



<b>Service Delivery Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 17 January 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>
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**Title:** Oadby and Wigston Tree Strategy – Public Consultation Draft

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report is to update the Committee on progress regarding the formerly titled “OWBC Tree Strategy” document, prior to commencing public consultation.

## **2. Recommendations**

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- 1) That this report be noted.
  - 2) That this Committee authorise a programme of public consultations regarding the current draft document. (This will be focussed on local residents’ groups; Civic Societies; Tree Wardens, and local educational establishments).
  - 3) That the Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager be authorised to make any further minor changes to the draft text that might arise from those intended consultations.
  - 4) That the Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager be instructed to report further to this Committee to authorise formal adoption of the finished document.

## **3. Information**

- 3.1 Members will be aware that a draft of the emerging Tree Strategy document was produced by external consultants just prior to Christmas 2015. The text of that draft required some further work before undertaking any public consultation on its contents. When consulted, a number of points were also made about suggested improvements by Elected Members – notably members of the Greening of the Borough Working Group.
- 3.2 Work on modifying the text was delayed until the newly appointed Arboricultural Officer was well in place and he might then add usefully to the final text. Finally and when “tested” against real world events that were occurring within the Planning Control environment and typical questions that routinely arise from members of the public, it became apparent that a number of further changes and additions to the text could usefully be incorporated.
- 3.3 The original draft text was very much a proclamation of this Council’s aspirations for the management of trees and woodlands throughout the Borough. However, it was of limited use in answering typical questions that arise from members of the public and would be developers.
- 3.4 The alternative text has now been completed and the current draft text is attached.
- 3.5 The key changes are:

- a) The original text and photographs have been retained, subject only to minor updating and deletion of the original “glossary” (which occupied several pages of the original).
  - b) Several new Chapters have been added with titles such as – “Trees and your property”, along with a new “FAQ’s” section, which addresses routine questions such as – “Who is responsible for maintaining a tree with a TPO?”
- 3.6 The effect of these changes has been to make the document altogether more “operational” than previously, and so likely to be referred to more frequently. Although its text has grown slightly, a truncated “quick reference” version has also been produced for use by officers such as Planning Duty Officers and customer facing staff at the Council’s Customer Service Centre. “Policies” and policy objectives within the draft document are likely to be reflected within the text of the emerging Local Plan
- 3.7 The Committee are asked to approve the current draft document as the subject of a six week public consultation exercise, with a view to finalising its text and formal adoption within the Spring of this year. The completion of those public consultations prior to adoption will serve to give the document “weight” as a material planning consideration.

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Implications	
<b>Financial (CR)</b>	No significant implications at this stage.
<b>Legal (AC)</b>	No significant implications at this stage.
<b>Risk (AT)</b>	No significant implications at this stage.
<b>Equalities (AT)</b>	Initial Screening attached.
	Equality Assessment
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Full Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable