

Communities Scrutiny Commission

17 November 2022



Report of: Patsy Mellor

Title: Executive Director, Management of Place

Ward: City-wide

Officers Presenting Report: Richard Ennion

Contact Telephone Number: N/A

Recommendation:

To note progress on developing a Bristol Tree Strategy

The significant issues in the report are:

1. A response is provided to the recommendations made by Scrutiny Tree Working Group.
2. Public engagement is planned to develop the Tree Strategy including a citizen facing questionnaire and stakeholder workshops.
3. Tree planting opportunity mapping work is underway.
4. Bristol City Council is reviewing its 'policy and procedures' for tree planting and management to reflect landlord functions.
5. Changes to the Local Plan and Development Management Policies are due to be consulted on (led by Strategic Planning), this has relevance to trees including protection, compensation for loss and requirements for new green infrastructure.



1. Summary

£40k funding was agreed by Cabinet in February 2022 to develop a Bristol Tree Strategy and Tree Planting under BCC's Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Work is ongoing to map the potential to plant trees at scale within the city to deliver the One City target to double tree canopy by 2046. Engagement to develop the strategy is planned, including a citizen questionnaire leading into stakeholder workshops.

2. Purpose

Tree planting opportunity mapping work is on-going. This will 'sense check' the potential to plant trees at scale to achieve the One City target to double tree canopy by 2046. Three broad land realms are under review: a) public highway network b) public green space and c) other private land. A model has been applied to assess the potential to plant trees in the public highway in partnership with the University of Bristol – results are due before the end of November 2022. An assessment of the potential to plant trees within public green space is planned, to include the 'Managing for Nature' protocols. An assessment of the potential to plant trees on private land, including private gardens is due to be designed - to be progressed with funds secured from the Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree fund grant awarded October 2022 in partnership with the Forest of Avon Trust (as grant recipient). See **Appendix A** for the method being applied to map tree planting opportunity.

The Managing for Nature method is described in some detail within the Ecological Emergency update report on the same 17th November Scrutiny agenda – as such no further details are described here.

A draft report has been circulated to West of England partners, via the Forest of Avon Trust, with recommendations for the adoption of a common approach to monitor tree canopy including an agreed baseline. The recommendation is to baseline and monitor off data provided by Bluesky, which estimates Bristol tree canopy to be around 17%.

Scrutiny Tree Working Group made a number of recommendations in their report on trees planting and management. See **Appendix B** for a response to each recommendation, which will be considered as the Tree Strategy develops.

Engagement to develop the tree strategy is planned to include a digital citizen facing questionnaire and stakeholder workshops. Timing is being agreed to allow for the Bristol City Council Budget consultation which is due to be released on the 10th November.

A resource has been secured to support engagement work and writing of the strategy following engagement work. Given the engagement work, there is no plan to consult on a draft strategy.

Bristol City Council [tree management policies](#) are to be reviewed in consideration of stakeholder engagement.

Strategic Planning are due to release draft development Management Policies for consultation by the end of November setting out how existing trees will be considered by the planning process, including the requirements for new green infrastructure to include trees.

3. Policy

Ecological Emergency strategy – 30% of land managed for nature, contribution towards One City target to double tree canopy by 2046.

Local Plan and Development Management policies that protect and provide for green infrastructure including trees and requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

BCC's existing [tree management policies](#) reflecting landlord duties for the management of trees.

4. Consultation

a) Internal

None

b) External

Not applicable

5. Public Sector Equality Duties

- 5a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –

- tackle prejudice; and
- promote understanding.

5b) An equalities impact assessment has been submitted.

Appendices:

Appendix A Tree Planting Opportunity Mapping

Appendix B Scrutiny Tree Working Group -Recommendations and officer response

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None