

STRONGER COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Date: 15 March 2021
Title: Trees Update
Contact Officer: Operations & Estates Advisor – John Hickman

Background

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress off the tree survey, tree works and tree planting.

Current Situation

Wychwood Tree Planting

Wychwood Project tree planting, the Operations and Estates Advisor has been advised by the Wychwood Project that they are in the process of planting the trees agreed by Council at the current time.

Tree Survey

The 2020 tree survey report tree works have been commission with the exception of T792 and T794 with the tree surgeons and will be completed as soon as they are able to do so.

T792 Pensclose and T794 Cogges Hill Road.

The suggested works by the Landscape and Forestry officer following complaints to WODC following the felling of an Oak tree in the close vicinity by others for subsidence issues has prevented the intended action to fell and plant replacements for these two trees. Alternative suggestions by the WODC Landscape and Forestry Officer to reduce the trees substantially for now and replant in preparation for the removal of these trees in the future has been discussed with the Councils tree consultants. The tree consultants have suggested that it would still not be known if the trees are safe to remain even with these works undertaken The tree consultants have suggested that they could carry out a pull test in one direction only (so avoiding the traffic management issues), as that would not give full information but enough to make a better management decision and would provide more justification to present to the residents.

This would reduce the cost of the pull test substantially and if the tree/s had to be removed would give the council the evidence as to why it had to do so for the residents. If the trees were currently safe enough to remain then tree planting future replacements for these trees this Autumn would be suggested so the new trees have time to establish before the original trees do have to be felled. The Operations and Estates Advisor has requested the tree

consultants provide a quote for the pull tests to be carried as they now suggest, but estimates this will be approx. half the original cost suggested in the original report.

Lakeside Allotment Boundary Tree Pollarding Works.

The associated works to Lakeside Allotment boundary trees has been completed by the tree surgeons.

Tree works to fell T277, T280 & T281 Queen Emma's Dyke

These trees work already agreed by council will be commissioned and carried out in the next financial year 2021/2022. Residents will be notified of the intended actions regarding these trees approx. one month prior to it being carried out by letter drop to all resident's that surround the green the trees are on.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates. There is an environmental impact to felling the trees in the future requested within the Tree survey however council's policy of replacing lost trees and also the pre-emptive planting of trees should alleviate the trees felling impact for the future.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. The associated risk from the trees that have been highlighted as high risk or require detailed investigation or felling.

Financial implications

The associated costs for Tree works to be taken from 4040/402 Arboriculture.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

- The suggested works to T792 and T794 and the programming of replacement trees to be planted this Autumn in preparation for the future removal of these trees.