

## **Briefing note for Overview and Scrutiny**

### **Tree policy and the enhanced maintenance program**

The purpose of this briefing note is to update Overview and Scrutiny about the Tree Policy and Maintenance Plan.

As reported to the panel in August 2016, the council agreed to invest an extra £100k per year, for the next 5 years, into an enhanced program of tree maintenance. This extra funding has been secured for the years 2016/17 and 2017/18.

With the current environmental services contract ending in June 2018, it was proposed that the remaining 3 years enhanced maintenance would be included in the new environmental services specification, which is currently being developed. The enhanced maintenance will be shown as a specific item within the overall tree management service, but will not part of the general maintenance program. It will be made clear that the enhanced maintenance is to be provided as well as the normal maintenance and not instead of.

With regards to this years maintenance, the starting point was to carry out a tree survey Zone 1, taking into account the requirements of the new Tree Policy.

There were a number of meetings between the Partnership Unit, Enterprise and the specialist tree contractor, during the survey stage. This initially was to ensure that the expectations of the council were clear to all parties and that the Tree Policy was being used. As the survey progressed, site visits were carried out, to look at what work was planned and understand the improvements it would bring.

Maintenance work has now started, with the contractor working their way through Zone 1. The work is programmed to be completed prior to the end of this financial year. Generally, the work has progressed well, although there have been times when some work had to be left, due to parked vehicles. The contractor has gone back to finish the work in these locations once it is safe to do so.

The contractor has reported that there has been nothing but positive reaction from the residents, who are extremely pleased to see this level of maintenance happening.

I have included two pictures below showing Greendale Square before the tree work was carried out and after it was completed. As you can see, the tree work has opened up the area, and made a significant improvement.



