

## EXETER CITY COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY 2 SEPTEMBER 2008

#### DRAFT TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present to Members a draft Tree and Woodland Strategy for the City.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council has recently put in place a number of strategies that set the framework within which it manages its green environment. However it does not have in place a strategy for managing the City's trees and woodland.
- 2.2 The importance of trees to the environment, the City and its residents and visitors is considerable and work has been ongoing to survey the City's trees over the last few years. It was thought that a Tree and Woodland Strategy was the next logical and essential step in managing this valuable resource wisely.
- 2.3 A cross-directorate officer team has therefore been developing the strategy in consultation with a Member tree working party. This working party has met several times to consider various drafts of the strategy, receive feedback on the consultation on the strategy and guide the officer group.
- 2.4 The working party last met on 5 August 2008 to receive the draft Tree and Woodland Strategy and agree the action plan prior to reporting it to this committee.
- 2.5 The strategy has been made available to Members via the internet (<http://s-civ-wap01:9071/ieListDocuments.asp?CId=127&MId=1709> ) however the action plan is attached to this report for Members to consider in detail.

#### 3. CONSULTATION ON THE STRATEGY TO DATE

- 3.1 As stated above, officers from across the Council have been involved in the development of the strategy representing Parks and Open Spaces, Leisure and Planning.
- 3.2 However given the strong feelings that tree management engenders the Tree and Woodland Strategy has also been the subject of wider consultation. This included;
- a wavelength survey;
  - a questionnaire; and
  - a focus group of 'corporate' stakeholders including representatives from Exeter Wild City – Devon Wildlife Trust, University of Exeter, Devon County Council and the Environment Agency.
- 3.3 The responses from the consultation have been instrumental in forming the strategy and are included as appendices to the strategy.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Following consideration by Committee the draft Tree and Woodland Strategy will be consulted on again. The Strategy will be placed on the website and appropriately publicised.
- 4.2 It is intended that following this further consultation the final version of the Tree and Woodland Strategy will be brought back to this committee later in the year prior to adoption by the Council.

#### **5. RECOMMENDED**

- 1) that Members accept the Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy and the action plan prior to further consultation.

HEAD OF CONTRACTS AND DIRECT SERVICES

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**  
**Background papers used in compiling this report:**

S:PA/LP/ Committee/908SCC3  
19.8.08