Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee - 19 July 2016

Subject: Manchester Tree Action Plan

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive – People, Policy and Reform

Summary

An approach to refreshing the Manchester Tree Action Plan, in the context of the adopted Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI) Strategy, was agreed at Neighbourhood Scrutiny Committee in September 2015. This report sets out the draft Tree Action Plan and highlights the key actions contained within it. It provides a summary of engagement with partners to date and how public consultation will further help to shape the Action Plan before its final approval later this year.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

Notes the report and the draft Tree Action Plan for the purposes of on-line public consultation.

Wards Affected: All

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- Manchester Tree Strategy and Action Plan 2005-10, Manchester City Council
- Manchester's Great Outdoors: A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015-25, Manchester City Council
- Manchester's Great Outdoors, Stakeholder Implementation Plan 2015-18, Manchester A Certain Future, Manchester City Council
- Manchester City Council Climate Change Delivery Plan 2010-20, Manchester City Council
- Manchester Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2012-27, Manchester City Council
- The Manchester Strategy: Our Manchester 2016-2025, Manchester City Council

1. Background

Manchester's original Tree Strategy and Action Plan was produced in 2006 to increase the understanding of trees in the City, to raise awareness of the important role that trees play and to galvanise and catalyse tree-related activity. Since then the understanding of the importance of green infrastructure to a thriving city has increased. This has been recognised in several approved key policy documents that provide the strategic context to this refreshed draft Tree Action Plan.

- The Manchester Strategy: Our Manchester sets a long term vision for Manchester's future. It recognises that world class Cities of the future will have access to beautiful green spaces and emphasises the need for a liveable city which is clean safe and attractive.
- The City Council Climate Change Action Plan, sets out the council's contribution to delivering Manchester A Certain Future, the city's climate change action plan. Trees are a vital component of green and blue infrastructure within the city and have a key regulating role to play in terms of air and water quality, climate change adaptation and mitigation, carbon storage and flood control.
- Manchester's Great Outdoors: a Green and Blue Infrastructure (G&BI)
 Strategy for Manchester is the key document and the mechanism that will help
 deliver the liveability agenda. Trees are recognised as playing an important
 part in this. The G&BI Strategy specifically references the development of this
 Action Plan as a key priority. One of the key objectives of Manchester's
 Great Outdoors is to improve the quality and functionality of all our green and
 blue spaces, including woodlands, and trees in parks, along streets, in both
 public and private areas, and this action plan can help support that.

2. How a refreshed Tree Action Plan will sit with the G&BI Strategy

- 2.1. The Tree Action Plan will not be a stand alone document but will be an essential part of the delivery plan for the G&BI Strategy. This sets the overall strategic context for the different elements that comprise green and blue infrastructure and provides an effective strategic foundation for the delivery of actions to enhance the City's trees.
- 2.2. The G&BI Strategy's four key objectives are to improve the quality and function of existing and new G&BI, improve connectivity and accessibility to G&BI within and beyond Manchester and to raise awareness and understanding of the G&BI benefits to residents, the economy and the environment. Each of the four key objectives has a set of headline actions which are relevant to particular stakeholders or particular types of G&BI.
- 2.3. The two key Headline Actions that are directly relevant to the City's trees are:
 - 'Effective and appropriate tree and woodland management and planting'.
 (G&BI Strategy Objective 1, Headline Action 5) and
 - Embed G&BI in key plans and policies (G&BI Strategy Objective 4, Headline Action 2)

The Tree Action Plan will sit within the Stakeholder Implementation Plan primarily

under the Headline Action of 'Effective and appropriate tree and woodland management and planting'. It will be an integral part of the G&BI Strategy Implementation Plan enabling more detail to be provided regarding how the City's tree assets can be cared for not just by the Council but by a range of stakeholders.

3. Consultation on the draft Tree Action Plan

3.1. Refreshing the Tree Action Plan has involved extensive engagement with key partners including those within the council. Evening and day time briefing sessions have been held with councillors and discussions have taken place with relevant officers across the council including the Tree Officers, Park Managers, Grounds Maintenance and Planning Officers. External partners including the Tree Council, Woodland Trust, GM Tree Station, City of Trees (formerly Red Rose Forest), Groundwork and the MACF G&BI Group have also been engaged with. Online public consultation with local residents and businesses will take place following Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

4. The vision for Manchester's trees

- 4.1. Trees in parks, along highways, in gardens and in other public and private spaces are an important part of the City's GI assets, providing the backdrop to Manchester as a word class, liveable City they are not an optional extra. The Manchester of the future will have an extensive, maturing tree and woodland canopy, with a rich and diverse mix of species, which will help the City adapt to climate change. The Tree Action Plan will allow a focus to be given to Trees, helping to ensure that they will continue to be planted in Manchester selectively and appropriately, with due regard given to location, landscape character and sustainability. Work will continue to bring existing trees and woodlands into active management, with a key emphasis on collaboration and partnership working. Communities and partner organisations will be engaged and involved, taking a proactive role in understanding, promoting, improving and protecting the City's treescape.
- 4.2. Within the context of the wider G&BI Strategy our vision continues to be to: Secure a long-term future for our trees and woodlands for generations to come, providing the right management and strong protection, ensuring their positive contribution to a growing, world class City, recognised for its dynamic and sustainable economy and high quality of life.

5. Tree Action Plan objectives

- 5.1. The four objectives from the original Tree Strategy will continue to shape the many actions that both the council and stakeholders are already undertaking individually and in partnership, as well as future actions that are required.
 - (i) Managing Sustainably The sustainable management of the City's tree stock has included tree audits and the development of a GIS based tree management system. This objective is still relevant and will continue to help in terms of forward planning and future proofing the City's tree stock.

- (ii) Planting Appropriately This objective continues to be appropriate; the right tree planted in the right place is part of creating a diverse and maturing tree stock that is sustainable and resilient and can cope better with the adverse effects of climate change, new pests and diseases.
- (iii) Protecting Strongly The aim of this objective is to ensure that Manchester's existing tree stock, both in public and private ownership, continues to have adequate protection. With a fast growing population, demand for residential growth and developing transport infrastructure, the City's trees and woodlands will continue to face challenges, but informed decision making supported by an appropriate policy framework will support the future for trees and woodlands within Manchester.
- (iv) Involving People Creatively This reflects the need to raise awareness, increase understanding, build capacity and highlight the joy of trees in the City. It remains important being at the centre of the G&BI Stakeholder Implementation Plan which embraces actions by all partners not just the Council.

6. Key actions within the draft refreshed Tree Action Plan

- 6.1. Below each objective the attached draft refreshed Tree Action Plan lists several headline actions and a wide range of potential activities through which the objectives would be delivered. The key actions are summarised as follows.
- **6.2. Managing Sustainably -** One of the key pieces of work contained within the draft Tree Action Plan will be the development, and on line publication, of a series of **key principles of tree management** in Manchester. It will aim to be a useful starting point as to what the Council will and won't do with regard to trees, highlighting the need for a consistent approach to tree management in the City. The principles will be developed working with professional tree officer and key partners, and will hopefully be a catalyst for other relevant tree management bodies to develop policies and principles of their own.
- **6.3. Planting Appropriately -** Within the context of a growing city which is liveable and climate resilient a key issue will be to ensure that Manchester continues to have a healthy tree canopy formed by a mixture of trees by type, age and location. Manchester's current tree canopy cover is 20% and the actions under this objective seek to sustain this level.
- **6.4. Protecting Strongly -** It is proposed that potential tree replacement and compensation measures be investigated to inform decision making where development of a site may require the removal of existing trees. This would provide a better understanding of the value of individual trees from saplings to mature specimens. This would supplement the more formal protection of trees that takes places through the use of TPOs and conservation area status, and could potentially provide additional protection for mature trees.
- **6.5. Involving Creatively -** The benefits of trees need to be widely understood by all partners if Manchester's tree assets, in both public and private ownership, are to be

fully cared for. Key to this is the provision of opportunities to support training and capacity building within community organisations. The development of the City of Trees Citizen Forester Volunteer Scheme is one such opportunity, launched earlier this year. This aims to build on the legacy of the Manchester Tree Warden Network which ran from 2008-2013 when it merged with the Manchester Community Guardian scheme. It will harness community interest in trees and woodlands and continue to provide an opportunity for the public to get actively involved with trees and woodlands in Manchester.

- 6.6. The success of the Action Plan would be monitored through a small number of potentially identifiable measures.
 - The number/area of trees/woodland with management plans
 - The percentage of tree canopy cover across Manchester
 - The number of trees removed and replaced through development, in parks and on highways
 - Numbers engaged with through volunteer opportunities

7. Next steps

- 7.1. The interest and initiative by a wide group of partners that kick started the original Tree Strategy and Action Plan is still very much alive. It is this interest and initiative that needs to continue to assist the role of council tree officers and ensure that a healthy tree stock across the City is well managed, protected and enhanced by all those who benefit from this essential natural asset. Collaborative approaches will continue to yield new opportunities for the City's trees and woodlands.
- 7.2. The draft Tree Action Plan has been refreshed through engagement with these partners both within and external to the council. This draft Action Plan will be used as the basis for an on line public consultation. This will give residents and any other interested individuals or groups the opportunity to comment on the headline actions and/or to volunteer to become more involved.
- 7.3. Once the results of the public consultation have been assessed, it is proposed that the final refreshed Tree Action Plan, linked to the G&BI Stakeholder Implementation Plan, will be brought back to Neighbourhoods & Environment Scrutiny Committee for endorsement, later this year.

Appendix
Draft Refreshed Tree Action Plan

APPENDIX 1

Tree Action Plan 2016-20

Tree Strategy Action Plan

The context for the Tree Strategy Action Plan is provided by **Manchester's Great Outdoors:** A Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester, an overarching document that provides the strategic framework for the different elements that comprise green and blue infrastructure. The key Headline Action within the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy of direct relevance to the City's trees is "Effective and appropriate tree and woodland management and planting." This Action Plan provides more detail about what this means for the City's trees.

The Action Plan is set out under the same objective headings used in the original Manchester Tree Strategy:

- 1. Managing sustainably,
- 2. Planting appropriately,
- 3. Protecting strongly and,
- 4. Involving creatively.

It also aims to follow the key principles set out in the Trees and Design Action Group **publication Trees Matter.** The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG) is an open collaborative forum facilitating cross-sector and cross-disciplinary dialogue and projects promoting the role of the urban forest throughout the United Kingdom. The action plan also takes on board best practice approaches suggested by partners including the **Woodland Trust** and **City of Trees** (formerly Red Rose Forest). The Action Plan has been developed collaboratively, working with a range of organisations and agencies, referencing existing and new partner commitments. It is a list of actions to be delivered by all partners and stakeholders, demonstrating true commitment to a sensible, sustainable and essential future for trees and woodlands in the City.

Monitoring, Review and Progress Reporting

The Action Plan will be updated quarterly and reported on annually. It is dynamic and accessible, making it far easier for tree related activity, from statutory bodies to community groups, to be captured.

The success of the Action Plan will ultimately be driven not just by the realisation of the activity illustrated below, but by the on going push by all of us to recognise and support the true value of trees to the City; making commitments to enhance and protect the treescape in Manchester for many years to come.

Objective 1 – Managing Sustainably

	Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
1	Map and monitor changes in the amount and distribution of trees across	Refine datasets of tree and woodland cover	Universities, CoT	2017-20
	the city	Refresh Manchester Tree Audit	GM partners, CoT, FC	2017-18
2	Develop a fuller understanding of the City's	Develop MCC tree management system	MCC	2016
	tree resource	Deliver annual highway tree inspection programme	MCC	2016-18
		Investigate online mapping tool of planned tree works in the City	MCC, Universities	2017-18
		Encourage network of data gathering and information sharing eg University access to canopy data for research	MCC, CoT, FC, Universities	2016-18
		Investigate opportunities for valuing Manchester tree stock including: • The development of an ecosystem services valuation of treescape	Universities, CoT	2017 -20
3	Ensure continued and sustainable management	Develop, agree and embed principles of tree management in Manchester	MCC	2016-17
	of all trees and woodland and best practice	Develop tree and woodland management plans MCC parks and greenspaces, which include:	MCC, CoT, GMEU	2016-20
	approaches employed	 No waste timber going to landfill Consideration of sustainable uses of woodland by-products 		
		Develop tree focussed opportunity mapping for :	MCC CoT	2016-20
		Encourage the development of tree and woodland management plans by all key landowners and managers of trees in Manchester	RPs, Universities	2016 – 20
		Develop tree management good practice case studies as part of MACF GI	MACF GI Group	2016-2020

	Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
		Group		
4	Ensure green and blue infrastructure (including trees and tree management) are considered as part of major new developments	Projects to include:	MCC, TfGM, developers	2016-2020
	and retrofits and policy reviews	Local Plan Review	MCC	2016-2019
5	Develop climate resilient approaches to tree and woodland management	Encourage use of trees within broader climate resilient adaptive plans eg Sustainable Urban Drainage projects, public realm improvements	GM CoT, MCC	2016-2020
	a community of the comm	Develop Ash Dieback Strategy in partnership with Natural Capital Group	GM, CoT, MCC, FC,	2016-17
		Encourage diversity of tree stock e.g appropriately diverse species and age ranges to help increase resilience to pests and disease	MCC, CoT	2016-18
6	Develop partnership projects that sensitively improve the functionality of the treescape	Develop appropriate projects to deliver the City of Trees vision in Manchester including: • Heritage Trees • Forest Schools • Community Orchard planting and management • RSPB Willow Tit conservation Project – Stenner Woods	CoT LWT, MBP, MVP, GW, CoT RSPB	2016/17 2016

Objective 2 – Planting Appropriately

	Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
1	Ensure continued healthy tree canopy cover across the City	Sustained tree and woodland canopy cover of 20% average by 2025 Deliver suitable and sustainable tree planting projects in line with the G&BI Strategy, tree audit baseline, park strategy and neighbourhood place plans, including: - One for one tree replacement for highways trees - Delivery of Transport corridor tree replacement policy - 150 Highways Tree planted annually - 1000 hedgerow trees planted annually - 2500 trees planted annually	MCC, RVIs, RPs, CoT, Woodland Trust LWT MCC TfGM MCC MCC CoT RPs MCC CoT RPs	2016-20
2	Continued planting of community orchards in suitable locations	Planting of at least 4 new community orchards annually Mapping of Community orchard locations Encourage cropping, harvesting, distribution and usage of food provided Develop Beacon Trees Mapping project	RFW, CoT, RPs, RFW, MCC UoM CoT	2016-20 2017-18
3	Investigate mechanisms for funding new tree planting, management, and maintenance	Support the delivery of the City of Trees Vision for Greater Manchester by:	MCC, MACF GI, RPs, MCC EA, MCC, CoT, GW CoT MCC	2016-20 2016-20 2016-18 2017-18
4	Develop a climate resilient approach to tree	Utilise a mixture of native and non native planting projects to ensure resilience against pests and diseases	MC, MACF GI, CoT	2016-20

Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
planting	Reduce risk of tree pests and disease by ensuring all new trees planted are from registered and approved sources	MCC, CoT	2016-20

Objective 3 – Protecting Strongly

	Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
1	Investigate effective tree replacement and compensation measures	Develop and agree appropriate compensation measure for tree loss and replacement in Manchester	MCC, CoT	2017
2	Ensure trees of high value are designated as Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)	Continue to Designate new TPOs as appropriate Enforce as appropriate against unauthorised works to a tree protected by a tree preservation order or within a conservation area Promotion of the Tree Preservation Order process via neighbourhood teams	MCC MCC, CoT, partners	2016-20 2016-20 2017-18
3	Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs): increase the number of SBIs in active	Increase the number of sites of biological importance (SBIs) in active conservation management by 1-4% annually work with landowners and land managers	MCC GMEU	2016 –208
	management to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity	Provide statistical report to Defra annually	MCC	2016-20
4	Use planning conditions to ensure high standard of tree works, protection and management	Tree officers to provide guidance and and advise through the planning process to ensure compliance of tree works against BS 5837 (the British Standard for Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction) BS 3998 (the British Standard for Tree Work)	MCC, Developers	2016-18

Objective 4 – Involving Creatively

	Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
1.	Further develop research into the benefits of trees	Local universities, MACF and MCC to establish an ongoing programme of collaborative GI research including trees, initially for 2016-20, to measure the impact of GI across the range of social, economic and environmental benefits set out in the Strategy. To include: • Creating 'ecosystems@Manchester' multi-disciplinary research network at the University of Manchester • Nerc Gardens and Ecosystem Services project • Nerc GHIA project • Nerc Green Growth	Universities, MCC, MACF GI UoM MMU UoM UoM	2016 2016-18 2016-18 2016 -18
		Update GI Evidence base with tree and woodland related research	CoT, MCC Universities	2016-20
2.	Encourage and record the delivery of community led and focussed tree projects and food growing	Projects to include: Real Food Wythenshawe Heritage trees	RFW CoT	2016-20 2016-18
3.	Raise the awareness of the benefits of trees	Establish social media platforms for ongoing promotion of tree related information Ward councillors and local communities to include tree activity in ward plans as appropriate,	Ward Councillors, CoT	2015-16 and ongoing annually
4	Provide oppportunties for community engagement, involvement and acitivity	Support and delivery of tree related activity, training and capacity building: Related volunteer opportunities to include: Friends of Group events and activities Development of CoT Citizen Forester Volunteer Scheme RVI volunteer and engagement opportunities Lancs WT Moston Fairways Volunteers Scheme	CoT, Friends Groups, Third Sector partners MCC	2016-20
5.	Showcase local best	Apply for national awards wherever appropriate e.g. Britain in Bloom RHS	MCC	2016-20

_	Headline Action	Potential projects/activities	Delivery Agencies	Timescales
	practice and seek recognition for delivered projects	Awards for community greening projects Encourage nomination of Champion trees as part of notable and ancient trees in Britain and Ireland register	MCC	2016-20
6.	Raise the profile of Manchester as a an attractive place to live, work and visit with access to high quality GI within and	Use the city's trees and woodlands attract visitors and create new recreation opportunities, including through: Heaton Park Canopy Trail Heritage Trees project Beacon Trees	MACF GI Group, MCC, MM, UoM, MCC CoT CoT, MCC	2016-20
	beyond Manchester	Promote the City's existing parks and green spaces to maximise their usage by local communities, workers and visitors	MCC, Universities	2016-17

Part 2 - Monitoring, Review and Progress Reporting Actions

	Headline Action	Method	Delivery agencies	Timescales
1	Key performance indicators	Potential measures to include: The number/area of trees/woodland with management plans The percentage of tree canopy cover across Manchester The number of trees removed and replaced through development, in parks and on highways Numbers engaged with through volunteer opportunities	All	2016-20
2	Annual review and reporting	Undertake an annual review against the Action Plan and publish the findings through the: - MACF website - MACF Annual Report - Manchester State of the City Report - Plus others as appropriate	MACF GI, UoM, MMU, UoS, MCC, and all other stakeholders as appropriate	2016-20
3	Website and news stories	Publish stories on progress against the Action Plan and specific projects on the MCC website, plus other channels as appropriate	MCC All	2016-20
4	Review and update the action plan	Undertake a full review of progress against the Action Plan in 2020 and publish an updated version for the following 3-5 year period.	MACF GI, MCC, and all other stakeholders as appropriate	2020

Contributors

The MACF Green and Blue Infrastructure Group and the Council are grateful to the following organisations who have contributed to the development of this Action Plan and made commitments to support its delivery.

CityCo	CIC	http://cityco.com/
City of Trees initiative	CoT	http://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/
Community groups	CGs	
Environment Agency	EA	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-
,		agency
Forestry Commission	FC	
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit	GMEU	http://www.tameside.gov.uk/ecologyunit
Groundwork	GW	http://www.groundwork.org.uk/
The Wildlife Trust For Lancashire, Manchester and North	LWT	http://www.lancswt.org.uk/
Merseyside		
Manchester A Certain Future - Green & Blue Group	MACF GI	http://macf.ontheplatform.org.uk/
Manchester Climate Agency	MCA	http://macf.ontheplatform.org.uk/
Manchester City Council	MCC	http://www.manchester.gov.uk/
Manchester Environmental Education Network	MEEN	http://www.meen.org.uk/
Manchester Garden City	MGC	http://cityco.com/project/manchester-garden-city/
Manchester Metropolitan University	MMU	
Manchester Museum	MM	http://www2.mmu.ac.uk/
Mersey Valley Partnership	MVP	http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/
Moston Brook Partnership	MBP	
Natural England	NE	
National Trust	NT	http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/
Network Rail	NR	http://www.networkrail.co.uk/
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council	OMBC	http://www.oldham.gov.uk/
Real Food Wythenshawe	RFW	
Registered Providers (Formerly Registered Housing Providers)	RP	
River Valley Initiatives	RVI	
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds	RSPB	http://www.rspb.org.uk/
Trans Pennine Trail partnership	TPT	http://www.transpenninetrail.org.uk/
Transport for Greater Manchester	TfGM	http://www.tfgm.com/Pages/default.aspx
UK Green Building Council	UK GBC	http://www.ukgbc.org/
University of Manchester	UoM	http://www.manchester.ac.uk/

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