



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

Notice of Non-key Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Application for grant funding – Forestry Commission Local Authority Treescapes and Urban Tree Challenge Funds
Decision Maker:	Imran Kazalbash, Assistant Director of Environment
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Barry Mugglestone and Cllr Paul Middleton
SLT Lead:	Neil Stubbings
Report Author and contact details:	Jacki Ager Jacki.ager@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	<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>
Financial summary:	The London Borough of Havering is seeking to apply for funding from the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Treescapes and Urban Tree Challenge Funds which provide grant funding to expand tree stock. Havering seeks £0.155m for the initial planting and watering. Any ongoing maintenance of the grant funded trees from year 4 post- planting will be met from existing maintenance regimes and budgets.
Relevant OSC:	<i>Places</i>

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Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	Yes
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Non-key Executive Decision

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

To agree to apply to the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Treescapes Fund for funding of £0.155m to plant highways trees.

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 pressures currently experienced by the Council, officers are seeking approval to apply to the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Treescapes Fund to obtain funding for the purchase and planting of new tree stock in the 23/24 planting season. The application will also seek funding to cover all watering and maintenance costs associated with the newly planted trees for three years following planting, and will seek to plant 225 highway trees in locations that have previously hosted trees.

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.

A second funding stream through the Urban Tree Challenge Fund will be used to target areas of tree deprivation, as a pilot project. The aim will be to plant approximately 75 trees in a small number of streets with currently little or no tree coverage. These streets will be identified, and ward members engaged with as part of the project. This application will be subject of a separate report.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

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Not apply for the grant – the Council has some contingency funding in its revenue budget, however there is a risk that the ageing tree stock in the borough will require additional support over the coming months / years which would reduce available budget.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

No formal consultation has been undertaken or is required.

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

Name: Jacki Ager

Designation: Waste and External Contracts Manager

Signature:

Date: 18.07.23

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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 power to apply for the funding under s111 Local Government Act 1972 as the funding will facilitate the Council to implement discharge of its functions and duties

The Council also has power to apply for the funding under the general power of competence contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. This allows the Council to do anything that an individual may do subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. None of the constraints on the Council's s.1 power are engaged by this decision.

This decision sets out the information relating to the funding application only. Any acceptance of funding and the entering into of a funding agreement will be subject to a further report setting out related information and implications.

For the reasons set out above the Council may apply for the funding.

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 immediate direct budget impacts for the first 3 years. The funding breaks down as follows:

	Unit Cost	LATF	UTTF	Total
		225	75	300
Purchase	120	27,000.00	9,000.00	36,000.00
Planting	70	15,750.00	5,250.00	21,000.00
Watering	300	67,500.00	22,500.00	90,000.00
Stakes/ties	5	1,125.00	375.00	1,500.00
Watering bags	20	4,500.00	1,500.00	6,000.00
Labour to unload	1.33	299.25	99.75	399.00
Total £		116,174.25	38,724.75	154,899.00
Total £m		0.116	0.039	0.155

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Any ongoing maintenance of the grant funded trees from year 4 post planting will need to 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, however officers are targeting existing empty tree pits, and as such, any planting will be based on the geographical need.

Officers have been advised that this Executive Decision does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment as the project is not envisaged to impact protected characteristics. If this situation changes an EqHIA will be drafted.

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 of standard trees will provide immediate environmental and climate change related benefits.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

N/A

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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: Imran Kazalbash

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title:

Other manager title: Assistant Director of Environment

Date: 18.07.23

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 _____