
MEETING	DECISION SESSION - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & TOURISM
DATE	18 DECEMBER 2017
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR REID

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Member confirmed that she had no personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, nor any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, to declare in the business on the agenda.

50. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 23 October 2017 be approved, and signed as a correct record.

51. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Written representations had been received in respect of Agenda item 4 (Update on the Arboricultural Management of Council Trees) from:-

- a) The Foxwood Residents Association, expressing disappointment that the council did not consult residents' associations on local tree management strategies and outlining matters which they felt should be included in such strategies, and
- b) Steve Galloway, highlighting increased complaints about overgrown trees and bushes in Westgate Ward, stressing the need for improved communication with residents and seeking more local discretion on tree and bush management.

52. UPDATE ON THE ARBORICULTURAL MANAGEMENT OF COUNCIL TREES

The Executive Member considered a report which explained how the council managed its own, 'public', trees (i.e. trees on the land it directly managed) and proposed a number of updates to the policy for the management of these trees.

The policy adopted in 2016 had helped to explain how work was prioritised and why complaints about 'dangerous' trees were often categorised as low priority. The changes proposed to the policy would enable ward committees to fund work on trees categorised as lower priority. They would also ensure that more details were recorded regarding the outcome of inspections and address the management of trees in woodlands and formal parks. The changes were summarised in paragraphs 15 to 18 of the report and the full policy, with proposed amendments and additions, was attached at Annex 1.

The Executive Member expressed support for the proposals, and noted that the policy did not apply to hedges. She raised concerns about street lights being obscured by trees, a problem she felt had been exacerbated by the new energy-saving LED lighting. Officers recognised the problem and committed to work on a case by case basis, in consultation with the Arboricultural Manager where necessary.

Resolved: (i) That the updated policy for the management of the council's public trees, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be approved, subject to the addition of the words '*and amenity space*' after '*formal Parks and Gardens*' in the new Policy Statement 19.

Reason: To ensure that the Council's duty of care towards tree management and protection remains consistent and transparent, and that resources are used to the best effect.

(ii) That Officers respond to those who have submitted written representations on this item and consider arranging a meeting with the representors.

Reason: In order to deal appropriately with the issues raised by the representors.

(iii) That a further update report be brought to the Executive Member in six months' time.

Reason: In order to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the updated policy.

CLlr A Reid, Interim Executive Member

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 4.43 pm].