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**North
Northamptonshire
Council**

Meeting: EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth
Date: Thursday 4th August, 2022
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Remote Meeting via Zoom (this meeting is not the subject of public meeting requirements)
The meeting will be available for the public to view live at the 'Democratic Services North Northants' YouTube channel.

To members of the EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth

Councillors Harriet Pentland (Chair), Tim Allebone, Jennie Bone, Lyn Buckingham, Dez Dell, Jan O'Hara and Kevin Watt

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<p>Adele Wylie, Monitoring Officer North Northamptonshire Council</p>  <p>Proper Officer 27th July 2022</p>			

This agenda has been published by Democratic Services.

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Meetings at the Council Offices

This meeting will be held using the Zoom platform.

Members' Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded of their duty to ensure they abide by the approved Member Code of Conduct whilst undertaking their role as a Councillor. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, you must declare the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** other Registerable Interests, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but must not take part in any vote on the matter unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **relates to** your own financial interest (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or **relates to** a financial interest of a relative, friend or close associate, you must disclose the interest and not vote on the matter unless granted a dispensation. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.

Members are reminded that they should continue to adhere to the Council's approved rules and protocols during the conduct of meetings. These are contained in the Council's approved Constitution.

If Members have any queries as to whether a Declaration of Interest should be made please contact the Monitoring Officer at – monitoringofficer@northnorthants.gov.uk

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Any press or media enquiries should be directed through the Council's Communications Team to NNU-Comms-Team@northnorthants.gov.uk

Public Enquiries

Public enquiries regarding the Authority's meetings can be made to democraticservices@northnorthants.gov.uk

Agenda Item 3



Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth Held at 2.00 pm on Monday 11th July, 2022 as a Remote Meeting via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Harriet Pentland (Chair)
Councillor Jennie Bone
Councillor Dez Dell

Councillor Lyn Buckingham
Councillor Kevin Watt

Officers

Ian Achurch
George Candler
Catherine Clooney
Rob Harbour
Liam Faulkner
Chris Haines
Greg Haynes
Carol Mundy
Iain Smith
Raj Sohal
Jonathan Waterworth

Head of Development, Infrastructure and Funding
Executive Director – Place and Economy
Team Leader – Environmental Protection
Assistant Director – Growth and Regeneration
Senior Works Supervisor
Countryside Services Manager
Climate Change Officer
Senior Democratic Services Officer
Assistant Director – Regulatory Services
Democratic Services Officer
Assistant Director – Assets and Environment

61 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tim Allebone.

62 Members' Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

63 Minutes from Meeting held on 18 May 2022

RESOLVED that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2022 were approved as a correct record.

64 Levelling Up Fund (to follow)

The Panel considered a verbal update by the Head of Development, Infrastructure and Funding, regarding the Levelling Up Fund and how work in this area had progressed since June. The Head of Development, Infrastructure and Funding outlined the process by which levelling up projects had been identified and shortlisted.

The Executive Director of Place and Economy assured members that a paper report regarding the Levelling Up Fund would be circulated to members of the Panel following the meeting.

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Members queried which projects had been shortlisted and bid on.

In response, The Head of Development, Infrastructure and Funding clarified that:

- The shortlisted projects related primarily to the local authority's 'green agenda', net zero targets and inclusion accessibility improving life chances.

RESOLVED that:

The report be noted.

65 Pollinator Strategy

The Panel considered a presentation by the Countryside Services Manager, which outlined North Northamptonshire Council's pollinator policy and how it operated within the legislative framework of the Environmental Act 2021.

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Members commended the detail provided in the presentation and expressed support for the local authority's aims concerning pollinators.
- One member suggested that 'smart targets' should be implemented into the action plan of the pollinator strategy; particularly around chemical usage, such as Glyphosate.
- Members queried whether the spot spraying of pesticides had been included in the pollinator policy. One member also questioned whether an option existed for residents to opt out of their properties being sprayed with pesticides.
- Members queried whether work on highways linked into the pollinator policy - for example, the maintenance of verges on motorways.
- Members queried whether the pollinator policy would influence future planning policy and the forthcoming North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan. The Panel expressed support for the protection of pollination areas.
- One member posited that residents desired to see greater action concerning the maintenance of intersections, as tall grass and weeds reduced visibility for motorists.

In response, the Countryside Services Manager clarified that:

- Officers had considered smart targets and intended to keep them simple, for effective measurement. The local authority particularly sought to measure the amount of new habitat, which would be created through the pollinator strategy. The volume of pesticide usage would also be closely monitored.
- Ground services colleagues in Kettering would work with their counterparts in Wellingborough to implement the spot spraying of pesticides. The spraying of

urban areas in Kettering and Corby was carried out by the local authority. There was no blanket spraying.

- The policy linked into highways work, around the preservation of green areas on motorways and roundabouts.
- Officers had liaised with planning colleagues, as well as the county ecologist, to take a joint approach regarding the protection of pollination areas through future planning policy.
- By the end of 2023, the local authority would have accurate measurements and figures relating to chemical usage.

RESOLVED that:

The report be noted.

66 Draft Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) 2022 (to follow)

The Panel considered a report by the Team Leader of Environmental Protection, which provided a position statement on air quality in North Northamptonshire from 2021 data.

During discussion, the principal points were noted:

- Members queried whether there were concentrations of particulate matter at certain times of the day, when traffic volume was increased.
- One member highlighted that the World Health Organisation had recommended a safety level of ten Nitrogen Dioxide per cubic meter, while the UK government had set this level at twenty. The member questioned whether the local authority was looking forward to determine how it would deal with improving air quality to comply with such standards.

In response, the Team Leader clarified that:

- The local authority did not monitor particulates in North Northamptonshire. Nitrogen Dioxide levels were measured on average - readings were available monthly. North Northamptonshire Council did not have any automatic monitoring sites, primarily due to the fact that they were expensive to operate.
- The local authority would utilise action plans, to ensure air quality could be improved to comply with government standards - without a sole dependence on producing AQMAs, when required to do so.

RESOLVED that:

The report be noted.

67 Close of Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel would be held virtually, via Zoom, on Thursday 4th August at 2:00pm.



Executive Advisory Panel Climate Change Environment and Growth Thursday 4th August 2022

Report Title	Tree Management & Care Policy
Report Author	George Candler, Executive Director for Place & Economy and Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member	Councillor Harriet Pentland, Executive Member for Climate & the Green Environment

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Tree Management & Care Policy

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To introduce a North Northamptonshire wide Tree Management & Care Policy for review and approval by the Executive Advisory Panel.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Policy document in Appendix 1, outlines the operational principles to be adopted in the management of North Northamptonshire’s trees, to ensure the council adopts best practice and meets its duty of care, legal, and health & safety obligations.
- 2.2 The policy has been developed with consideration of the council’s obligations under the Environment Act 2021, which includes provisions to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023, and so will be compatible with these duties.

2.3 The detailed Policy is provided in the appendix A. It is intended that the policies in this document will be published on the council's website in a suitable format once it is adopted.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Executive Advisory Panel consider and provide feedback on the Tree Management & Care Policy at **Appendix A**.

3.2 The reasons for the recommendation are:

- A harmonised policy will offer one consistent approach to tree management across the council.
 - A harmonised policy will minimise current issues with different approaches to requests for work and enable the Council to meet its duty of care, legal and health and safety obligations.
 - The policy provides the basis for unifying the varying practices adopted by the legacy councils.
 - The policy supports the Council's key commitments to a Greener, sustainable environment and the council's obligations under the Environment Act 2021, which includes provisions to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023.
 - The council receives many queries from the public about its trees and there is a wide range of expectations about the council's responsibilities. The policy provides a clear statement to residents of how the council is seeking to manage its trees and a sound basis for officers to respond to queries.
 - The policy provides a foundation on which to develop a wider, comprehensive tree strategy which will include aspirational targets for planting and woodland expansion.
-

3.3 Alternative Options Considered:

The only other option is to not have clear policies for tree care and management, delaying harmonisation of working practices and fragmented Policies across the separate service areas.

This is not an option that can continue to be maintained effectively over time.

The option to not to have a Council wide tree policy and to continue with management under existing practices and policies has been discounted in favour of harmonising working practices and Policies as soon as possible, clearly establishing consistent guiding principles for the care and management of trees for North Northamptonshire Council and improving the service.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 North Northamptonshire Council, as a major landowner and Highway Authority is responsible for the care and management of thousands of trees, and for ensuring the safety of its residents. The different service areas and teams involved in tree work across the council are in the process of integrating working practices and systems and this policy provides a unifying set of principles to work under.
- 4.2 The policy document gives clear unambiguous statements for officers working in all Directorates with a responsibility for the management and care of trees to implement. This will help ensure that the Council meets its duty of care, legal and health and safety obligations whilst not exposing itself to any undue liability. All agents, partners and contractors of the council will be requested to comply with these policies. Following consultation with the established working group, the policies have been collated into six policy statement areas:
- Over-arching Umbrella
 - Planting
 - Maintenance
 - Protection
 - Subsidence
 - Felling and Pruning
- 4.3 This Policy document will assist the Council to meet its key priorities including:
- Protect and enhancing the landscape of the towns, villages, countryside, and public open spaces.
 - Enhancing the natural environment and ecology in accordance with the council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy commitments and other relevant council policies such as the Pollinator Policy.
 - Developing a Tree Strategy to increase coverage and improve the long-term care of our tree stock.
 - Realisation of the social, economic, and environmental benefits of trees, including as a means of carbon sequestration
 - The sustainable increase of tree and woodland cover in the NNC area under the principle of 'the right tree in the right place'.
- 4.4 Policy outcomes:
- Increase overall tree and canopy cover.
 - Maintain the tree stock in a safe condition.
 - Maintain the tree stock to ensure maximum life cycles are achieved.
 - Enhance the environment and associated amenity space.
 - Reduce the number of foreseeable tree failures across the Councils landownership.
 - Reduce the overall number of tree related insurance claims raised against the Council.
 - Respond with consistency to requests for work to be undertaken to trees.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 How the council manages its trees in towns, villages, and streets, in particular gives rise to a wide range of public enquiries and complaints. Many of these arise from lack of a clear understanding of the council's responsibilities and policies in relation to trees. Clear policies published on the council's web site will help officers manage these enquiries effectively.
- 5.2 Whilst the Council has a legal duty to maintain its tree stock in a safe way, as a significant landowner across North Northamptonshire it has the ability to utilise its green space to enhance the environment for residents, and importantly support climate change mitigation and biodiversity improvement.
- 5.3 The proposed policy aims to strike a balance to the above competing objectives, by providing safeguards for tree and woodlands, and clearly setting out in what circumstance the Council will undertake works to trees, including felling and removal.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 To formally adopt the policy and implement its use, including the following action plan:
- Publish policy on the Councils website.
 - Continue the work of the Tree management Working Group to reduce the division of responsibility for Council trees by integrating tree management.
 - Create a comprehensive web landing page for tree management information and guidance.
 - Develop a comprehensive Tree Strategy, including analysis of existing tree data on canopy cover and inspection surveys. This is vital before any meaningful management plans can be developed.
 - An action plan will be produced, setting out the Councils ambitions within a 5 and 10 year timeframe, divided into main objectives linked to existing Council Priorities and Policies, covering protection of existing trees, care of existing trees and planting and establishment of new trees.
 - Further detail on actions is provided within section 5.3 on Appendix A.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1 There are no direct financial or transformation implications from the policy beyond the existing obligations already placed on the Council as landowner by law.
- 7.1.2 Budgets exist for tree maintenance, typically covering safety works only. Works to trees can be expensive and resource intensive. As part of the further work to fully understand the councils tree stock condition it is anticipated that financial resource will be required. Any such requirement will

be considered based on risk and liability, following the council governance process for securing finances.

7.2 Legal and Governance

7.2.1 There are no governance implications in relation to this policy. The legal implications relate to the council's obligations relating to Landowner's duty of care to manage the risks posed by the council's trees.

7.2.2 The council also has related duties under the Environment Act 2021, which includes provisions to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023, and so the policy will be compatible with these duties.

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1 The adoption of this policy supports the Councils Corporate Plan 2021-25 priority of Greener, sustainable environment.

7.4 Risk

7.4.1 The risks associated with tree management and their management, principally being risk of injury of people or property, are detailed within policy document.

7.4.2 The policy statements enable the Council to focus its resources on safety works that mitigate the risk of injury or liability for damage to property.

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 Statutory consultation is not required. Internal consultation has been undertaken with the relevant departments, including Planning officers and the Council's ecologist.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 Any comments from the Executive Advisory Panel Climate Change are to be shared at the meeting.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 This policy affects more than two wards and will be eligible for call in by Scrutiny Commission.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 An Equality Screening Assessment has not identified any adverse impact on individuals with protected characteristics.

7.9 Climate Impact

7.9.1 This proposal will have positive benefits for supporting carbon sequestration by increasing the amount of carbon stored in the form of longer vegetation, shrubs and trees.

7.10 Community Impact

7.10.1 The community impact is expected to be positive resulting in more interesting, varied and wildlife rich green spaces accessible to local people.

7.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

7.11.1 There are no Crime and Disorder issues arising directly from this report.

8. Background Papers

8.1 The Policy document and appendices refer to external legislation and website available to support applicants.



Tree Management & Care Policy

August 2022 V1

www.northnorthants.gov.uk

Document Version Control

Author:	Senior Tree and Landscape Officer
Version Number:	V1
Issue date:	July 2022
Type of document:	Tree Management & Care
Document File Name:	Policy
Approval date and by who (CMT / committee):	
Document held by (name/section):	
For internal publication only or external also:	Internal and External
Document stored on Council website or Intranet	Council intranet and Website
Next review date:	July 2023

Change History

Issue	Date	Comments
0.1	May 2022	Initial draft for comment
0.2	July 2022	Draft for Exec

NB: Draft versions 0.1 - final published versions 1.0

Consultees

Internal	External
Tree and Woodland Management Group members	
Chair EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth	

Distribution List

Internal	External
Tree and Woodlands Management Group members	

Links to other documents

Document	Link

Additional Comments to note

A Tree Management Working Group of Officers was established in 2021 with responsibilities for tree management to consider and develop best practice across the new Authority to develop a consistent approach to managing trees, particularly with standards of work, and the future production and adoption of a tree strategy with supporting policies. The group quickly recognised a need for alignment of tree policies from the legacy Council areas to standardise quality of management and tree care across North Northants,

and this initial Tree Management & Care Policy is the first document produced as part of what will become a comprehensive Tree Strategy.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 North Northamptonshire Council, as a major landowner and Highway Authority is responsible for the care and management of its trees and ensuring the safety of its residents.
- 1.2 The Council recognises the many benefits a whole range of public amenities and environmental enhancements provided by trees.
- 1.3 Following a review of existing adopted and emerging tree management policies, this one initial umbrella document will support consistent standards for the care and management of trees on all land that is the responsibility of the Council, and with the administration of the Councils statutory tree protection and planning responsibilities.
- 1.4 The following policies constitute a Tree Management & Care Policy for the Council which is part of a wider developing Tree Strategy.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This Policy document gives clear unambiguous statements of how the Council will manage its tree stock across all Directorates, with clear responsibility for the management and care of trees to ensure that the Council meets its legal obligations whilst protecting the green environment. All agents, partners and contractors of the council will be requested to comply with these policies.
- 2.2 The policy is set out in six areas:
1. Umbrella Policy
 2. Planting Policies
 3. Maintenance Policies
 4. Protection Policies
 5. Subsidence Policies
 6. Felling and Pruning Policies
- 2.2 This document will be regularly reviewed annually by the Tree and Management Working Group. Any amendment and addition to the Policy will be subject to approval of the Executive and would be presented as part of the future development of a comprehensive Tree Strategy.

3.0 Policy outcomes

- 3.1 The Policy outcomes are to align the standards of tree care, protection and management across the services responsible for trees in North Northamptonshire.
- 3.2 This Policy document will assist the Council to meet key priorities including:
- Protect and enhancing the landscape of the towns, villages, countryside, and public open spaces.
 - Enhancing the natural environment and ecology in accordance with the council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy commitments and other relevant council policies such as the Pollinator Policy.
 - Developing a Tree Strategy to increase coverage and improve the long-term care of our tree stock.
 - Realisation of the social, economic, and environmental benefits of trees, including as a means of carbon sequestration
 - The sustainable increase of tree and woodland cover in the NNC area under the principle of 'the right tree in the right place'.
- 3.3 The Policy also seeks to achieve the follow tree management outcomes:
- Increase overall tree and canopy cover.
 - Maintain the tree stock in a safe condition.
 - Maintain the tree stock to ensure maximum life cycles are achieved.
 - Enhance the environment and associated amenity space.
 - Reduce the number of foreseeable tree failures across the Councils landownership.
 - Reduce the overall number of tree related insurance claims raised against the Council.
 - Respond with consistency to requests for work to be undertaken to trees.

4.0 Tree Management & Care Policy

4.1 Umbrella Policy

Policy: TP1

The Council will manage trees to ensure that it meets its legal responsibilities, to ensure public safety according to the priority of works and its financial resources. e.g. duty of care, health and safety.

4.2 Planting Policies

Policy: TP2

Planting of individual or groups of trees on Council managed land, including Highways land, should prioritise larger growing shade-providing trees, scaling down to smaller ornamental trees where larger trees are not suitable. The Council will aim to establish a healthy tree stock with diversity of age, genus and species to mitigate as best as possible against pests and disease that can threaten entire species. The Right Tree, Right Place approach is intended to allow any trees planted to reach full height and maturity and remove the requirement for regular pruning programmes, which are very resource intensive, and to minimise any later nuisance impact. In all woodland locations native tree species of local provenance or natural regeneration are likely to take priority over non-native species. However, on other Public land including Highways, Parks and Open spaces, the Council will select species to provide a mixed & sustainable tree stock, and selection will not be limited to a small list of native species.

Policy: TP3

For every individual tree felled on North Northamptonshire Council land at least one replacement tree will be planted. This may not include replacements for self-set trees that have established in inappropriate locations, planning thinning and coppicing of woodlands and other wooded areas.

In some cases, it may not be appropriate to replant in the same area as the tree felled. Where this is the case planting will take place elsewhere in the interest of sustainability.

Where trees in a woodland are removed and there is suitable natural regeneration, this regeneration will be managed in an appropriate manner to ensure that it adequately replaces felled trees, rather than introducing new trees. Where successfully managed, regeneration can contribute to tree replacement and planting targets, and the Council is working to achieve a higher number of new trees provided through regeneration than those felled.

Policy TP4

To strive for the provision of space for planting trees including street trees on new development sites, selecting species in accordance with **TP2**.

This will include supporting Community Groups, Parish and Town Councils by enabling planting projects on North Northamptonshire Land, including Highways. Such planting must adhere to the Right Tree, Right Place principle, with clear responsibility established for ongoing maintenance and care to ensure the trees maximum life cycle is achieved.

Policy TP 5

All new individually planted staked trees will be watered for two years after planting and young trees will be inspected annually during the first three years and maintenance work undertaken where appropriate. Recyclable materials will be used as part of the planting process where possible. Any newly planted tree that fails to establish and dies within the first five years shall be replaced.

Policy TP 6

The Council will maximise opportunities for community and partnership involvement in tree planting schemes especially within woodlands and Country Parks.

Policy TP 7

Where trees are felled on private land the Council will encourage planting of replacement trees wherever possible.

Where trees are on areas of Public land owned by a third party such as one of the local Town or Parish Councils or Housing Associations, it may not be possible to enforce replacement planting unless the trees have the protection of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), lie within a Conservation Area, or where a felling license is required.

However, all landowners will be encouraged to adopt a policy of replacement planting. Where such trees are within a Conservation Area or subject to a TPO or planning condition the Council can require replanting for the felled trees. Similarly, trees felled with a felling license may be replaced under the control of the Forestry Commission.

4.3 Maintenance Policies

The Council may carry out works to trees for safety reasons to reduce risk and liability, and to allow the reasonable enjoyment of public and private property. The Council may also prune trees to improve the structure and help the future health of the tree. Felling and removal of trees will only be considered where pruning does not offer a reasonable solution. Where risk is an issue a risk assessment of the tree will be undertaken.

Tree work may be required for the benefit of a group of trees. For example, it may be necessary to remove diseased or damaged trees or to thin out a group of closely planted trees to meet long term management objectives to benefit those remaining trees that will grow to maturity.

Policy: TP6

The Council will maintain all its trees ensuring works are carried out in accordance with current best practice and whenever possible within the scope of the most recent "British Standards for Tree Work" - BS 3998.

Policy: TP7

The Council will continue to carry out regular tree inspections on a cyclical basis, at a frequency appropriate to the individual location, and carry out work to trees based on risk to ensure its duty of care is maintained.

Policy: TP8

When undertaking Highway or Utility works near to trees, to minimise the risk of harm to tree roots all work must be planned and carried to the standards as set out in the Department for Transport's 'Roots and Routes: Guidelines on Highways Works and Trees' and in conjunction with relevant National Joint Utility Guidance documents.

4.4 Protection Policies**Policy: TP9**

The Council will enforce and if expedient prosecute tree related contraventions and apply the maximum penalty within their powers. This will include seeking to recoup costs from other tree owners when undertaking works as an emergency or a Highways Section 154 Notice.

Policy: TP10

The Council will seek compensation from any organisation responsible for significant damage to or removal of any council owned tree(s) to the value as calculated by Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees (CAVAT).

Policy: TP11

On construction sites all work must be in accordance with the most recent version of BS 5837 "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations" and that foundation details follow the recommendations of the National House Building Councils Standards Chapter 4.2 'Building near trees.

Policy: TP12

In the processing of planning applications, to aim for retention of trees of high amenity/environmental value taking consideration of both their individual merit and their interaction as part of a group or broader landscape features.

4.5 Subsidence Policy**Policy: TP13**

In order to protect the Councils interests and speed up the processing of claims, the Council will manage and process subsidence claims for trees in accordance with the London Tree Officers Association (LTOA) Risk Limitation Strategy, as well as the Joint Mitigation Protocol, where appropriate.

4.6 Felling and Pruning Policies

Policy: TP14

The Council will only fell/remove trees for sound arboricultural reasons.

These may include:

- Dead, dying or dangerous;
- Proven to be causing significant structural damage;
- In accordance with any statutory duties and or plant health orders;
- Considered by an Arboriculturalist to be an inappropriate species for the location, or to have structural or physiological defects making removal the only sensible management option.

Removal will also be considered where required as part of an agreed management programme or as a strategic improvement project.

Policy: TP15

The following reasons will not constitute grounds for the pruning or removal of trees on Council land by the Council:

- Interference with satellite dish or TV aerial reception telephone cables.
- Leaf seed and fruit fall.
- Where the tree is perceived to be too large.
- Obstruction of view or causing shade.
- Mess caused by insects or birds, or trees home to mammals including squirrels.
- Problems associated with fruit.
- Problems associated with pollen.
- Healthy mature trees will not be removed to create space to plant new trees.
- Someone is willing to pay for the removal and replacement of a tree.
- The perceived risk that it may cause subsidence in the future.
- Causing disruption to pavements, kerbs, garden paths and walls. In these cases, engineering solutions will be sought where possible.

Selective minor pruning may be undertaken to trees on Council land if deemed justified by the Council on the following grounds:

- Overhanging neighbour's land
- Excessive blockage of light
- To facilitate community safety CCTV cameras

Policy: TP 16

In accordance with the requirement in section 115 of the Environment Act 2021 the Council will consult members of the public before felling a tree on an urban road (a street tree).

4.7 Referencing and Supporting Documents

- BS 3998:2010 – Tree Work: Recommendations
- BS 5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction

- LTOA Joint Mitigation Protocol
- National House Building Councils Standards Chapter 4.2
- LTOA Risk Limitation Strategy
- Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees (CAVAT)
- Environment Act 2021
- England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024

5.0 Next steps

- 5.1 The next steps toward the production of a comprehensive Tree Strategy will be to collate and analyse existing tree data including canopy cover and tree inspection surveys across the four legacy Council areas and Highways ownership. Where no data exists sample surveys may need to be carried out to establish to extent of the resource to me managed. This is vital before any meaningful management plans can be developed.
- 5.2 At the same time Tree management Working Group are looking at reducing the division of responsibility for Council trees by integrating tree management, focusing on Highways trees in the former East Area where the standards for tree management are different to the other three legacy Council Areas before the new Highways Contract begins.
- 5.3 An action plan setting out what the Council hopes to achieve in the coming years will also be produced divided into main objectives linked to existing Council Priorities and Policies and the necessary harmonisation work across different Council departments, covering protection of existing trees, care of existing trees and planting and establishment of new trees. Some of the action plan subjects will include:
- Development of a Council wide computerised record of Council owned trees and a prioritised regime of re-inspection based on the level of risk. Geographical Information System (GIS) support will be required, and resources will need to be identified to support this task.
 - Identify large scale natural regeneration and tree planting locations to enable to maximisation of the use of grant schemes and partnership working.
 - Develop and approval process and minimum standards for tree planting on NNC land, including Highways.
 - Develop harmonised tree inspection and record keeping standards and a Council wide team for service delivery, bringing together Highways Street trees and open space tree management together.
 - Providing advice and support to community groups wishing to plant trees.
 - Development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by end of 2023, to meet national timescales
 - Harmonising all Statutory Planning Tree functions, decisions, conditions from the four legacy Planning Authorities.
 - Reviewing all Council Tree Preservation Orders
 - Produce new Supplementary Planning Documents for Tree Replacement Standards, and Trees and Development.
 - Scope and develop a plan to respond to the threat from Ash Dieback.



Executive Advisory Panel Climate Change Environment and Growth Thursday 4th August 2022

Report Title	Pollinator Policy
Report Author	George Candler, Executive Director for Place & Economy and Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member	Councillor Harriet Pentland, Executive Member for Climate & the Green Environment

Key Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there public sector equality duty implications?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Applicable paragraph number/s for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972	

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Pollinator Strategy

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To introduce a North Northamptonshire wide Pollinator Strategy for review and approval by the Executive Advisory Panel.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Policy document in Appendix 1, outlines the operational principles to be adopted in the management of North Northamptonshire’s parks, green spaces and selected highways verges, to improve habitats for pollinator species through implementing the key actions to implement the policy.
- 2.2 The policy has been developed with consideration of the council’s obligations under the Environment Act 2021, which includes provisions to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023, and so will be compatible with these duties.

2.3 The detailed Strategy is provided in the appendix A. It is intended that the policies in this document will be published on the council's website once it is adopted, along with promotion with residents in North Northamptonshire via the engagement strategy detailed in the policy.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Executive Advisory Panel consider and provide feedback on the Pollinator Policy at **Appendix A**.

3.2 The reasons for the recommendation are:

- The policy establishes guiding principles relevant to the operational management of the council's parks and open spaces services and helps meet the council's obligations under the Environment Act 2021, which includes provisions to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023.
- The policy provides the basis for unifying and building on the varying practices adopted by the legacy councils.
- The policy supports the Council's key commitments to a greener, sustainable environment.
- The policy provides a clear statement to residents of how the council is seeking to improve habitats for pollinator species (and other wildlife) in their parks and open spaces.

3.3 Alternative Options Considered:

- The option of continuing historic land management approaches such as 'short mowing' large areas of green spaces was considered but not believed to be in keeping with the council's duties towards nature recovery.
- The option to not have a pollinator strategy and to continue with management of parks and open spaces under the principles devised by the individual officers in the parks and green spaces was rejected in favour of establishing guiding principles for the council's land managers.

4. Report Background

4.1 The Council directly manages a wide range of public parks and open spaces, including urban parks, informal green spaces, country parks, woodlands and nature reserves. The responsibility for managing these areas now sits largely in the Place and Economy Directorate. In advance of any formal service re-structure, the different parks/greenspace teams from the legacy councils are in the process of integrating working practices and systems and this policy provides a unifying set of principles in relation to improving habitats for pollinator species such as bees and butterflies etc.

- 4.2 Some very successful pilot work improving urban green spaces for pollinators has already been undertaken through the ‘Pardon the weeds we are feeding the bees’ initiative in the Kettering/Corby area, which received international recognition and was shared widely on social media. This has seen many areas of formerly short mown grass on parks, green space and verges etc to grow being allowed flower. The associated ‘we are feeding the bees’ signs put up locally helped explain to residents why the look of their green spaces is changing, and the public response has been largely favourable.
- 4.3 The return of the grounds services in the Wellingborough area to direct NNC management provides a good opportunity for the council to extend and develop this kind of approach in line with the principles outlined in the policy.
- 4.4 The principles contained in the document in appendix 1 have been drawn up following internal consultation, and are drawn from the principles identified in the National Pollinator Strategy and are broken down in the policy into four themes:
1. Increase forage resources for pollinator species.
 2. Improve habitats for nesting and overwintering pollinators.
 3. Reduce Pesticide use.
 4. Participate in pollinator projects and action.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The key issues in relation to the implementation of this policy are that the kinds of changes to land management proposed will change the look of the landscape and lead to a more natural look for the areas where, for example, longer grass is to be maintained. However, these changes involve ‘soft landscaping’ and are therefore easily reversible and changeable. Also, areas will be carefully selected and balanced against the need to maintain sufficient short mown open space for recreation – picnics, informal games, dog exercise etc. The success of the ‘feed the bees’ campaign and signage in Kettering & Corby has demonstrated widespread public support for this if the reasons for the change are understood and they are not perceived as cost cutting or neglect.
- 5.2 The option of continuing historic land management approaches such as ‘short mowing’ large areas of green spaces was considered but not considered in keeping with the council’s duties towards nature recovery.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 To formally adopt the policy and implement its use, including the following action plan:
- Publish on the Council website and distribute pollinator policy
 - Identify further areas for natural regeneration with a phased plan for introduction – using ‘feed the bees’ signage
 - Review use of pesticides across the Council and identify areas of efficiency that will reduce environment impact and provide cost benefits to the council’s land management.

- Develop business case for specialised equipment – reciprocal mowers for mowing long grass mowing equipment
- Review bedding plant purchases – ensuring pollinator friendly
- Training and development of grounds staff
- Deliver habitat works Support local community involvement and initiatives where practical and meet objectives
- Review bedding plant purchases – ensuring pollinator friendly
- Deliver habitat works
- Implement performance monitoring from Spring 2023
- Support local community involvement and initiatives where practical and meet objectives

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources, Financial and Transformation

- 7.1.1 There are no direct financial or transformation implications from the policy beyond the existing obligations already placed on the Council as landowner by law.
- 7.1.2 Much of the change in land management will be implemented by change in practice through use of existing resources. Any requirement for bespoke equipment will be considered, following the council's governance process for securing finances.

7.2 Legal and Governance

- 7.2.1 There are no governance implications in relation to this policy. The legal implications relate to the council's obligations under the Environment Act 2021, which includes provisions to strengthen and improve the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023, and so will be compatible with these duties.

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

- 7.3.1 The adoption of this policy supports the Councils Corporate Plan 2021-25 priority of Greener, sustainable environment.

7.4 Risk

- 7.4.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed policy. Cutting of vegetation associated with highways visibility splays and to promote community safety will continue.

7.5 Consultation

- 7.5.1 Statutory consultation is not required. Internal consultation has been undertaken with the relevant departments, including Planning officers and the Council's ecologist.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

- 7.6.1 Any comments from the Executive Advisory Panel Climate Change are to be shared at the meeting.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

- 7.7.1 This policy affects more than two wards and will be eligible for call in by Scrutiny Commission.

7.8 Equality Implications

- 7.8.1 An Equality Screening Assessment has not identified any adverse impact on individuals with protected characteristics.

7.9 Climate Impact

- 7.9.1 This proposal will have positive benefits for both reducing CO2 emissions resulting from a reduction in the frequency of mechanical mowing in Council parks and green spaces. It will also increase the amount of carbon stored in the form of longer vegetation, shrubs and trees.

7.10 Community Impact

- 7.10.1 The community impact is expected to be positive resulting in more interesting, varied and wildlife rich green spaces accessible to local people as evidenced by the trial in Kettering/Corby area.

7.11 Crime and Disorder Impact

- 7.11.1 There are no Crime and Disorder issues arising directly from this report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 The Policy document and appendices refer to external legislation and website available to support applicants.

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Pollinator Strategy

August 2022 V1

www.northnorthants.gov.uk

Document Version Control

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Issue	Date	Comments
0.1	May 2022	Initial draft for comment
0.2	July 2022	Draft for Exec

NB: Draft versions 0.1 - final published versions 1.0

Consultees

Internal	External
Internal Departments	
EAP Climate Change Environment & Growth	

Distribution List

Internal	External

Links to other documents

Document	Link

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Pollinators are essential for biodiversity and our wider environment. They maintain the diversity of wildflowers and support healthy ecosystems, particularly by helping plants to produce fruits and seeds which birds and other animals rely on. Pollinators are considered to be a 'keystone species' owing to their importance in supporting a range of ecosystem functions. As such they are of enormous value to agriculture as well as public open spaces and ultimately our health and well-being.
- 1.2 There are at least 1,500 species of insect pollinators in the UK. Most are native species of bumblebees, solitary bees, wasps, moths, butterflies, beetles and flies. Of these the honeybee is normally kept as domestic stock managed in hives by beekeepers. Most pollination is carried out by insects, however there are numerous species such as, birds, smaller foraging mammals and indeed humans that carry out supplementary pollination of plants.
- 1.3 Unfortunately, pollinators face many pressures, including habitat loss, pests and diseases, extreme weather, competition from invasive species, climate change and pesticide use.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this pollinator strategy is to set out the actions we are taking in North Northamptonshire Council's parks, open spaces, and highway verges to help reverse the decline in pollinator populations.
 - 2.2 The policy draws on statutory obligations for environmental protection, introduced by the Environment Act 2021, national policy related to supporting pollinators.
 - 2.2 This document will be reviewed annually, with regular monitoring of how the Council is achieving the action plan within this strategy and publication of key performance indicators.
- 3.0 Policy outcomes
- 3.1 The Environment Act 2021 (the Act) operates as the UK's new framework of environmental protection. The Act enshrines environmental protection into law.
 - 3.2 The Act sets out the legal framework for significant reforms to local authority waste and recycling services, as well as creating new statutory duties for local authorities on nature recovery. Taken together, the Act establishes a new relationship between central and local government on environmental improvement.
 - 3.3 The Act strengthens the duty on public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including mandating a requirement on developers to provide a 'net gain of biodiversity' through the planning system, and a duty for identified Responsible Authorities (of which North Northamptonshire Council is one) to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy by the end of 2023.
 - 3.4 More specifically, in 2014 Defra produced a [National Pollinator Strategy](#) with the primary aim of expanding food, shelter and nest sites across all types of land so that pollinator species can survive and thrive.

- 3.5 The policies and actions identified in this North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) strategy are underpinned by the Environmental Act and the [National Pollinator Strategy 2014](#) with the aim of delivering outcomes at a local level – notably expanding food, shelter and nesting sites across all types of NNC land to support pollinator species - boosting their chances of survival and allowing them to thrive. More specifically to help achieve the five main principles identified in the National Pollinator Strategy of:
1. more, bigger, better, joined-up, diverse and high-quality flower-rich habitats (including foodplants, nesting places and shelter) supporting pollinators.
 2. healthy populations of wild pollinators and managed bees which are more resilient to threats, including but not limited to climate change.
 3. no further extinctions of known threatened pollinator species.
 4. enhanced awareness across a wide range of businesses, other organisations and the public of the essential needs of pollinators.
 5. evidence of actions taken to support pollinators and pollination services.
- 3.6 With regards to council policy, a greener and sustainable environment is one of North Northamptonshire Council's key commitments. The management and development of the council's parks, open spaces and highways represents a significant investment in time and money towards this commitment, as well as providing enormous cross-cutting benefits to North Northamptonshire residents, notably for health and wellbeing. Further information regarding the council's key commitment to a 'greener and sustainable environment' is available at:
- [North Northamptonshire Council Corporate Plan](#)
- [Northamptonshire Climate Change Strategy 2020 – 2023](#)
- 3.7 The council manages a range of different wildlife habitats in its country parks, urban parks and greenspaces, woodlands, nature reserves and highways networks and there are significant opportunities to further improve these areas by implementing this strategy, particularly in urban areas.
- 3.8 This policy will apply to the following organisations and employees
- NNC
 - Sub-contractors acting on behalf of the Council
 - Suppliers
 - Commercial customers

4.0 Pollinator Strategy

4.1 Key actions to be taken to improve conditions in North Northamptonshire Council's parks, open spaces and highway verges:

1. Increase forage resources for pollinator species

- Leave more long grass/meadow areas in less formal parts of the parks and open spaces to allow flowers to bloom and seed. Prioritising areas that connect to each other and to existing wildlife habitats and corridors. This action will also help protect against soil erosion resulting from hotter temperatures and drought by maintaining stronger root systems of grasses and other perennial plants. If practical and of ecological value, work to improve the floral diversity of these areas and reduce the dominance of coarser grasses.
- Where suitable, allow verges to flower and become rich in early sources of pollen from March through to June as part of the 'Pardon the Weeds' campaign.
- Plant at least 1 tree for every one we remove, per the Tree Management & Care Policy.
- Plant and encourage a native understorey of flowering plants such as hawthorn, blackthorn, honeysuckle, particularly in woodland and marginal areas.

2. Improve habitats for nesting and overwintering pollinators

- Keep some areas of long grass throughout the winter as a refuge for insects - cutting on a 3-year rotation to ensure that the areas do not become rank and lose floral diversity.
- Acknowledge the importance of bare ground areas for ground-nesting species. Ensure that not all paths and desire lines are hard surfaced or re-turfed, as these are important nesting areas.
- Leave patches of nettles and other larval food plants for breeding butterflies and moths.
- Avoid planting new specimens of tree species which can be damaging to bumblebee species, such as *Tilia petiolate*.
- Where practical, support projects that create bee 'hotels' to encourage mining and leafcutter bees to nest.
- Ensure suitable bio-security measures for new planting if plants are being imported.

3. Reduce Pesticide use

- Wherever practicable, aim to reduce the use of pesticides and ensure that where any treatment application is required that it is minimised by sensitive application techniques such as spot spraying with the most up to date technologies and products and reducing/phasing out blanket spraying of herbicides for weed control.

4. Participate in pollinator projects and action

- Engage with stakeholders in areas where significant change is likely such as through our 'Pardon the weeds, we are feeding the bees' signage etc

- Support or deliver projects aimed at increasing the diversity and abundance of pollinating insects, where practical.
- Aim to involve people in improving their environment, such as through volunteering in parks etc.
- Include learning about pollinators in our Education Ranger led Outdoor Learning activity programmes with schools and groups.

4.2 The above actions will be delivered by:

- Applying the actions identified in this strategy to our ongoing land management work programmes.
- Communication and engagement with stakeholders through social media campaigns, direct consultation with residents and 'on-site' information such as our (already tested) 'feed the bees signage'.
- Identifying and promoting new sites for biodiversity improvement and ensuring record keeping and monitoring performance.
- Education and training to ensure the continued development and application of the policy in the maintenance of NNC's parks, open spaces, highways.
- Building on the work previously undertaken by the legacy sovereign authorities and the Northamptonshire Local Nature Partnership including the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan and the Natural Capital Investment Plan, existing policies such as the council's Procurement Policy, and linking with related policies and strategies under development such as the NNC Tree Policy, such as the replacement of felled trees.
- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) will be a strategic spatial strategy that maps the most valuable habitats in North Northamptonshire, proposals for improvements and priorities for nature recovery specific to North Northamptonshire. As such the actions outlined in this pollinator strategy will feature in the LNRS for North Northamptonshire.

4.3 Examples of pollinator work to date:

- The council's country parks, woodlands and nature reserves have a long history of managing habitats to improve wildlife, including pollinators. Much of this is achieved through volunteer work programmes supported by the park and woodland Rangers. These parks contain some very valuable wildlife habitats and are the home to nationally scarce species such as Black Hairstreak and Purple Emperor Butterflies at Fermyn Woods Country Park.
- More recently, valuable work on improving pollinator habitats in urban areas has been trialled in the Kettering and Corby areas which received international recognition and was shared widely on social media. This included the use of 'feed the bees' information signage in verges and parks, to help people understand why their local landscape is changing. This work has been well received and demonstrated the potential for further improvements to our urban greenspaces and will be expanded across North Northants in the areas where the council has responsibility for green spaces.

5.0 Next steps

5.1 The Pollinator Strategy provides a strong basis for the council to take forward proactive campaigns to enhance and promote the natural environment. The following delivery plan is proposed to be undertaken through 2022 and 2023:

- Publication of the policy on the council's website, including the production of a graphic designed version to promote to residents.
- Work with internal and external partners to identify further areas of land for pollinator habitat improvement with a phased plan for introduction
- Review use of pesticides across the council, with a view to reducing use as much as possible. Train and develop staff – Ongoing
- Publicity campaign with residents and businesses, including social media
- Introduce new mowing regimes and 'feed the bees' signage

5.2 The following performance indicators will also be introduced as soon as practicable to support the Councils regular monitoring of the strategies actions.

- The number of trees felled, the reason for felling, and the number planted per Annum
- The volume of pesticide used – Establish a baseline for Grounds services in Wellingborough area.
- Area of habitat improved (via set aside etc) hectares per Annum.

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