

APPENDIX 1 Recommendations and Executive Response

STREET TREES SCRUTINY PANEL – EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

Recommendation	Executive response	Lead Officer Responsible
<p>R1 That the budget for Street Trees (and more generally the arboriculture budget) needs to be re-examined to ensure that it is sufficient to maintain an adequate regime of monitoring, inspection and works on the city's Street Tree stock.</p>	<p>By changing the method of pruning in Hove from tip pruning to composite pruning (this involves thinning the crown in addition to reducing the diameter of the tree's canopy), we have been able to re-schedule the frequency of pruning on the majority of Hove's trees and work within the existing budget. Under the new working arrangement, the west area Street Tree Rota (Hove) for 2007/2008 has been completed on time, the first time for a number of years and has attracted several positive comments. The previous high number of complaints has dropped dramatically. The new pruning regime has also incorporated work operations designed to eventually reduce the amount of epicormic growth growing low on the trunks. Currently one third of Hove's street trees have been reviewed and pruned under the new regime, with a further third to be surveyed by October and pruned during the autumn/winter period 2008/09.</p>	<p>Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager</p>

R2	That all alternative sources of income be explored in order to supplement the current Arboriculture budget.	The current Tree Donation Scheme has previously proved very successful in parks while Street tree locations attract few donors. A new Tree Trust has now been set up to incorporate the existing Tree Donation Scheme and allow a secondary element where smaller sums can be donated to a general planting fund, thus increasing the potential for tree planting across the City. The leaflet artwork is currently being finalised and a report on this will be presented to the Environmental Cabinet Member Meeting at an appropriate time. The Arboricultural Service has also been active in working with the public on Community planting in residential streets sharing funding with local residents to plant trees in areas that have not enjoyed tree cover previously. Warleigh Road was a noticeable success for the 2007/08 season and discussions with Residents of Stanley Road are well advanced for a similar scheme to take place in 2008/09.	Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager
R3	That whenever possible, the disposal of felled Street Trees should be on a commercial basis. When the sale of felled Street Trees is impractical, their disposal should be environmentally sustainable.	Despite the poor quality of street trees the sale of Elm Timber generally has attracted reasonable interest while other species have attracted none at all. However, the Arboricultural Service will continue to consider ways to promote more generalised timber sales. Where timber cannot	Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager

be sold as much as possible will be mechanically chipped and used as Mulch and as a soil improver.

R4	<p>That the Panel welcomes the Tree and Woodland Strategy, currently in draft form, and looks forward to seeing the completed document. The Panel hopes that its recommendations will inform this Strategy, and trusts that OSOC will request regular updates on the progress of the Strategy, and receive the proposed final strategy prior to its adoption.</p>	<p>The drafts of the Tree Strategy have been reviewed and edited. Recommendation of scrutiny will inform the strategy, subject to Environmental Cabinet Member Meeting approval.</p>	<p>Rob Greenland Arboricultur e Manager</p>
R5	<p>That the inspection and maintenance of all Council owned trees should be co-ordinated by the Council's Arboriculture division. Where other bodies are responsible for the maintenance of certain trees, and responsibility cannot be transferred to Arboriculture, they should be encouraged to refer to the Arboriculture Department for guidance on how to maintain their tree stock.</p> <p>Environment Committee should receive an annual stock report on street trees, to ensure regular inspections of trees are undertaken, to raise and maintain a Council profile with respect to street trees, and to monitor the overall numbers of street trees in the City. This report should</p>	<p>If the Council's arboriculture officers were to be responsible for the inspection and maintenance of other departments' trees, additional funding will need to be identified from those departments concerned. The Scrutiny Panel Report will be forwarded to departments with large land holdings to enable them to consider this issue.</p> <p>A summary of Street tree removal and planting will be made available to Members annually. A key street tree is elm and a report on the preservation of these will go to the Environmental Cabinet Member Meeting following the end of the Elm Disease infection period</p>	<p>Rob Greenland Arboricultur e Manager</p> <p>Rob Greenland Arboricultur e Manager</p>

contain sufficient information and analysis for the Committee to be able to make informed judgements about significant changes and areas for concern.

R6	That the Panel notes the value of integrated working between: a) various Council departments with responsibility for Street Trees, and, b) Council departments and Statutory Undertakers. The Panel recommends that arrangements for integrated working are formalised wherever possible and regular meetings between all agencies are arranged to discuss specific projects and general ways of working.	The Arboriculture Manager and the Highway Operations Manager have revised the Highways' policies in relation to trees and made progress towards ensuring that officers understand the full range of issues affecting trees. There is still need to improve liaison with statutory undertakers but discussion has taken place and will continue at the quarterly street works co-ordination meetings. Basic Maintenance: policies have been presented and agreed by Environment Committee in March 2008, and circulated to all Highway Basic Maintenance staff. (HBM) HBM team meetings have included discussion and plans regarding management of street trees, especially where tree roots are causing trip hazards. Assistant Engineer has been nominated as liaison officer to work with the Arboricultural team, acting as central point of contact to co-ordinate works. Major improvements have been made in liaison between Departments to co-ordinate stump grinding operations and reinstatement of footpaths. The purchase of an	Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager Christina Liassides Highway Operations Manager
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A representative of the Council's arboriculture department should be invited to all meetings where discussions about works in proximity to trees takes place.

'in-house' specialist grinding machine is currently being investigated and such provision is seen as a means to further improve the joint service delivery both physically and financially.
: Utilities are fully aware of their responsibility under the latest NJUG (National Joint Utilities Guidance), which is a recent revision and includes how to work in proximity with trees and their roots. Any issues that the Arboricultural team reports to Highways will be forwarded on to the Utilities via the quarterly council-utility co-ordination meetings.

Essential highway & transport provision and projects can enhance our street tree environment providing care is taken not to contribute to the pressure on street trees and their associated maintenance.

Sustainable Transport

Meetings are already in place for specific BM tree works.
The "Legibility" Steering Group, led by Sustainable Transport, oversees all major projects and schemes throughout the city and includes representatives from City Services, to ensure that there is a good focus on trees and other planting initiatives in the public realm. Sustainable Transport will inform the Arboricultural Service of

		small-scale schemes via circulation of proposed forthcoming project lists, with specific locations being identified by the Arboricultural service for further discussion as required.	
R7	That every opportunity be taken to develop and publicise educational materials relating to the city's Street Trees.	The Arboricultural Section provides informative pages on the Council's website in the form of 'Arboricultural Information Notes' covering diverse but related subjects and are looking into adding pages for younger residents. A number of leaflets covering diseases which affect the public directly, e.g. Elm Disease and Brown Tail Moth are also available on line and on demand. These are also available from a number of libraries and other public outlets. Recently, they have become involved in 'Springwatch' and 'Autumnwatch' in conjunction with the BBC, and have assisted in promoting the Elm population in the BBC television programme 'The trees that Made Britain' with officers from Kew Gardens. The Arboricultural Service will continue to promote 'Trees' at all opportunities.	Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager
R8	Recommendation – That the Panel is concerned about the lack of provision of trees on housing land and recommends that the Assistant Director of Housing Management should meet with Arboriculture officers to suggest ways in which this	The Scrutiny Committee Report will be forwarded to Housing and the arboriculture officers are available to offer guidance on tree planting. Senior Housing Managers and the Arboriculture Manager have commenced meetings with a	Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager (to pass on

situation might be remedied.	view to update the areas of concern and the way that tree works are managed in Tenancies. The Officers are also exploring ways to encourage residents in flats complexes to take on a 'Tree Warden' role. The Arboriculturists' will undertake to provide a basic level of training to assist in the identification of tree related problems and to provide an ' Information support ' pack. The Arboriculturists' will investigate all areas of grant-aided assistance that might be available for tree planting in these areas.	information)
[Note: The Overview and Scrutiny Organisation Committee approved this recommendation but agreed it should not be interpreted as a proposal that the Housing budget should automatically be used to pursue more planting on Housing owned land, bearing in mind all the competing budget pressures faced by Housing. It would be for Housing to consider whether it might be able to commit any Housing budget. The Committee considered that the Assistant Director, Housing Management and Arboriculture officers should initially concentrate on exploring alternative ways of remedying the lack of trees on housing land, other than through redirecting the Housing budget.]		
R9 That current good practice in encouraging Street Tree planting in major new developments across the city be continued.	The arboriculture officers will continue to recommend this when consulted on planning issues. The Planning Dept has also initiated new methods to gain additional street trees in areas near to where development is taking place, utilising Section 106 finances or goodwill.	Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager
R10 That the issue of unnecessary application of asphalt up to tree bases be examined by the	The Highways' Contractor Standard Instructions will not allow tarmacking up to the trees.	Christina Liassides

	<p>departments responsible and appropriate steps be taken to ensure that contractors are discouraged from doing engaging in this practice and are monitored accordingly.</p>	<p>Highway Inspectors will instruct the contractor to re-do new repairs if tarmac is put in unnecessarily at the base. However, because of safety reasons, it may be necessary on occasion to tarmac around the base; in these cases, the officers in the Highway Department will specifically agree it.</p> <p>Highways BM will continue to carry this out as described above, with formal annual reminders to contractors and more informal discussion and reminders via team meetings/site meetings.</p>	<p>Highway Operations Manager</p>
<p>R11</p>	<p>That the Panel does not encourage unnecessary removal of healthy trees, but recognises that there may be instances when a Street Tree poses such a severe hazard that its removal may be the best solution. In such cases the Panel recommends near-simultaneous re-planting of the same species where this is practical.</p>	<p>Problem trees are generally removed soon after the problem becomes apparent and this may be outside of the normal planting season so they cannot be replaced until the appropriate period. Officers would not recommend planting outside the season, October to March. Members need to be aware that trees which are damaging property are also removed, where root or branch pruning is not practical and no engineering solution exists.</p>	<p>Rob Greenland Arboriculture Manager</p>

