

ITEM 7



COUNCIL CABINET 18 OCTOBER 2005

Report of the Cabinet Member for Community Services,
Regeneration and E-Government

Operation of Trial for Cosmetic Work to Trees

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Council Cabinet at its meeting on 14 June 2005 approved that £5,000 be vired from the grounds maintenance budget 2005/06 to undertake a trial of cosmetic works to trees in the Area Panel 5 area.
- 1.2 To date no works have been undertaken under this pilot.

RECOMMENDATION

2. To extend the pilot scheme, with the total existing £5,000 budget, to all Area Panel areas for the 2005/06 financial year.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. As no works have been undertaken to date and 3 months of the trial has already passed it would be sensible to extend the area of the pilot to include all Area Panels.

Operation of Trial for Cosmetic Work to Trees

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1.1 The Planning and Environment Commission undertook a topic review on the Tree Management Policy. One of the recommendations of the Commission was that the responsibility for prioritising and approving cosmetic tree work and for allocating the financial resources available for it should be transferred from the Arboricultural Section to the Area Panels.
- 1.2 In response to the recommendation it was proposed that a pilot scheme be undertaken in the Area Panel 5 area where a ring fenced budget managed by Commercial Services was made available to Area Panel 5 to commission cosmetic tree works in cases where the Arboricultural Officer had not been prepared to commission work requested by a constituent.
- 1.3 It was proposed that in the pilot year that £5,000 was ringfenced to Area Panel 5. On average the cost of pruning a tree was £100 to £150 so approximately 35 to 50 requests could be approved each year by the Area Panel. All work requested would have to comply with the conditions stated in the Tree Management Policy. The pilot scheme would be reviewed after one year.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. To keep the trial solely within the Area Panel 5 area.

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Background papers:	None	
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Implications	

IMPLICATIONS

Finance

1. The virement of £5,000 from the grounds maintenance budget for 2005/06 has already been approved. If the scheme continues or is extended it will form a budget pressure for 2006/07.

Legal

2. None arising.

Personnel

3. None arising.

Equalities Impact

4. Cosmetic works to trees may be of most benefit to housebound people and those with failing eyesight.

Corporate Themes and Priorities

5. The pilot promotes the objectives of providing a diverse, attractive and healthy environment and the Council value of being open, transparent and honest in everything we do.