

Notice of Non-Key Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Tree Survey Contract – Permission to award contract
Decision Maker:	Imran Kazalbash Director for Environment
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Barry Mugglestone Environment
ELT Lead:	Neil Stubbings Strategic Director of Place
Report Author and contact details:	Samantha Eady Programme Manager
Policy context:	<i>Supports making the borough a great place to live, work and enjoy by ensuring the Council's tree stock in priority areas is safe and maintained enhancing the green spaces for our residents.</i>
Financial summary:	The cost of the contract is approximately £0.136m to be funded from existing Public Realm revenue budget allocation within Environment Service.
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee:	Places
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non key Decision

Non-key Executive Decision

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

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

X

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

This report is seeking the approval from the Director of Environment to agree to;

- **Award the Tree Survey Contract** for parks and open spaces, following completion of the Request for Quote (RFQ) procurement process to Place Services for a period of 6 months with the option to extend the contract period by no more than 3 months.
- The **final contract value is £0.136m**, representing an increase of £0.036m compared to the original estimated cost required to deliver the works as approved in the “Tree Survey Contract – Permission to commence tendering process” decision report.
- The options to extend the contract period shall not give rise any additional charges or expenditure.

This contract will enable a comprehensive tree condition survey across priority public use sites, informing future inspection cycles, risk management, and maintenance planning.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Part 3 Responsibility for Functions of the Council’s Constitution
Scheme 3.3.3 Powers common to all Strategic Directors

4. Contracts

4. 2 To award all contracts with a total contract value of below £1,000,000 other than contracts covered by Contract Procedure Rule 16.3.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Council undertook a Request for Quotation (RFQ) for the Tree Survey Contract in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules. One compliant submission was received from **Place Services**, who were subsequently confirmed as the successful bidder following evaluation against the published quality, price, and compliance criteria.

A market- engagement event was undertaken with potential providers, including a site visit, to set out the requirements and discuss known challenges. Providers then independently assessed the specified parks and open spaces specified and priced the work based on their findings. This process identified significant uncertainties and gaps in the Council’s existing tree- stock data, which limited the ability to accurately forecast survey volumes at the budget- setting stage. The resulting cost increase reflects the provider’s assessment of the sites, which identified a higher level of survey complexity and workload than could be estimated from the limited baseline tree- stock data available.

Non-key Executive Decision

The decision to award the Tree Survey Contract is necessary to enable the Council to meet its statutory duties for the safe management of its tree stock and to transition from a reactive approach to a planned, evidence- led programme of tree maintenance. The procurement exercise has demonstrated that a contract value of £0.136m is required to deliver the full scope of survey work across priority parks and open spaces. The contract is expected to run for 6 months to complete the identified works.

Awarding the contract at this stage will enable the Council to:

- Obtain an accurate, boroughwide understanding of tree condition, replacing historic ad- hoc inspections with a consistent baseline dataset.
- Support public safety and risk reduction, particularly in high- footfall areas such as play spaces, sports pitches, car parks, pathways, and areas around buildings.
- Inform future budget planning and maintenance programmes, enabling the Council to target resources where risks and needs are greatest.
- Fully utilise the new tree management system, ensuring data captured aligns with digital workflows and supports long- term monitoring.
- Demonstrate compliance with statutory duties, reducing exposure to liability and insurance risks through a structured inspection regime.
- Ensure operational resilience, as existing internal resources do not have the capacity or specialist expertise to deliver a survey of this scale.

Taking all factors into account, awarding the contract now represents the most efficient, safe, and cost- effective means of delivering a high- quality tree survey that meets the Council's legal duties, operational needs, and environmental objectives.

Background

The Council has a legal duty to manage the risks posed by trees on land which is owned or controlled. This is primarily governed by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957/1984. The Council must take reasonable steps to ensure that trees do not pose an unacceptable risk to people or property. This is typically achieved through regular tree surveys, risk assessments, and timely remedial works.

To date, tree inspections have been carried out in response to visual assessments by parks officers, and service requests from members of the public, with a primary focus on high footfall areas.

The recent implementation of a new tree management system presents an opportunity to revisit historic survey data and enhance the evidence base, supporting the development of a more robust and proactive monitoring regime.

One of the outputs will be to provide condition surveys and recommendations for future inspection cycles. Trees identified as requiring attention will be attended to by the existing tree maintenance contractor.

There is an existing annual tree maintenance budget for Parks and Highways, of approximately £0.700m.

It is expected that this project will last approximately 6 months.

Non-key Executive Decision

The priority zones will include, but not be limited to high footfall areas such as:

- Play areas
- Sports pitches
- Formal pathways
- Car parks
- Buildings areas
- Property boundaries

Ongoing cyclical inspections may require additional resources; however, this will be better understood once this initial survey is carried out.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The possibility of utilising our existing staff resources was thoroughly considered; however, it has been determined that they lack the time and capacity to undertake this work.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

None

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

Name: Samantha Eady

Designation: Programme Manager

Signature: *Samantha Eady*

Date: 26.01.26

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has a general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual may generally do subject to any statutory limitations. The arrangements now sought are in accordance with these powers.

The procurement is below threshold and therefore the full rigours of the Procurement act 2023 (PA) do not apply. However, the Council's Contract Procedure Rules must be complied with.

It appears the contract was procured in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules and Legal shall be consulted in finalising and executing the contract. The contract shall be period for a period of 6 months with the options to extend by no more than 3 months. The value of the contract shall remain at £0.136m, and any extension is only to allow for additional time to complete the surveys by the contractor.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

This report seeks approval to award the tree survey contract to Place Services, following completion of the procurement process, with a contract value of £0.136m, to be funded from existing Environment Service revenue budgets.

The approved contract value represents a £0.036m increase compared to the original estimated cost of £0.100m set out in the earlier "Tree Survey Contract – Permission to commence tendering process" report. This increase reflects information obtained through market engagement and the procurement process, which identified greater survey complexity and workload than could not be robustly estimated at the pre- tender stage due to limited baseline tree- stock data and site- specific access requirements.

The revised contract value has been reviewed and can be accommodated within existing approved revenue budgets. The contract value is capped at £0.136m and is considered affordable. While the survey works themselves are contained within the approved contract sum, it is recognised that the outputs of the survey may identify future tree maintenance or remedial works. Any such requirements would be assessed separately and managed within the existing annual tree maintenance budget (approximately £0.700m) or subject to further approval should additional funding be required.

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

There is no impact on any directly employed Council employees, and no existing external contract for inspections is currently in operation. The procurement process can be undertaken within existing staff resources.

Non-key Executive Decision

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The inspections of trees will focus on high use areas, considered the highest risk, which will include footpaths, seating areas and play areas. There are no anticipated equalities and social inclusion implications or risks associated with this contract.

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.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socioeconomics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out and on this occasion, this is not required.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

There are not equalities and social inclusion implications and risks associated with this decision

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The project supports environmental stewardship by enabling proactive tree management and risk reduction. There is recognition of the need to balance operational needs (e.g., heating, maintenance) with climate change considerations.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

N/A

Non-key Executive Decision

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
Director of Environment

Date: 11.02.2026

Lodging this notice

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

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____