, pending the outcome of this review. Significant savings were made by the Trees Service during these two years, however, certain works were curtailed or delayed, and the budget level was not seen as sustainable in the long term. The review has therefore proposed a new level of expenditure of £229,000 plus £30,000 HRA recharge which recognises the increased number of trees that the Council now controls

53. If the Executive agrees the new approach to Council-owned trees, this will create a new spending pressure, within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, of £28,400 in addition to the £80,000 growth already incorporated in the interim budget, and this will need to be considered during the budget setting process each year.

54. However, the proposals will help reduce future budget overspends which have previously been as high as £251,000.

55. Increasing the maintenance contribution for land containing trees which the Council will be required to actively manage with immediate effect, and potential increases in contributions following the review of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for the Borough of Fareham (excluding Welborne) will help to ensure the service remains sustainable if we adopt more land in the future.

CONCLUSION

56. The proposals in the review of the Council's Trees Service review should help ensure that the Council's growing tree stock continues to be managed in an effective way whilst minimising the risk of future budgetary pressures.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Lee Smith – Head of Development Management (Ext 4427) or Roy Brown – Policy, Research and Engagement Manager (Ext 4489)

Fareham Borough Council
Council Trees Service Review

1. Tree Review Aims and Methodology

Introduction

This document sets out the findings of the review of the Council Trees Service which took place between October 2019 and August 2021. Options for how the Service could be delivered in the future are set out following which preferred proposals are put forward. The preferred proposals balance the need to ensure that the Borough's trees and woodlands are managed in an effective way whilst delivering good value to our customers.

Why conduct a review?

- The number of trees owned and/or maintained by the Council has risen significantly during the last ten years.
- There is a perception that the cost of managing the Council's trees is increasing in an unsustainable manner.
- The significant financial challenges faced by the Council, have been intensified by the impact of COVID-19. The Council's tree service has exceeded its budget provision in recent years. This review was therefore added to the Opportunities Plan to identify ways to reduce the level of expenditure needed for the service.
- It is therefore important to understand how the Council can continue to ensure a well-managed stock of trees within the Borough, within budgetary constraints.

What were the aims of the review?

The Council Trees Service review scope was to:

- Apply systems thinking (Vanguard) methodology to identify the costs and systems involved in providing the service.
- Identify our statutory functions and those which were discretionary.
- Explore options for alternative models of provision that can help to continue to ensure a well-managed and safe tree stock, whilst reducing the cost of the service.

What was the methodology?

In order to cover the broad scope of the review a number of methods were used:

- A systems thinking approach to identify the costs and systems involved in providing the service.
- The legislative requirements were researched with regards to tree works the Council must undertake and the risks it must manage.
- Identifying inspection, adoptions and maintenance approaches followed by other local authorities within Hampshire.
- Discussions with Officers, relevant Members, partners e.g. Legal Services and the Council's Insurers.
- Much of the financial assessment is based on the financial year 2019/20. This period was used to ensure that the impacts from COVID-19 over the last 18 months did not impact upon the assessments and findings.

2. The local picture

The landscape character of the Borough

- There is a significant amount of tree cover in the Borough's urban areas providing an attractive environment to live and work in.
- The Borough's more rural areas are made up of a diverse range of land types such as chalk downland, coastal landscapes, mud flats, salt marshes and low-lying river valleys.
- These differing landscapes support a broad range of trees.
- There are an estimated 210,000 to 220,000 mature trees on land that the Council owns.

Why do we need to manage our trees?

- The risk of being struck and killed by a tree or branch falling is extremely low for those trees in or next to areas of high public use.
- Legally the Council needs to take reasonable steps to ensure its trees do not pose a significant risk to people or property.
- The Council does not actively manage (i.e. inspect or maintain), every tree it owns as it does not need to.
- The Council only actively manages those trees which may pose a risk to people or property.
- There are approximately 21,000 trees which the Council actively manages.

Tree Strategy

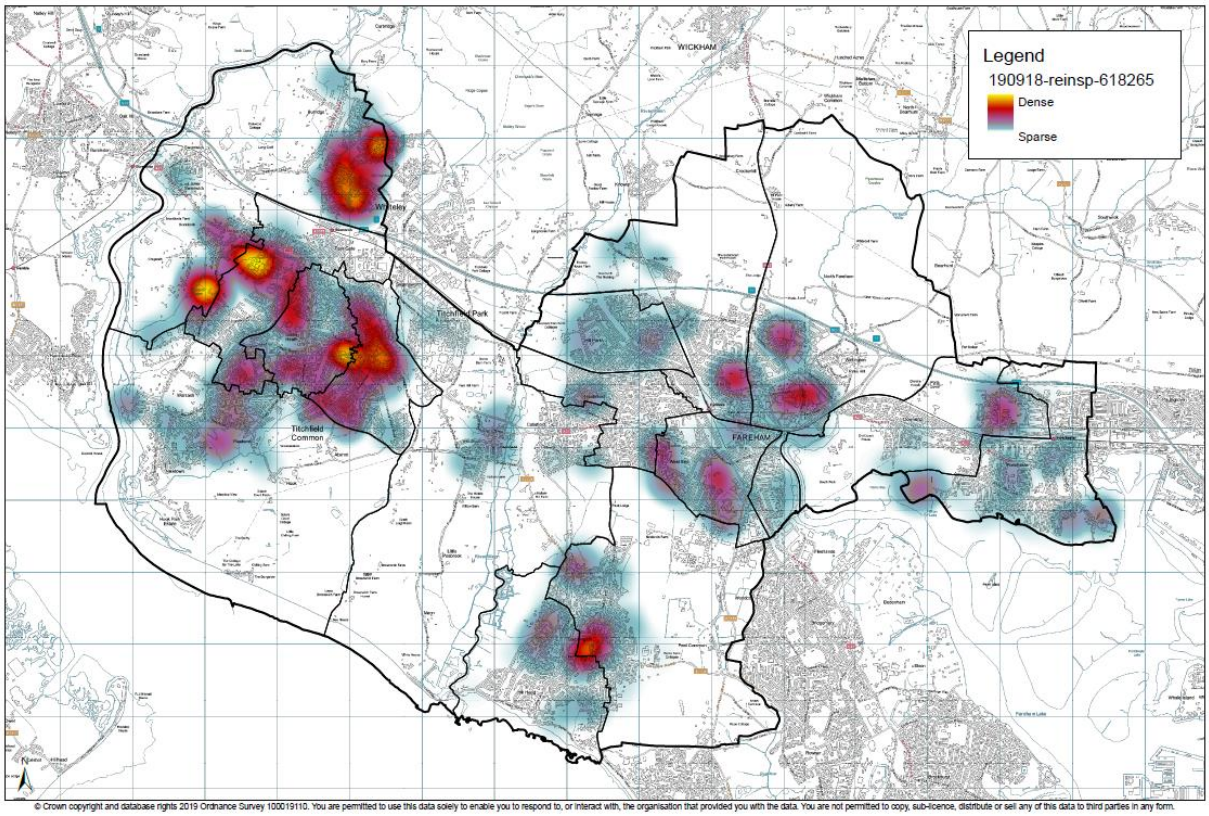
- The Council's Tree Strategy was last updated in 2012.
- The importance of the role trees play in improving the environment and mitigating against the effects of climate change has continued to increase.
- The financial challenges faced by local government have also significantly increased during this period.
- One of the outcomes of the review is to update the Tree Strategy to reflect the agreed proposals.

What trees are the Council responsible for?

- The Council is responsible for an estimated 210,000 to 220,000 mature trees on more than 290 hectares (equivalent to 406 football pitches) of public open space, housing areas and woodlands.

The map below identifies where the majority of trees that the Council actively manages are located.

Tree Inspections



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The heat map reflects the locations of the Council owned/managed trees across the Borough. The greater concentration of trees are in the Western Wards of the Borough.

The number of trees the Council is responsible for has increased rapidly

- Whilst the Council does not hold records of every single tree on land it owns, it is estimated that there is in the region of 210,000 to 220,000 mature trees on Council managed land.
- Over the last 10 years, the Council has adopted land with an estimated 140,000 to 160,000 mature trees included.
- In addition to these mature trees there will be a significant number of saplings and immature trees.
- As can be seen in Chart 1 below, the number of trees being actively managed by this Council (i.e. regularly inspected and maintained) has increased from just under 10,000 in 2011/12 to just over 21,000 in 2020/21.

Chart 1: Increase in actively managed trees

- This equated to a 110% increase in the number of trees actively managed by the Council within 9 years, which equates to 1,222 trees every year.

What does the service look like?

The Council Trees Service is within the Planning and Regeneration Directorate. The Tree Team consists of three full time employees comprising a Principal Tree Officer, a Tree Officer and a Tree Assistant. Direct employee costs were £114,662 in 2020/21.

What does the Tree Team do?

The Team has two main roles:

- To undertake all the Council's planning functions in respect of trees. This includes:
  - Serving and reviewing Tree Preservation Orders
  - Dealing with all applications to carry out works to protected trees
  - Providing advice on all tree matters to Planners and the Council's Planning Committee
  - Providing advice on trees to all of the Council's customers.
  - Delivering this part of the Tree Service accounts for around 60% of the Tree Team's total time.
- To manage the trees on Council owned land (irrespective of which part of the Council holds/manages the land. This accounts for around 40% of the Team's time.

Managing Council Trees

There are four main areas of work linked to the management of trees:

Tree inspections: Assess the general wellbeing of Council owned trees and identify any potential health and safety concerns. Recommendations are made to undertake works which will minimise any identified risks posed by the tree. These works are undertaken by an external contractor.

Planned tree works: These works are largely driven by the recommendations following inspections and can include activities such as reducing the length of branches and removing damaged or dead parts of a tree. The Council has a framework of external contractors in place who carry out the works to the Council's trees.

Good neighbour works: Residents approach the Council and ask it to carry out works to its trees when they consider they cause a nuisance (e.g. Overhanging, loss of light).

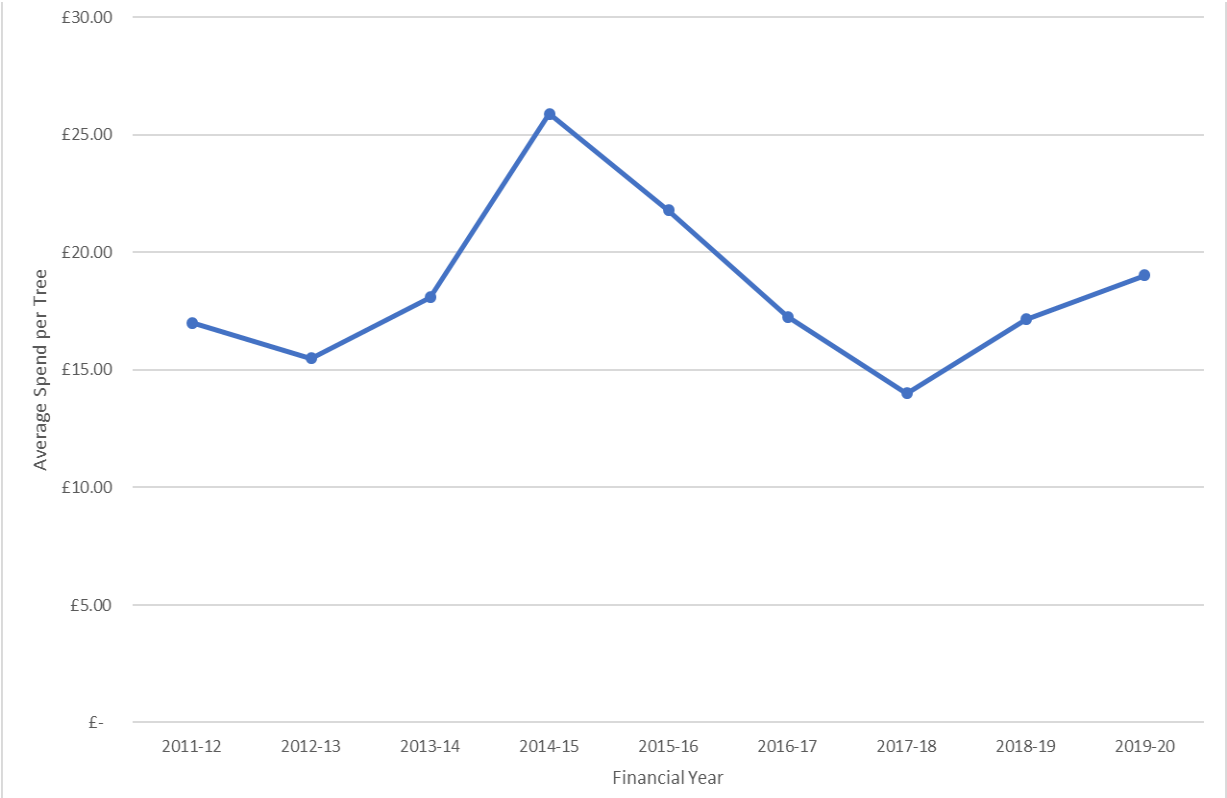
Tree planting: The Team arranges the replacement of dead or diseased trees in public amenity areas as well as pro-actively planting further trees in sites identified across the Borough.

The four work areas above will be discussed in more detail later in the report.

What does the Council Trees Service cost the Council?

The Council has worked hard to ensure good value for money when managing the Council's tree stock. This is reflected in Chart 2 below, which shows that the annual average cost of each managed tree has largely stayed at or below £20 a year since 2011/12.

Chart 2: Average cost per Council controlled tree between 2011/12 and 2019/20



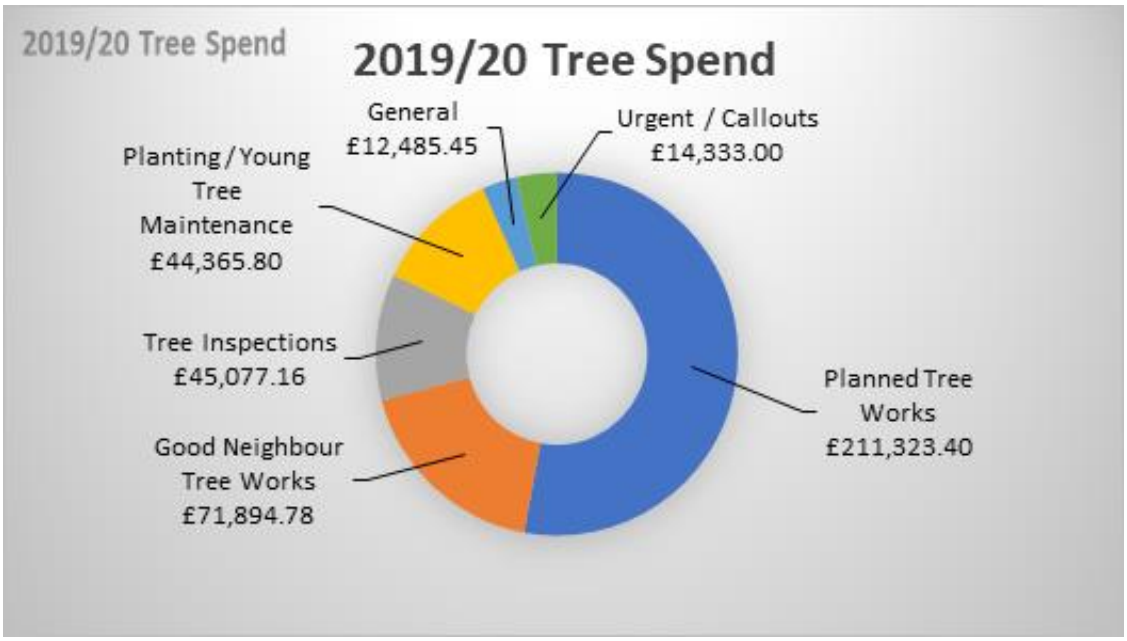
Whilst the spend per tree has stayed relatively constant, the overall spend on trees, (excluding employee costs), has risen significantly, from £150,000 in 2011/12 to approximately £400,000 in 2019/20. As Table 1 shows below, this overall increase in service cost reflects the significant increase in the number of Council managed trees over time. Substantial increases in tree management costs in 2014-16 and 2018-20 reflect works undertaken following the adoption and works to trees at Coldeast.

Table 1: Growth in tree numbers and cost over time

Year	Cost	Approx. Trees Managed
2011/12	£151,785	9,500
2012/13	£141,098	9,750
2013/14	£191,080	10,500
2014/15	£281,300	11,000
2015/16	£278,211	13,000
2016/17	£236,723	14,000
2017/18	£227,120	17,000
2018/19	£330,438	18,000
2019/20	£399,277	21,000

Council Trees Service Costs in 2019/20

Chart 3 below outlines the different service elements which made up the £399,277 spent in 2019/20. This year was chosen as the baseline for analysis as it was the last not impacted by COVID-19.



The actual budget set by Council for this part of the Service for 2019/20 was £120,600, plus around £27,500 recharged to the Housing Revenue account. This meant that there was an overspend against the allocated budget of around £251,000 that year.

Two work areas made up around 75% of the total cost of the Tree Service in 2019/20:

- Planned tree works - £211,000
- Good neighbour works -£72,000

The vast majority of the planned tree works carried out followed on from works identified as part of tree inspections.

Good Neighbour works do not directly correlate to the number of trees being managed. The Council is not legally required to carry out Good Neighbour Works (e.g. to address overhanging, loss of light, leaf litter, nuisance caused by roosting birds, etc) and is in a small minority of Councils undertaking these works.

Responding to financial challenges in 2020/21

Both the regular service overspends, and the wider financial pressures faced by the Council, which were worsened by the impact of COVID-19, meant that a decision was taken to put in place an increased interim budget for both 2020/21 and 2021/22. This was to reflect the increase in the number of trees being managed but had the expectation that spend would stay within the budget provision.

The interim budget would provide budgetary clarity to the team pending results of the Council Trees Service Review and was set at £200,600 plus £30,000 for Housing Revenue Account recharges, for works carried out on land controlled by Fareham Housing.

The remainder of the report looks at options for ensuring that the Council Trees Service continues to offer a high level of service both now and in the future whilst managing and mitigating the risk of any future overspend.

4. Tree Inspections

Why carry out tree inspections?

The Health and Safety Executive classify risk from tree falls within their lowest category of risk. Whilst the level of risk is low, tree owners have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable harm to both people and property. Tree inspections are one of the key tools for identifying potential risks to people and property.

How many inspections do we carry out?

Not all Council owned/managed trees are inspected. Only those trees that potentially pose a risk to people or property are inspected. There are currently around 21,000 on the Council's tree inspection register, which are actively managed.

Trees are principally added onto the Council's tree inspection register:

- When the Council adopts or purchases land, the Council makes arrangements for trees on the land to be inspected. Where trees might potentially pose a risk to people or property, they are added to the tree inspection register.
- As younger trees mature and become larger.

Depending on their size, location and characteristics, trees are identified as being of:

- **High risk** –Inspected every year, The Council has 2098 trees in this category
- **Medium risk** – Inspected every 2 years. The Council has 1,766 trees in this category
- **Low risk** – Inspected every 3 years. The Council has 16,548 trees in this category
- **Lowest risk** - Inspected every 6 years. The Council has 480 trees which are considered very low risk e.g. those only recently planted,
- **Awaiting risk assessment**: Around 146 young trees are awaiting a risk assessment.

The overall number of inspections varies from year to year, for example:

- In 2018/19, there were 9,052 inspections
- In 2019/20, there were 4,800 inspections

What is involved in a tree inspection?

The Council employs an external contractor to carry out Tree Inspections on its behalf. Each tree inspection will:

- Assess the general wellbeing of Council owned trees
- Identify any potential health and safety concerns
- Make recommendations for works that could help reduce any identified risks

The appointed Tree Inspector reports back the results of every single inspection and identifies any works they believe should be undertaken to manage any risks posed by the tree. Each tree inspected is recorded on the Council's database, which details:

- The tree's condition
- Species
- Age
- Size
- All previous Inspections and works undertaken.
- Works the Tree Inspector recommends should be undertaken and how quickly the works should be carried out.

Whilst the majority of the recommendations of the Tree Inspector are accepted, the Council's Tree Team review the recommended works and will visit sites and view the situation first-hand when they consider it necessary.

The average annual costs of Tree inspections are around £30,000-£35,000.

How do other Councils approach tree inspections?

In evaluating options for future service delivery, it has been helpful to understand the approaches adopted by other Councils within Hampshire. With this in mind, all Hampshire Councils were asked to complete a survey outlining their approach to tree management, including inspections.

Table 2 over the page identifies the inspection periods of all the Councils that responded to the Council's survey.

Table 2: Inspection Periods Comparison between Councils (years)				
Risk	**High**	**Med**	**Low**	**Lowest**
Fareham	1	2	3	6
Portsmouth	1	0	4	
Test Valley	1	0	5	
Winchester	1.5	3	0	
Hart	1.5	2.5	5	
Eastleigh	2	4	0	
Rushmoor	2	3	0	
New Forest	2-3	4-5	5	
Southampton	2	5	5	
Basingstoke & Deane	Every 5/6 years, apart from small number of more frequent inspections			
Gosport	No defined inspection regime			

- The table shows that there are a range of inspection approaches adopted by local Councils.
- Each Council has adopted their inspection regime with an understanding that it is an appropriate approach to managing the risk of their trees.
- A number inspect their high-risk trees less often than Fareham e.g. New Forest inspect their high-risk trees every 2-3 years, compared to every 12 months by Fareham.
- The same applies for both, medium and low risk trees. For example, the most common frequency for low risk trees is 5-yearly inspections, whereas Fareham inspect them every 3 years. 80% of Fareham's trees are in the low category.
- Overall, Table 2 shows that Fareham's current inspection regime is amongst the most frequent of those Councils that responded.

Is there a direct link between how often we inspect trees and how often we carry out works to trees?

In order to establish whether there is a link between frequency of inspection and the amount of work undertaken, a detailed assessment was undertaken of the frequency of inspections and the amount of tree works undertaken at one of the Council's facilities.

Park Lane Recreation Ground was chosen for a detailed assessment as its 406 trees provide a good representation of the makeup of the tree stock across the Borough, with a range of species, sizes, ages and different inspection categories.

Between the years 2008 and 2019, 1,499 inspections took place at the site. Of these:

- 93% were low risk trees
- 4% were medium risk trees
- 2% were high risk trees

Of the 1,499 inspections, only 16% (243) generated any tree works. This means that the vast majority of inspections did not generate a need for works to trees.

The works that took place were on 151 individual trees. This means that 38% of the works were on trees that have had multiple maintenance activities carried out on them over time.

Analysis

- Tree inspections currently cost on average around £30,000-£35,000 a year and identify the majority of the planned tree works.
- As the Council adopts more land and trees mature, the number of trees that need to be inspected will rise.
- We currently have one of the most frequent regimes of inspections when compared to other Councils in Hampshire.
- From the sample analysed, only 16% of inspections resulted in tree work being carried out.
- The low inspection to tree works ratio, coupled with the examples of how other authorities are operating within the County, indicates that there is potential to reduce the frequency of inspections whilst maintaining a good level of risk management.

Proposed approach

A number of different inspection regimes were assessed. However, the following approach offered the best balance between continuing to manage risk effectively and ensuring good value for money:

- With this in mind, it is proposed that the inspection regime would change to:
    - **High risk trees:** Inspect every 18 months instead of annually
    - **Medium risk trees:** Inspect every 3 years instead of every 2
    - **Low risk trees:** Inspect every 5 years instead of every 3
    - **Lowest risk trees:** Reclassify these into the low risk category instead of inspecting every 6 years
- This approach to inspections would be comparable to other local Councils and is more regular than some such as Southampton and the New Forest.
- Feedback on this proposed approach to inspections would have to be received from our insurers before implementing.
- In addition to moving the small number (408) of lowest risk trees into the low risk category, there is likely to be a reclassification of a minority of trees that were previously on the risk boundary between two categories e.g. moving from low to medium risk.
- It is estimated that the overall number of tree inspections would reduce from an average of around 6,200 a year to approximately 5,300 based on current tree numbers.
- This approach would also free-up a small part of the Tree team's resources, which could be used to focus on areas such as applying for grant funding.
- The annual cost of the contracted inspections under this regime is estimated to be £30,000. This is approximately £15,000 less than the actual spend in the baseline year of 2019/20 and could start to be realised from 2022/23 onwards.
- The tree works recommended during inspections can take a number of months to be completed, depending on the nature of works identified.
- Tree works are priced on a scale determined by the diameter of the tree stem/trunk being worked on. Inspecting less may mean that when the work is undertaken, the cost of the work will be slightly higher.
- Based on present assumptions, a reduction in current spending as set out above is anticipated.
- It is proposed that the financial impact of the changes from the inspection regime and planned tree works (discussed later) be reviewed after 2 years.

5. Planned Tree Works

What type of work is carried out?

- The majority of planned tree works arise from recommendations made following tree inspections.
- In addition to planned works, there is a much smaller number of reactive works carried out every year between trees being inspected. These may include where trees have been identified as dangerous to people or property and are actioned as a priority.
- Tree works can involve tasks such as:
    - Removal of growth around the base of the trunk
    - Crown lifting, thinning or the reduction/removal of branches
    - The felling of dead or diseased trees
    - General pruning and dead wooding
- As would be expected, much of the tree works are at height and require specific arboricultural expertise and equipment.
- The cost of this service element was £211,000 in the financial year 2019/20. There can be a fair degree of fluctuation on this figure. For the last financial year, the figure was £161,000.
- In light of the level of expense it is important to ensure that this service is designed and provided in a way that offers the best value for money.

Where do the planned tree works take place?

The greatest concentration of trees is in the Western part of the Borough. As table 3 shows, this is reflected in the locations of tree works, with 58% of the costs being attributed to the Western Wards.

Table 3: Percentage of Tree Work Spend2008-19 (by ward)	
Sarisbury	25%
Park Gate	18%
Locks Heath	11%
Titchfield common	11%
Portchester East	5%
Fareham South	5%
Fareham North West	4%
Stubbington	4%
Fareham North	3%
Fareham West	3%
Hill Head	3%
Portchester West	2%
Titchfield	2%
Warsash	4%
Total	100%

It is important to recognise that about 57% of the spend on tree works in Park Gate is on the Coldeast site. Whilst 31% of the spend in Sarisbury was at Holly Hill Woodland Park, a significant percentage was spent in areas such as Whiteley, where developments have large areas of canopy and many of the publicly accessible areas and homes are close to trees**.**

The percentage spend in Stubbington is likely to increase in the coming years as the 21,000 trees planted at Daedalus Common mature.

Potential Grounds Maintenance role

All tree works are currently carried out by external tree contractors on the Council's Framework, which followed a competitive tendering exercise. Analysis shows that the service receives very good value from the contractors. The potential for Streetscene to take on some of this work was identified during the review as an area to explore.

The additional equipment that the Council would need to conduct tree works has been explored, as well as the current capacity of the Streetscene service to absorb this work. As a result of considering these issues it was established that:

- Based on discussions with Streetscene, the capital costs for the Council to take on high level tree works are likely to be in the region of £100,000 being to the cost of purchasing the equipment and vehicles needed.
- Any employees would need to be qualified to carry out some of the more technical works, meaning additional expenditure on training, with some posts likely being upgraded.
- Some of the low height works that do not require specialised equipment could potentially be carried out by the Streetscene team. The low-level works are relatively small in number but still contribute to the overall cost of delivering the service.

Proposed Approach

As the skills and equipment are in place, it is proposed that low height works be accommodated within the ground's maintenance work programme from 2022/23 onwards.

Accommodating this work in-house is likely to reduce the expenditure on external tree contractors by £11,700 a year.

It is also proposed to reduce the spend on planned tree works by a further £19,500 compared to the actual spend in 2019/20.

The potential reduction in planned tree works as a result of less frequent inspections proposed earlier, is likely to result in this further reduction in spending. However, due to the lag between inspections and carrying out the recommended works, it will take time for these to become fully apparent.

It is therefore also proposed that the Planned Tree Works budget is reviewed after 2 years to see if any further reductions in spending can be made.

6. Good Neighbour Works

What are Good Neighbour Works?

Customers contact the Tree Team regarding Council owned trees that may be causing the following types of issues to their properties:

- Overhanging branches
- Obstruction of light
- Leaf litter
- Impact on TV reception
- Nuisance caused by birds roosting in overhanging trees

The Tree Team assesses the neighbour impact and decides whether it is appropriate to carry out works on the trees or not. Any works undertaken are normally carried out by external tree contractors.

Works which are requested in respect of perceived nuisance, rather than causing a risk to people or property, are described in this report as 'Good Neighbour Works'. The Council is not under a legal duty to undertake these works.

Carrying out Good Neighbour Works costs the Council around £72,000 a year.

Responding to financial challenges

In response to financial challenges faced by the Council it was decided that Good Neighbour Works would be temporarily suspended from June 2020 onwards.

The Council has received some complaints about the fact that it is no longer carrying out works to its trees when it is perceived they are causing a nuisance.

The level of complaints has not been high, and neighbours are entitled to cut back the Council's trees to the party boundary. The Tree Team provides advice to these customers along with details of who they can approach to get the works undertaken for them.

What do other Councils in Hampshire do?

All Councils within Hampshire that provided information regarding their approach have confirmed that they do not conduct any good neighbour works. Any potential works to mitigate risks to people or properties are undertaken as part of their planned tree works. The only two Councils that did not provide information on their approach were Havant and Basingstoke and Deane.

Therefore, Fareham Borough Council was alone in Hampshire in conducting extensive Good Neighbour Works up until June 2020.

Options considered

Asking for a contribution from customers towards the cost of remedial works was explored as an option. This would require The Tree Team to liaise with customers and arrange the works through external tree contractors.

Whilst this approach would achieve some savings, the Council would still continue delivering a service which it is not legally required to do, nor is it one provided by other Council's in Hampshire.

This approach would also increase the administrative demands on the Tree Team and Finance through processing payments and potentially pursuing debts. There may also be complaints from customers who believe that the extent of works they have paid for are not as great as they would have hoped.

Discussions were held with the Council's external tree contractors to see if they would be able carry out works for residents at the same rates they do for the Council receives. They were however unwilling to do this, as the Council only receives the rates it does because of the volume of work it provides.

Proposed approach

Taking into account all of the factors set out above, it is proposed that the Council no longer carries out Good Neighbour Work.

The Tree Team would continue to provide advice to customers along with details of who they can approach to get the works undertaken for them.

As the service will stop there would be a saving of £72,000 compared to the actual spend in the baseline year of 2019/20.

7. Tree Planting

Why does the Council undertake tree planting?

The Council 's Tree Team normally arranges the planting of around 150 trees in the Borough every year. All of the planting is carried out by external contractors. The type of planting is made up of two main categories:

1. Replacement planting:

- The Council will plant replacement trees particularly where a tree is removed in a location with more limited tree cover (for example with some of the Council's areas of open space). These replacement trees account for around 60% of all the trees planted each year.
- In areas where there is extensive remaining tree cover (for example a woodland area) the Council normally allows the area to naturally regenerate rather than undertaking dedicated planting.
- The Council's approach to replacement tree planting means that approximately 20% of trees that die or are felled are 'pro-actively' replaced by the Council.

2. Pro-active tree planting:

- Around 60 new trees a year are pro-actively planted by the Tree Team in urban areas across the Borough.
- Sites for new planting include those set out in the Council's Tree Strategy, sites where requests have been received from residents and Members, along with areas of the Borough where the extent of tree cover is low.
- In addition to this, there are a very limited number of memorial trees planted each year.

What are the costs?

- The individual cost of trees varies, depending on type and size. On average, it costs £179 per tree to plant and maintain e.g. mulch and water, in the first year.
- There will be variations in expense each year, depending on the number of trees, variety and size planted. For example:
    - In 2018/19 we planted 145 trees and spent £45,000, including watering and mulching.
    - In 2019/20 we planted 140 trees and spent £37,000, including watering and mulching.
- A proportion of the annual watering and mulching costs include those for trees planted in previous years as it can take between 3-5 years for a tree to become fully self-sufficient.
- Due to the financial challenges being faced and the interim budget put in place pending the outcome of the Tree Service Review, very little tree planting has taken place recently.

The role of trees in helping to mitigate the effects of climate change

- The Council's Climate Change Action Plan identifies projects and actions to reduce or eliminate the Council's carbon emissions.
- The plan also highlights the need to offset emissions where we cannot reduce or eliminate our carbon output.
- Strategic tree planting on Council owned land was identified as a potential opportunity to be explored to help offset some of the Council's carbon emissions.
- There are broader environmental benefits to tree planting e.g. habitat provision and flood risk reduction.
- To achieve official carbon offsetting accreditation is a costly, complicated and slow process.
- Whilst Strategic Tree Planting could play a role, it is likely that much bigger gains will be made through projects that either aim to eliminate emissions, such as switching to a green energy suppliers, or reduce them e.g. exploring opportunities for replacing some of the Council's fleet with low emission vehicles.

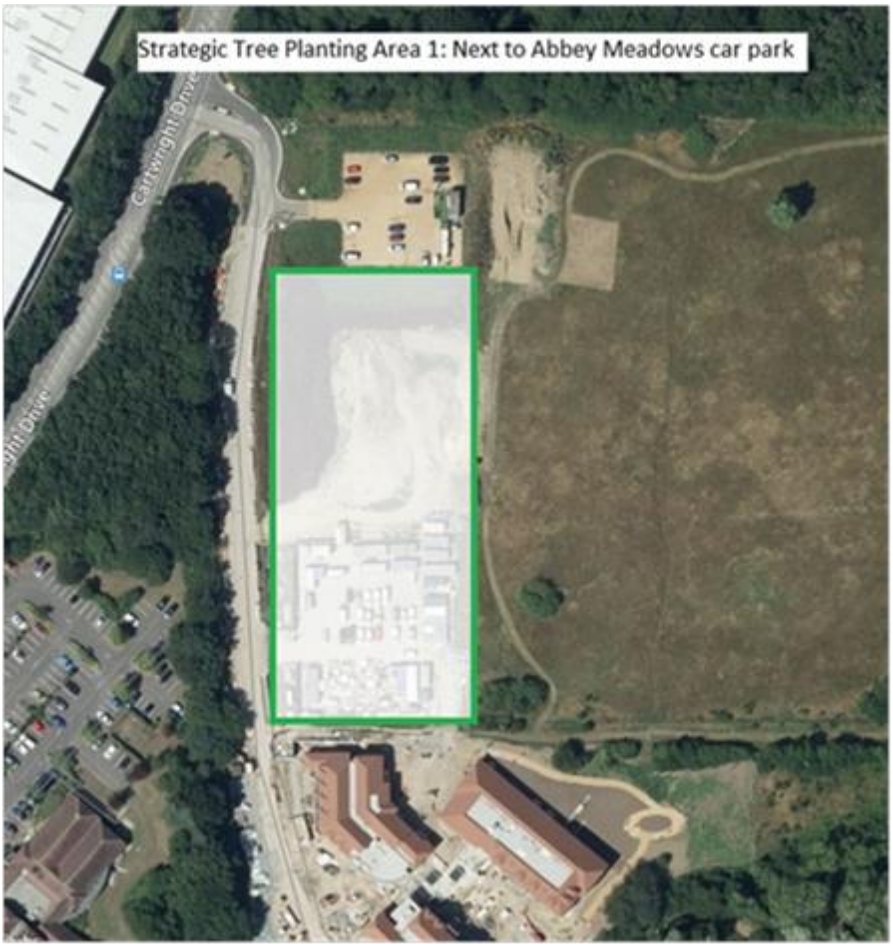
The benefits of a strategic approach to tree planting

- Planting trees together in groups (i.e. strategically), can provide greater benefits than planting trees in very small numbers on an ad-hoc basis.
- Larger scale planting can provide wider areas of shade and larger habitat areas for wildlife, whilst reducing soil erosion.
- In addition, the process of maintaining the trees is made easier by having large numbers of trees grouped together in a smaller number of locations. This reduces the number of trips needed and the amount of fuel used to travel to different locations, providing economies of scale.
- There are a number of grant sources available that the Council can look to tap into to help fund the planting of trees.
- These are often linked to the involvement of the local community organisations. The grants tend to fund larger planting schemes as opposed ad hoc trees.
- It is anticipated that these types of funding opportunities are likely to remain available for the foreseeable future.
- In order to maximise the potential gains a considered approach is needed that takes account the conditions of any proposed planting site.

Proposed approach

In order to retain the landscape and community value of trees in areas of public open space, whilst ensuring that the Council benefits from strategic tree planting it is proposed that:

- Dead or removed trees continue to be replaced in a like for like manner where appropriate in public urban open spaces.
- Additional tree planting will take place on strategic tree sites only.
- These are likely to be in country park areas where there is capacity for additional areas of relatively large-scale block planting.
- At present two potential sites for strategic planting have been identified: the larger of the two is alongside Abbey Meadows Country Park with a second potential site close to Holly Hill Leisure Centre. Other potential sites will continue to be explored across the Borough.
- The overhead view on the next page identifies the one potential exemplar Strategic Tree Planting site: an area of approximately 2 hectares by the car park at Abbey Meadows.
- Any potential new strategic site would require feasibility assessments carried out to fully understand the context of the site e.g. soil conditions and any potential constraints.
- This would then allow the calculation of a proposed cost for planting at the site. This would include any enabling works required, as well as tree planting, watering, and mulching costs.
- Options for external grant funding will be explored for each potential site.
- Potential sites deemed suitable following this work would then be presented to the Executive for approval, along with the funding needed for each site.
- Each site would represent a growth area and would need to be included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- The existing countryside volunteer resource is not sufficient to help manage any new Strategic Planting sites.
- Whilst the Council will be undertaking the planting and management to begin with, over the long term they present a good opportunity to build links with community organisations.
- Working with the community will open up opportunities to apply for grant funding to provide for tree planting and may well lead to further teams of volunteers looking to help with the management of these sites.
- It will take time to build sufficient level of volunteers trained to do this.
- Streetscene will also re-evaluate their priorities to accommodate tree planting, mulching and watering wherever possible in the strategic planting areas.



- The proposed approach to tree planting will reduce expenditure by around £19,500 compared to the actual spend in 2019/20, leaving a level of spend of approximately £25,000 per year.
- Whilst replacement tree planting is likely to be undertaken by external contractors in the short-term, Streetscene will re-evaluate their priorities to see if they can accommodate replacement tree planting.

8. Adopting Land

The Councils approach to adopting land

Fareham has had a long history of adopting land that comes forward through the planning process. There are two main types of development where this occurs:

- Larger residential development sites that have areas of green space included within proposals. This approach gives the Council control over large areas of green space within the Borough, without people needing to pay any additional estate management charges
- Exceptional sites such as Coldeast or Daedalus Common that come forward rarely.

It's also important to note that there are two overall types of trees that we take responsibility for:

- Trees already onsite which are often already mature which require inspections and maintenance
- New planting such as saplings, agreed as part of the development scheme, which require additional support e.g. watering and mulching in their first few years and then eventually inspections and maintenance when mature

The Council currently applies a flat rate charge (per square metre) to adopt land irrespective of whether it contains trees or not. This rate has not been reviewed for a number of years.

Impact of the Council's current approach

Whilst there are many benefits to the Council's approach to adopting land, as the Council adopts more land, trees often come with the land as does the legal responsibilities for managing them.

The number of trees actively managed by the Council increased by 110% over a ten-year period. The number of actual trees taken on by the Council has increased by many times this amount as it is not required to actively manage many of the trees it owns. This is as a direct result of the Council adopting more land.

The annual spend for managing trees in 2019/20 was £247,492 higher than in 2011/12.

Future projections

There is significant development allocated in the Publication Version of the Local Plan with a number of large sites being proposed.

These are likely to contain considerable areas of green space and, in many instances, it is likely that they will contain large number of trees.

If the Council wishes to continue with its current approach of adopting land wherever developers are happy for the Council to do so, this will continue to add to the spending pressures arising from the management of Council owned trees.

For example, if Fareham continues to adopt trees at its current rate of approximately 700 a year (not counting Coldeast) then the annual tree maintenance and inspection costs will increase by approximately:

- £67,070 over the next 5 years
- £134,140 over the next 10 years

Considering the financial challenges faced by the Council, our current approach to adopting land and funding its maintenance, even with the other savings proposed in this report is not sustainable in the long term.

Do other Councils in Hampshire adopt all public open space?

No other Council in Hampshire adopts land as their default approach. Some adopt land in exceptional circumstances. Many either allow Parish Councils to manage such sites, or ensure arrangements are in place for private management companies to undertake the management in perpetuity.

Some of those Councils who adopt land charge a rate which reflects the costs of managing trees where necessary.

Proposed Approach

Based on the cost implications associated with adopting land it is important to consider the Council's strategic approach. The Council can:

- A) Increase service budget as tree stock increases; or
- B) Seek to recover the full costs of managing trees from developers, at the point where the Council adopts land

Option A will represent a continuing spending pressure on the Council's in respect of tree management.

Seeking to secure the future costs of managing trees at the point where land is adopted, will manage and mitigate likely future spending on the Council's tree management budget.

There may well be an increased likelihood that developers make arrangements for private estate management companies to manage public open space and trees, rather than paying the Council higher levels of contributions to adopt the land.

Policy CS20 Infrastructure and Development Contributions, of the adopted Core Strategy, states:

"Development will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of infrastructure through planning conditions, legal agreement or directly through the service provider. Contributions or provision may also be required to mitigate the impact of development upon infrastructure. Detailed guidance on provision or contributions is or will be set out in Supplementary Planning Document(s) including any standard charges introduced through the Community Infrastructure Levy. Provision or financial contributions will be required to include arrangements for on-going maintenance where necessary and appropriate. Phasing of development will be related to the provision of infrastructure. Consideration will be given to pooling of contributions towards the cost of facilities."

The cost the Council charges for maintaining public open space is set out within Fareham Borough Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for the Borough of Fareham (excluding Welborne). Within the section relating to the 'Maintenance of Open Space' (at paragraphs C.15 and C.16 of that document), it states that 'Where maintenance is secured by means of a development contribution, the amount due will be calculated using Table 7 below which will be revised as at 1 April annually in line with inflation (the Council will use the published Retail Price Index), unless otherwise justified, for example, by a greater than average rise in the costs associated with replacing children's play equipment.

At the present time the Council seeks a contribution of £6 per square metre (index linked from April 2015) for maintaining parks and amenity open space land it adopts. As a result of the detailed work that has been undertaken as part of the review of the Council's trees, it is clear that the cost of maintaining such land when it contains trees is considerably higher than the level of contribution presently secured. It is recommended that where the Council adopts land containing trees which it will be required to actively manage, a maintenance contribution of £500 (index linked from April 2021) should be secured for each tree, above the £6 per square metre (index linked). The introduction of such an increase in cost in relation to maintenance contributions is justified within Paragraph C.16 of the adopted Supplementary Planning Document.

It will also be appropriate for the Council to ensure that any trees on land being adopted by the Council, are in good order and have had any necessary works undertaken to ensure they do not present a risk to people or property, before being adopted.

9. Proposed Budget Overview

This report is based on the analysis of the actual expenditure from the baseline year of 2019/20, when the actual spend was £399,480 compared to a budget of £120,600 plus £30,000 from recharges to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for works carried out on Fareham Housing land.

As mentioned previously, an interim budget of £200,600 plus the £30,000 HRA recharge, was set for 2020/21 and 2021/22, pending the outcome of this review. Significant savings were made during these two years, however, certain works were curtailed or delayed, and the budget level was not seen as fully sustainable in the long term.

Potential options to reduce the level of spend that have been discussed in this paper total £137,700. However, some of these would not be available until 2022/23.

As shown in Table 4 below, the overall proposed level of expenditure including these options would be a reduction of £140,500 compared to the actual spend in 2019/20. However, the proposed approach would require an increase in budget provision of £28,400 when compared to the budget set for the last 2 years. This additional budget is an accurate reflection of the cost of managing the increased number of trees that the Council now controls.

Table 4: Comparison of Proposals to the last 2 years expenditure budget and actual spend in 2019/20

Element of Service	**2019/20 – Actual Expenditure**	**2020/21 – Actual Expenditure**	**Proposed Level of Expenditure**
Budget	**£120,600 + £30,000 HRA**	**£200,600 + £30,000 HRA**	***£229,000 + £30,000 HRA***
Planned Tree Works	£211,323	£161,059	*£180,000*
Good neighbour works	£71,895	£26,032	*0*
Tree Inspections	£45,077	£22,715	*£30,000*
Tree planting & young tree maintenance	£44,366	£13,991	*£25,000*
General e.g. software, insurance claim related works	£12,485	£6,300	*£10,000*
Urgent call outs	£14,333.	£22,826	*£14,000*
Gross Expenditure	**£399,480**	**£252,923**	***£259,000***
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) recharge	-£27,647	-£32,948	*-£30,000*
Net Expenditure	**£371,833**	**£219,975**	***£229,000***
Overspend	**£251,233**	**£19,375**	

The proposed maintenance contribution for adopting land with trees on would help ensure that the service remains financially sustainable as we adopt more land in the future.

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision
21 September 2021

Portfolio:	Policy and Resources
Subject:	**Disposal of Trinity Street Public Conveniences**
Report of:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Corporate Priorities:	A Dynamic, Prudent and Progressive Council

Purpose:
To consider the proposed disposal of the Trinity Street public conveniences

Executive summary:
The Trinity Street Public Conveniences are considered to be surplus to requirement and Churchill Retirement Living wish to purchase the site in conjunction with their purchase of the adjacent former magistrates' court site. Terms have been provisionally agreed.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Executive approves the disposal of the Trinity Street Public Conveniences on the terms and conditions as detailed in the Confidential Appendix A attached to this report.

Reason:
To dispose of surplus land and to receive a capital receipt.

Cost of proposals
Terms of the proposed disposal are commercially confidential and are contained in Appendix A.

Appendices: **A:** Terms and conditions of sale (Confidential)

Background papers: None

Reference papers: None

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	21 September 2021
Subject:	Disposal of Trinity Street Public Conveniences
Briefing by:	Director of Planning and Regeneration
Portfolio:	Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. The Trinity Street public conveniences have been closed for a number of years following a long-term problem with antisocial behaviour. Churchill Retirement Living are buying the adjacent former Magistrates Court site and wish to purchase the public convenience site from the Borough Council.

PROPOSALS

2. At the time of writing there exists a favourable resolution to grant planning permission by the Planning Committee in respect of the application P/18/1261/OA for the demolition and redevelopment of the former magistrate's court site and work is proceeding on the Section 106 agreements. The toilet site is not included in that application but subject to planning permission could be utilised for ancillary infrastructure works such as the siting of a substation or enclosed refuse storage. It will not be utilised for habitable accommodation.

3. Terms have been provisionally agreed for the disposal of the public convenience site (subject to planning etc) and are reported in Confidential Appendix A. The consideration is in accordance with S123(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 and represents the best consideration that can be reasonably obtained by the Council.

4. The consideration is in excess of the current level for which Delegated Powers have been granted to Chief Officers, for the disposal of an asset, and so approval is therefore sought from the Executive.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. The sale proceeds will go to the capital receipts reserve to be used against future capital projects.

CONCLUSION

6. The provisionally agreed terms are recommended for approval.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Karen Boothroyd (Ext 4319)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision
21 September 2021

Portfolio:	Policy and Resources
Subject:	**Citizen of Honour Award – Special Group Achievement Category**
Report of:	Head of Democratic Services
Corporate Priorities:	Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities

Purpose:
To consider the proposal of presenting a Special Group Achievement Award under the Citizen of Honour scheme, to Acts of Kindness (Solent) for its outstanding contribution and support to the residents of the Borough.

Executive summary:
The Executive has previously agreed arrangements for a Special Group Achievement Category under the Citizen of Honour Award Scheme for outstanding contribution in support of the local community and voluntary groups and organisations in the Borough.

It is proposed that a Special Group Achievement award be presented to Acts of Kindness (Solent) to recognise its outstanding contribution to improving the lives of residents of the Borough.

Recommendation/Recommended Option:
It is recommended that the Executive agrees to present Acts of Kindness (Solent) with a Citizen of Honour Special Group Achievement Award in recognition of its outstanding contribution and support of the local community and the residents of the borough of Fareham.

Reason:
To recognise the contribution made to the lives of Fareham residents by Acts of Kindness (Solent).

Cost of proposals:
The cost of this proposal is to be met from existing resources for civic events.

Appendices: None

Background papers: None

Reference papers: Executive Report – 9 March 2009
Citizen of Honour Award Scheme -Special Achievement Category

Executive Report – 9 July 2018
Citizen of Honour Award Scheme – Special Group Achievement Category

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	21 September 2021
Subject:	Citizen of Honour Award – Special Group Achievement Category
Briefing by:	Head of Democratic Services
Portfolio:	Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. The Citizen of Honour award scheme was introduced in 1996 to recognise notable voluntary and unpaid service provided to the community by Borough residents. It was first modified in 2001 to include young citizens who had acted bravely, undertook regular selfless acts or were adapting to a disability.

2. The Special Achievement category was introduced in 2009 to recognise residents who had made a notable and significant achievement in their field, and in July 2018 the Executive agreed arrangements for a Special Group Achievement category to recognise and celebrate special achievements to allow occasional awards to be made to community groups, voluntary organisations and charities that have made outstanding contributions to the lives of people living in the Borough. Unlike the normal Citizen of Honour Awards, nominations can be put forward at any time.

3. This report seeks approval for a Special Group Achievement award to be made to Acts of Kindness (Solent) in recognition of its outstanding contribution and support to improving the lives of residents of the Borough.

BACKGROUND

4. Acts of Kindness (Solent) was founded by Kerry Snuggs, (previous Citizen of Honour award winner) in 2014 to help people in the local community and now has more than 200 volunteers. It helps those facing immediate crisis with food, clothing and furniture and helps with community projects ranging from gardening projects through to laptops for children and dedicated Easter and Christmas campaigns.

5. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the charity has fed more than 7,000 people, providing enough food for seven days including fresh fruit, vegetables, bread and eggs to provide a nutritious menu. It continues to feed around 200 people a week.

PROPOSAL

6. It is proposed that a Special Group Achievement award be presented to Acts of Kindness (Solent) in recognition of their outstanding contribution and support to people living in the Borough.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no significant financial implications associated with this award. As per the scheme agreed by the Executive, any costs will be covered by the existing Civic events budget.

CONCLUSION

8. That the Executive agrees to present Acts of Kindness (Solent) with a Citizen of Honour Special Group Achievement Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution and support of the local community and the residents of the borough of Fareham.

9. An engraved shield will be presented to Acts of Kindness (Solent) by the Mayor.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Pauline Lock (Ext 4400)

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision
21 September 2021

Portfolio:	Policy and Resources
Subject:	**Citizen of Honour Award Scheme – Special Achievement Category**
Report of:	Head of Democratic Services
Corporate Priorities:	Strong, Safe, Inclusive and Healthy Communities

Purpose:
To consider the proposal of presenting a Special Achievement Award, under the Citizen of Honour scheme, to Declan Brooks in recognition of winning a bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games in the men's BMX Freestyle Cycling.

Executive summary:
The Executive has previously agreed arrangements for a Special Achievement Category, under the Citizen of Honour Award Scheme, to recognise and celebrate special achievements of residents within the Borough.

Declan Brooks is a Fareham resident and recently competed for Great Britain in the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics. Declan succeeded in winning a bronze medal in the men's BMX Freestyle Cycling. It is proposed that a Special Achievement award be presented to Declan in recognition of his sporting achievement.

Recommendation/Recommended Option:
It is recommended that the Executive agrees to present Declan Brooks with a Citizen of Honour Special Achievement Award in recognition of winning a bronze medal in the men's BMX Freestyle Cycling at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games.

Reason:
To recognise the special achievement made by winning a bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games.

Cost of proposals:
The cost of the award will be met from existing resources for Civic events.

Appendices: None

Background papers: None

Reference papers: Executive Report – 9 March 2009
Citizen of Honour Award Scheme – Special Achievement Category

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	21 September 2021
Subject:	Citizen of Honour Award Scheme – Special Achievement Category
Briefing by:	Head of Democratic Services
Portfolio:	Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. The Citizen of Honour award scheme was introduced in 1996 to recognise notable voluntary and unpaid service provided to the community by Borough residents. It was first modified in 2001 to include young citizens who had acted bravely, undertook regular selfless acts or were adapting to a disability.

2. The Special Achievement category was introduced in 2009 to recognise residents who had made a notable and significant achievement in their field. Unlike the normal Citizen of Honour Awards, nominations can be put forward at any time.

3. This report seeks approval for a Special Achievement award to be made to a local resident, in support of their sporting achievement at an international level.

BACKGROUND

4. Declan Brooks is a Fareham resident and recently competed in the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games. Declan succeeded in finishing third, winning a bronze medal for Great Britain in the debut men's BMX Freestyle Cycling event.

5. It is proposed that a Special Achievement award be presented to Declan in recognition of his outstanding sporting achievement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There are no significant financial implications associated with this award. As per the scheme, agreed by the Executive, any costs will be covered by the existing Civic events budget.

PROPOSAL

7. That Declan Brooks is presented with a Citizen of Honour Special Achievement Award in recognition of winning a bronze medal at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games in the men's BMX Freestyle Cycling.

CONCLUSION

8. That the Executive agrees to present Declan Brooks with a Citizen of Honour Special Achievement Award in recognition of winning a bronze medal in the men's BMX Freestyle Cycling at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Pauline Lock (Ext 4400)

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to the Executive for Decision
21 September 2021

Portfolio:	Policy & Resources
Subject:	**COVID Heroes Awards Nominations**
Report of:	Director of Leisure and Community
Corporate Priority:	Strong, safe, inclusive and healthy communities

Purpose:
This report presents nominations for consideration under the Council's special COVID Heroes award scheme 2021.

Executive summary:
It was agreed at the Executive Meeting on 1 March 2021 that the annual Citizen of Honour and Young Citizen of Honour Awards were rested for one year and replaced with a new one-year initiative – the COVID Heroes Awards.

The Council launched the COVID Heroes Awards scheme in April 2021, to recognise the organisations and individuals of all ages who worked tirelessly to support those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID Heroes Awards take the place of the Council's annual 'Citizen and Young Citizen of Honour Awards' for one year only. There are three categories:

- Adults (over 18). In recognition of outstanding service to the community or contribution to helping the lives of others during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Young People (under 18). In recognition of outstanding personal achievements or becoming a role model to family, friends or the community.
- Organisations. In recognition of outstanding community service during the COVID-19 pandemic and going above and beyond to help the Fareham community.

The Council received 85 nominations overall. There are 53 nominations for the Adults category, eight nominations for the Young People category and 24 nominations in the organisations category. All those nominated will receive a Certificate of Appreciation, signed by the Mayor and the Executive Leader.

There will be up to five selected winners for each category, chosen by the Executive. All winners would receive a medal and entry into the Council's roll of honour.

Recommendation/Recommended Option:
It is recommended that the Executive selects five candidates in each of the three categories from the attached nominations to be recognised in the COVID Heroes Awards 2021

Reason:
Due to the pandemic many vulnerable residents have needed, and received, help on an unprecedented scale, and many residents and organisations have responded wholeheartedly to meet this need. The COVID Heroes Awards were created to allow the Council to recognise the people and organisations who have stepped up. The scheme replaces Citizen of Honour awards for one year only.

Cost of proposals:
All associated costs regarding the COVID Heroes Awards will be met from existing resources.

Appendices:	**Appendix A – Confidential: COVID Heroes Awards Nominations 2021 Ages 18 and over** **Appendix B – Confidential: COVID Heroes Awards Nominations 2021 Ages under 18** **Appendix C - Confidential: COVID Heroes Awards Nominations 2021 Organisations**
Background papers:	**Report to the Executive for Decision 01 March 2021**

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Briefing Paper

Date:	21 September 2021
Subject:	COVID Heroes Awards 2021
Briefing by:	Director of Leisure and Community
Portfolio:	Policy and Resources

INTRODUCTION

1. It was agreed at the Executive Meeting on 1 March 2021 that the annual Citizen of Honour and Young Citizen of Honour Awards were rested for one year and replaced with a new one-year initiative – the COVID Heroes Awards.

2. The COVID Heroes Awards were launched in April 2021, to replace the Citizen of Honour Awards for one year only.

3. The primary reason for the awards is to recognise the exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic and show the Council's gratitude to those individuals and organisations who have gone above and beyond to help others impacted by the crisis.

4. To demonstrate the importance and distinction of these awards, all winners will receive a medal and entry into the Council's roll of honour.

5. Everyone nominated for an award will receive a certificate of appreciation, signed by the Mayor and the Executive Leader of the Council, as a gesture of thanks. These will be sent to each recipient by post.

6. Winners from each category will receive a certificate and display medal. Presentation of these awards will depend on ongoing safety procedures following the pandemic and will be considered at a later date.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

7. In order to encourage greater participation in the scheme a marketing campaign was implemented. A logo was created and used to promote the awards.

8. Due to the ongoing pandemic a strong social media campaign was used to promote the awards. Regular 'Tweets' and 'Posts' were placed on Twitter and Facebook to encourage nominations.

9. One Community helped to promote the awards through their newsletters and channels.

10. The awards were featured in the local press such as the Daily Echo.

11. All information about the scheme is on the Council's website and was shown on the main story rotator on the home page throughout the campaign.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE AWARDS

12. This year, the Council has received 85 nominations overall:

    - 8 nominations in the Young People Category
    - 53 nominations in the Adult Category
    - 24 nominations in the Corporate Category

OFFICIAL PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

13. Everyone nominated for the award will receive a certificate of appreciation, signed by the Mayor and the Executive Leader of the Council, as a gesture of thanks. The signed certificate will be sent to each recipient by post.

14. There will be five overall winners selected from the adult and young person categories, chosen by the Executive. All winners will receive a display medal and entry into the Council's roll of honour.

15. A large number of nominations were received for one particular organisation, all of which were very similar in nature. It is therefore proposed that one of the Organisation Awards is pre-allocated to this organisation due to the huge number of volunteers who worked on its behalf to assist the community throughout the pandemic. Therefore, only four additional organisations should be chosen by the Executive in this category.

16. It is usual practice for this report to outline details of an event to welcome winners to the Civic Offices to be presented their medals and certificates by the Mayor. However due to ongoing safety concerns following the pandemic this event will need to be considered and arranged separately from this report if appropriate at a future date.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The funding of this awards scheme can be met from existing resources.

PROPOSAL

18. The Executive is requested to consider all the nominations as presented and select up to five successful winners from the Adult and Children categories, and four winners from the Organisation category, to be formally recognised as COVID Heroes 2021.

RISK ASSESSMENT

19. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

20. The COVID Heroes Awards recognises the exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic and shows the Council's gratitude to those individuals and organisations who

have gone above and beyond to help others during these unprecedented times.

21. This report presents the strongest nominations for the COVID Heroes Awards and requests that the Executive considers and selects five winning nominees from each category.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Jan Lasnon (Ext 4302)

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