

## Notice of Non-key Executive Decision

<b>Subject Heading:</b>	<b>Acceptance of grant funding – Forestry Commission Local Authority Treescapes Fund</b>
<b>Decision Maker:</b>	<b>Barry Francis, Director of Neighbourhoods</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Barry Mugglestone and Cllr Paul Middleton
<b>SLT Lead:</b>	Barry Francis, Director of Neighbourhoods
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	Max Graham Max.graham@havering.gov.uk
<b>Policy context:</b>	<i>As part of the Havering Plan within the Places theme:  Making sure that our neighbourhoods are a great place to live by investing in them and keeping them clean, green and safe with access to quality parks and leisure facilities</i>
<b>Financial summary:</b>	The London Borough of Havering has secured grant funding of £271,190 which was received in September 2022. Accept award of £271,190 from the Forestry Commission following a successful bid by the Council to the Local Authority Treescapes Fund which provides funding to expand tree stock.  No Budget Implication
<b>Relevant OSC:</b>	<b>Places</b>
<b>Is this decision exempt from being called-in?</b>	Yes

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**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Communities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Places making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connections making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Part A – Report seeking decision

### DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

This report seeks approval to accept funding of £271,190 from the Forestry Commission to plant highways trees and trees in parks. Approval is also sought to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix A) with the Forestry Commission as a condition of accepting the funding.

### AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Under Part 3 of the Constitution

3.3 Powers of the Senior Leadership Team

Financial responsibilities

(c) In consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to apply for, accept and manage external funding up to a limit of £500,000 per grant in support of any function within their Directorate provided that any financial contributions by the Council are made from within existing budgets.

### STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

In consideration of the financial difficulties currently experienced by the Council, officers applied to the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Treescaping Fund to obtain funding for the purchase and planting of new tree stock in the 22/23 planting season. The application also sought funding to cover all watering and maintenance costs associated with the newly planted trees for three years following planting.

The new tree stock would break down as:

- 356 highway trees planted in locations that have previously hosted trees
- 120 trees for shadow planting mature grand trees in parks
- 3000 whips to be planted in parks

Planting highways trees in locations that have previously hosted trees reduces, if not near eliminates, the prospect of increasing the maintenance cost (for example leaf removal) of our tree stock as maintenance regimes will already be in place at these existing tree locations. Officers will ensure the trees selected for highway locations are appropriate to the local environment and require minimal maintenance. The prematurity of the new trees to be planted means that they will not need to be pruned for at least 15-20 years. Officers' understanding is that planting new trees in old locations will allow the Council to meet its tree planting targets while saving resources and lowering maintenance costs.

The funding will include 120 trees for shadow planting grand, over mature trees in the north of the borough. This is because the extensive deer population in the north of the borough has prevented newer, younger trees from establishing resulting in a disproportionate number of over-mature, older trees. By shadow planting (roughly 20-30m away) grand, lone-standing, mature trees in the north of the borough and protecting these new shadow-planted trees with

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deer guards, the Council would be protecting the amenity provided by these trees for future generations.

Officers also sought to include volunteer and community groups in this project and as such, 3000 whips will be planted utilising the community based support that is available.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

Not accept the grant – the Council would not be able to plant the trees as listed above as there is no further funding available.

**PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION**

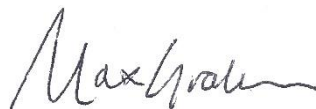
No formal consultation has been undertaken or is required.

**NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER**

Name: Max Graham

Designation: Associate Project Manager

Signature:



Date: 23/09/2022

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### Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

This report seeks approval to accept grant funding from the Forestry Commission and enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as a condition of this grant funding.

Section 10 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 requires the Council to maintain and keep open spaces in 'a good and decent space', which includes planting trees. Section 96 of the Highways Act 1980 also provides the Highway Authority the power to plant trees in the highway maintainable by them

The Council has the general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual may generally do, together with the power under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to do anything conducive, incidental or ancillary to or which facilitates any of its functions.

Administration of the grant will be covered via a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Forestry Commission. The Council must utilise the grant for the intended purpose of the fund and must provide evidence of planting activities and maintenance to remain eligible to claim the grant.

The recommendations in this report are in keeping with these duties and powers.

Officers should ensure that the grant is spent in accordance with the terms of the MOU.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Entire Project will be funded via the grant funding awarded by the Forestry Commission. The council will not exceed the funding awarded for this project and as such, there are no direct budget impacts. The funding breaks down as follows:

Financial year	2022/23		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Claim Schedule	Claim 1 (Offer accepted)	Claim 2 (Mar-23)	Claim 4 (Mar-24)	Claim 5 (Mar -25)	Claim 6 (Mar -26)
Tree / Capital Costs (split 50%)	£63,565.00	£63,565.00			
Maintenance Costs			£48,020.00	£48,020.00	£48,020.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£63,565.00</b>	<b>£63,565.00</b>	<b>£48,020.00</b>	<b>£48,020.00</b>	<b>£48,020.00</b>

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As explained within the report any ongoing maintenance of the grant funded trees will be met from existing maintenance regimes and budgets.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**

The Public Realm team are actively working on this project. The Tree Team has confirmed extra responsibilities can be assumed for inspections during the initial years after planting as regular inspections will need to take place. This will likely fall in line with its routine cyclical inspections.

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

### **EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are: age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

Every effort will be made to benefit all the demographics of our community involved in this project.

Officers have been advised that this Executive Decision does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment as the project does not impact protected characteristics.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

Planting trees results in many benefits in the fight against climate change, for example, they provide habitat for wildlife, cooler streets, remove carbon from the atmosphere increasing air quality, improving water quality and reduces storm water run-off. In addition, trees in urban settings provide a range of mental and physical benefits to those living in close proximity.

Planting 476 standard trees will provide immediate environmental and climate change related benefits, while 3000 whips will provide these benefits in greater quantities further down the line.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Memorandum of Understanding with Forestry Commission

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**Part C – Record of decision**

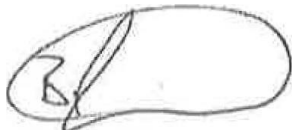
I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

**Decision**

Proposal agreed

**Details of decision maker**

Signed:



Name: Barry Francis

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title: Director of Neighbourhoods

Other manager title:

Date: 23/09/2022

**Lodging this notice**

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

**For use by Committee Administration**

This notice was lodged with me on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



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