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22 February 2016

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Public Services – Councillor Lancaster

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Executive Director, Place

**Ward(s) affected:**

Bablake

**Title:** Petition - The Management of Trees in Loudon Avenue.

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

In April 2015 the Trees & Woodlands Team received a complaint from a resident of Loudon Avenue between Streetfield Road and Barker Butts Lane about the tree root activity from the street trees, in relation to the risk that they present to the nearby houses for subsidence damage and potential claims against the Council. After an assessment of the level of risk presented by the trees in this section of Loudon Avenue, The Arboricultural Services Officer concluded that 4 trees needed to be replaced out of 21 trees to reduce the likelihood of a future subsidence event occurring at the properties of 21 to 29 Loudon Avenue.

Beyond this work, a continuing evaluation of the level of risk presented by the trees would be conducted by the Trees & Woodlands Team, in the southern section of Loudon Avenue, to further reduce the level of risk. This may require the reduction in the number of trees present in the southern section Loudon Avenue. Phasing the work over two to three years will allow the work to undertake within yearly budgets and not affect service delivery elsewhere. Highway Tree Policy, appendix L to the Highway Asset Management Plan requires all highway trees to be replaced on a two for one basis.

The work to remove the current trees was to be undertaken during November and consultation letters, notifying the local residents of the work were sent out on the 27 Oct 2015.

On the 17th November 2015 the Council received a petition bearing 25 signatures requesting the removal of 50% of the trees (every other tree) along Loudon Avenue.

There are three sections to Loudon Avenue, each with trees as follows. Poole Road to Leofric Street 12 trees, Leofric Street to Steeplefield Road 15 trees and Steeplefield Road to Barker' Butts Lane 21 trees. The southern section of the avenue is overstocked in relation to the two other sections. The purpose of having trees in residential roads is to provide enhancing amenity greening and to soften the harshness of buildings and structures. The higher number of trees

present in this section of the avenue has made the trees become more of a nuisance to the local residence than an enhancing feature.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Public Services is recommended to approve:

1. The reduction of the number of trees in the southern section of Loudon Avenue, between Steeplefield Road and Barkers' Butts Lane from 21 to 12 by removing trees in a pattern that will leave a balanced level of amenity greening.
2. Replacement trees being planted in the nearby Moseley Park on the 2 for 1 basis and retaining the overall tree canopy cover for this area, but also further enhancing Moseley Park.

**List of Appendices included:**

Highway Tree Policy. Appendix L to the Highway Asset Management Plan.

**Other useful background papers:**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## **Report title: Petition – The Management of Trees in Loudon**

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 In April 2015 the Trees & Woodlands team received a complaint from a resident of Loudon Avenue about the tree root activity from the street trees, in relation to the risk that they present to the nearby houses for subsidence damage.
- 1.2 After an assessment of the level of risk presented by the trees in the southern section of Loudon Avenue, The Arboricultural Services Officer concluded that 4 trees needed to be replaced to reduce the likelihood of a future subsidence event occurring at the properties of 21 to 29 Loudon Avenue.
- 1.3 Beyond this work, a continuing evaluation of the level of risk presented by the trees would be conducted by the Trees & Woodlands Team, in the southern section of Loudon Avenue, to further reduce the level of risk. This work identified that a reduction in the number of trees present in the southern section Loudon Avenue would be required. Phasing the work over two to three years would allowed the work to be undertaken within yearly budgets and not affect service delivery elsewhere.
- 1.4 The work to remove the current trees was to be undertaken during November and consultation letters, notifying the local residents of the work were sent out on the 27 October 2015.
- 1.5 On the 6 November 2015 the council received a petition bearing 25 signatures requesting the removal of 50% of the trees (every other tree) on Loudon Avenue. The petition read:

“We the resident of Loudon Avenue would like a reduction of 50% of the trees in Loudon Avenue (removing every other tree). We think this would greatly reduce the damage done by trees to the surrounding features. Namely the road, damage to walls and movement of house structures. This would retain valuable green amenity. Trees have been removed further up Loudon Avenue and appear every 25 metres not every 12 metres as they do between Barker Butts Lane and Steeplefield Road. We look forward to your reply as we know you are about to start work in the area.”

### **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 Option 1 – Remove 9 trees to reduce the total number of trees in this section of Loudon Avenue from 21 to 12. This will spread out the presence of trees in this section to match the other two sections of Loudon Avenue. The cost of this work is £3708 and can be funded from the tree maintenance budget.



2.2 Option 2 – Remove 9 trees as above and replace them on a 2:1 ratio with 18 young trees in the nearby Moseley Park on a two for one basis. This option almost meets the petitioners' requirements, retains street tree amenity, satisfies the Highway Tree Policy and increases the numbers of trees present in the area. The cost of this work is £6678 and could be funded from the tree maintenance budget. The plan below indicates the new tree positions. Exact positions will be determined during the planting process.



2.3 Option 3 - Remove all 17 remaining Pollarded trees and replace them with new trees. This will maintain the numbers of trees present at 21 and meet the Highway Tree Policy needs on tree replacement but would not meet the petitioners request and the long term risk to properties would remain in the long term. The cost of this work is £12,117. This level of cost

could not be funded by the tree maintenance budget, without significant adjustments to other work.

- 2.4 Option 4 – Remove all 17 remaining pollarded trees and replace only 9 trees, providing a total of 12 young trees. This option provides the best balance of amenity greening and tree subsidence risk management for the long term. The cost of this work is £10,137. This level of cost could not be funded by the tree maintenance budget, without significant adjustments to other work.
- 2.5 Option 2 is the recommended option as it responds to the issues raised by the residents but maintains the level of trees within the local area.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 There has been no consultation because of the petition being received.

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 Immediately. Feb/March 2016.

### **5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources**

Financial implications

The costs associated with the recommended option can be met from within existing revenue budgets.

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

The Council is obliged to consider any petition received with five or more signatories.

Officers will be required to have regard to any existing Tree Preservation Orders which may have been placed on the trees in question in order to protect them. This will determine whether the trees can be removed.

The Council's Highway Tree Policy, (appendix L to the Highway Asset Management Plan) required all highway trees to be replaced one for one as addressed in this report.

### **6. Other implications**

None

#### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

This contributes to improving the environment and neighbourhood that people live in.

#### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

As part of the on-going systematic inspection and management process the Urban Forestry Unit will continue to evaluate the level of risk presented by highway trees and undertake such actions as necessary to reduce or mitigate that risk.

**6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

None.

**6.4 Equalities / EIA**

There are no equality implications

**6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

All trees will be replaced so there are no environmental impacts.

**6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

None

**Report author(s):**

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**Directorate:** Place

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

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Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Resources	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016
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Legal: Rob Parkes	Legal Services	Resources	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016
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Members: Councillor Rachel Lancaster	Cabinet Member (Public Services)		8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

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**Appendices**

Highway Tree Policy. Appendix L to Highway Asset Management Plan.