

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

SUBJECT:	Tree Management Policy and Tree Inspection Reports
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members adopt the proposed tree management policy attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 That members note a number of tree safety works that have been identified by the most recent tree safety survey and which will be scheduled for action in the near future.

2. Background

- 2.1 In response to recent concerns over the Sherwood Avenue project a new tree management policy is proposed to help regulate future tree management across Town Council sites.
- 2.2 To ensure members are up to date generally with tree works, a copy of the most recent tree safety inspection results for all sites have been circulated to all members. Due to the size of the documents, they have not been published or printed as part of this report but are available to members of the public on request.
- 2.3 Members are asked to note that there are a range of safety works recommended by the recent reports which will be actioned in the near future.
- 2.4 All safety works for the Cemetery have already been undertaken and concluded and outstanding works are those that are merely recommended as good tree management practice but not to address a safety risk.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

- 3.1 Contained in the report.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk



Tree Management Policy for Newark Town Council

Introduction: Trees are integral components of our urban environment, providing numerous benefits such as improving air quality, reducing urban heat island effect, enhancing biodiversity, and contributing to the aesthetic appeal of our communities. As stewards of the environment, the Town Council recognises the importance of managing trees effectively to ensure their preservation and maximise the benefits they offer to residents. This Tree Management Policy outlines the guidelines and procedures for the management, maintenance, and conservation of trees within the jurisdiction of the Town Council.

Goals:

1. **Conservation:** To conserve and protect existing trees within the town's boundaries.
2. **Enhancement:** To enhance the urban forest canopy cover through strategic planting initiatives.
3. **Safety:** To ensure the safety of residents and property by proactively managing tree risks.
4. **Community Engagement:** To engage and educate residents about the importance of trees and involve them in tree management initiatives.
5. **Sustainability:** To promote sustainable practices in tree management, including biodiversity conservation and climate resilience.

Policy Statements:

1. **Tree Inventory and Assessment:**
 - Conduct regular inventory and assessment of all trees within the town's jurisdiction to monitor their health, condition, and species diversity.
 - Prioritise the maintenance and management of trees based on their health, location, and significance.
2. **Tree Planting and Maintenance:**
 - Implement a tree planting program to increase the town's urban forest canopy cover, focusing on native species and suitable tree types for urban environments.
 - Ensure proper maintenance practices, including watering, pruning, and mulching, to promote tree health and longevity.
3. **Tree Removal and Replacement:**
 - Tree removal should only be considered as a last resort, and alternative solutions such as pruning or tree support systems should be explored wherever feasible. Circumstances where tree removal is required is set out in Schedule 1 below.
 - When tree removal is necessary due to disease, decay, or safety concerns, replacement trees should where suitable be planted in a timely manner to maintain or enhance the town's tree canopy.

4. **Tree Risk Management:**

- Conduct regular tree risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential hazards posed by trees to public safety and property.
- Prioritise the management of high-risk trees through appropriate interventions, such as pruning, cabling, or removal.

5. **Development and Construction:**

- Integrate tree protection measures into development and construction projects to minimise the impact on existing trees.
- Seek that developers submit tree preservation plans and mitigate any tree loss through compensatory planting or preservation of existing trees wherever possible.

6. **Community Engagement and Education:**

- Engage residents to foster awareness and appreciation for trees.
- Encourage community involvement in tree planting initiatives, tree care workshops, and volunteer opportunities.

7. **Compliance and Enforcement:**

- Advocate for tree protection ordinances and regulations to ensure compliance with tree management standards and guidelines.

8. **Partnerships and Collaboration:**

- Collaborate with community organisations, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to leverage resources and expertise in tree management initiatives.
- Seek funding opportunities and grants to support tree planting, maintenance, and educational programs.

Review and Revision: This Tree Management Policy shall be reviewed periodically to incorporate emerging best practices, technological advancements, and community feedback. Revisions may be made as necessary to ensure the continued effectiveness and relevance of the policy in achieving its goals.

Conclusion: The Town Council is committed to the responsible management and stewardship of trees within its jurisdiction.

By implementing this Tree Management Policy, we aim to preserve and enhance our urban forest for the benefit of current and future generations, fostering a healthier, more sustainable, and vibrant community.

Schedule 1

Felling trees should always be approached with caution and consideration for ecological impact. Here is a list of circumstances when trees may need to be felled:

1. **Dead or Dying Trees:** Trees that are dead or dying pose a safety risk as they can fall unexpectedly, endangering people or property.
2. **Diseased Trees:** Trees infected with diseases that cannot be treated or controlled may need to be removed to prevent the spread of the disease to other trees.
3. **Structurally Unstable Trees:** Trees with structural defects such as large cavities, splits, or weakened branches may need to be felled to prevent them from collapsing and causing harm.
4. **Overcrowding:** In densely populated areas, trees may need to be felled to reduce competition for resources such as sunlight, water, and nutrients, allowing healthier trees to thrive.
5. **Danger to Infrastructure:** Trees growing too close to buildings, power lines, roads, or other infrastructure may need to be felled to prevent damage or disruption.

6. **Root Damage:** Trees with extensive root damage, such as those caused by construction activities or soil erosion, may become unstable and need to be removed.
7. **Invasive Species Control:** Invasive tree species can outcompete native vegetation, disrupting ecosystems. Felling invasive trees may be necessary to restore balance to the ecosystem.
8. **Urban Development:** Trees may need to be felled to make way for urban development projects such as construction of buildings, roads, or parks.
9. **Safety Concerns:** Trees that have grown too large and pose a risk of falling due to their size or location may need to be felled to ensure public safety.
10. **Storm Damage:** Trees damaged by storms, such as lightning strikes, high winds, or heavy snow, may need to be felled if they are at risk of falling or if they pose a danger to nearby structures or people.
11. **Tree Health Management:** Sometimes, selective felling is necessary as part of forest management practices to maintain overall forest health, diversity, and sustainability.
12. **Land Clearing:** In agricultural or landscaping contexts, trees may need to be felled to clear land for cultivation, pasture, or other land use purposes.
13. **Legal Requirements:** In some cases, local regulations or ordinances may require the felling of certain trees for reasons such as fire prevention, habitat restoration, or conservation efforts.
14. **Aesthetic Reasons:** While not ideal, in some cases, trees may be felled for aesthetic reasons, such as to improve views or landscape design. However, this should be approached with caution and consideration for ecological impact.

Before felling trees, it's important to consider alternatives such as tree pruning, bracing, or transplanting, and to obtain any necessary permits or approvals from relevant authorities. Additionally, replanting trees whenever possible is essential for maintaining ecological balance and preserving green spaces.

The felling of trees should always be a last resort. Where felling is required in response to a tree safety inspection report or as a consequence of the circumstances listed at numbers 1,2,3,9 and 10 Council officers shall have authority to action the relevant tree work but must inform all Councillors of the details of the work being carried out and as appropriate share copies of the relevant reports.

In the case of trees being felled in all other cases, the felling of a tree must be by way of Council resolution in response to appropriate reports from officers and where necessary arboricultural experts.

In all cases where appropriate officers will provide public notification of felling works via the Councils website and social media channels and appropriate notices in the area in which the works are to be undertaken. Some locations may require more extensive public awareness than others.

Adopted : 17th April 2024

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

SUBJECT:	Town Hall Hire Fees and Charges
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members adopt an increase to the Town Hall Hire Charges as set out in this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The current fees and charges for hire of the Town Hall are attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The Clerk has enquired with the Council financial administration officer (who until Summer 2023 had handled all bookings of the Town Hall for many years) as to the time elapsed since the charges were last reviewed. Historic records suggest that it was the 2015/2016 financial year when a review was last undertaken.
- 2.3 In view of the Council's wider hospitality development plans which are subject to a separate report in the Agenda to which this report relates, the Clerk is advocating for an interim increase of the fees and charges to apply immediately but which will then be subject to further review by any appointed hospitality manager (assuming members approve an appointment of this nature).
- 2.4 Clearly the Council's overheads to support bookings and hire have risen significantly in the last 10 years and so an increase will help to mitigate against those increases is recommended.
- 2.5 The Clerk would suggest a 15% rise for all costs identified in the hire charge schedule as an interim increase pending a more focused review by any appointed hospitality manager who will present revised hire charge proposals at a later date which will take account of advice from the hospitality consultant report and their own industry knowledge and expertise as well as taking account of any improved building event infrastructure.
- 3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues**
- 3.1 Contained in the report.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

WEDDINGS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS Room Hire charges			
		Current	Plus 15 % (rounded to nearest pound)
Civil Ceremony Only	2 Hours	£450.00	£518.00
SPECIAL PACKAGE			
Ballroom Council Chamber & Kitchen	Daytime up to 6pm Evening after 6pm Day & Evening	£650.00 £850.00 £1400.00	£748.00 £978.00 £1,610.00
Ballroom	Daytime – up to 6pm	£84.00 hour	£97.00
Ballroom	Evening – after 6pm	£115.00 hour	£133.00
Council Chamber	Daytime – up to 6pm	£59.00 hour	£68.00
Council Chamber	Evening – after 6pm	£86.00 hour	£99.00
Pickin Room/ Committee Room	Daytime – up to 6pm	£31.00 hour	£37.00
Pickin Room/Committee Room	Evening – after 6pm	£59.00 hour	£68.00
Kitchen	Daytime & Evening	£27.00 hour	£32.00
Business Bookings			
Ballroom		£69.00 hour £378 day rate	£80.00 £435.00
Council Chamber		£42.00 hour £217 day rate	£49.00 £250.00
Pickin/Committee Room		£31.00 hour £169 day rate	£36.00 £195.00
Old Robing Room		£15.00 hour £75 day rate	£18.00 £87.00
Kitchen		£27.00 hour	£32.00

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

SUBJECT:	Works Approval Schedule
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That members note the report and attached schedule.

2. Background

- 2.1 At the last FGP meeting on 27th March 2024 members received a report identifying various estate maintenance, repair and investment needs. Members resolved to provide devolved authority to the Clerk, Leader and Chairman of Finance and General Purposes to progress relevant works and determine the appropriate way to account for the cost.
- 2.2 Since the meeting the Clerk has developed an internal approval document for use by the Operations Manager to seek appropriate consent for works to be undertaken. A copy of the approval note is attached to this report as Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Since the meeting the Operations Manager has submitted a number of works approval notes to the Clerk, Leader and Chair of FGP. The Leader has suggested that a monthly report and update is provided to members to show the works which are being progressed. The attached schedule (Appendix 2) sets out a current list of works approvals that have been sought.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

- 3.1 Contained in the report.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk

Works Approval Notes Submitted

Description / Reason for Works	Quotes Received	Officer Recommended Quote Cost	Reason for fewer quotes if less than number required	Authorisations from Clerk, Leader and FGP Chair
Essential safety repairs to Syerston Way play area arising from annual full safety check.	2 received.	£2,225.00	N/A	YES
Replacement perspex and seals in glass domed units.	1 received.	£4,332.92	8 other companies approached for further quote but have all declined.	Awaited
Repairs to fencing at Riverside Park	2 received.	£770.00	N/A	Awaited
Drone survey of Town Hall roof to aid access solutions assessment.	1 received.	£1,900.00	Specialist work.	Awaited

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

SUBJECT:	CCLA Property Fund Withdrawal
REPORT BY:	Matthew Gleadell

1. **Recommendations**

- 1.1 That 6 months' notice to withdraw shares to a value of £1million is given to CCLA Property Fund.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The Council's accountant has recommended the draw down of funds to allow for the restating of capital receipts within the accounts as an asset and a credit value (currently shown as a negative value) and also to release funds for various capital projects and expenditure already approved and spent, and expected to be approved. Please see the text of an e-mail from the accountant below.

Hi Matthew

Apologies for the delayed response.

To correct the Capital Receipts Reserve the council will need to do the following:

- *Draw down funds from the CCLA property Fund in excess of the current deficit.*
- *This will then show as income in the year that it is drawn down and can then be transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve to put this back into a credit balance position.*
- *Any surplus drawn down will remain in the Capital Receipts Reserve to fund future Capital Expenditure*
- *It is important going forward that if you are planning Capital Expenditure utilising funds from the CCLA Property Fund that the funds are withdrawn from the CCLA Property Fund prior to the Capital Expenditure being incurred. This again would be included as income during the year and then transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve, the Capital Expenditure would then be included as expenditure during the year and transferred from the Capital Receipts Reserve.*
- *Revenue Expenditure can be transferred into the CCLA Property Fund but it would need to be kept separate from any Capital Funds so should be in a separate CCLA Property Fund Account. Transfer to and from this CCLA property fund would be included as income/expenditure and would go into/out of the General Reserve.*

Hope this all makes sense

David

- 2.2 It is proposed that the funds be moved to the Councils CCLA Deposit Account which is a same day access fund.
- 2.3 Notice to draw down funds is currently 6 months.
- 2.4 The Council has already approved a number of capital expenditure items but has borrowed from revenue reserves to do so. These need to be repaid.

- 2.5 The accountant is keen to ensure that the Council is operating on a system that ensures that Capital and Revenue are distinctly separate within the investments.
- 2.6 A separate CCLA Property Fund account may be set up to hold revenue reserves. As it stands capital and revenue reserves sit in the same investment account.
- 2.7 Where Capital funds are expected to be spent, funds should be drawn down in advance. This has not been happening and so the withdrawal will correct the accounting systems.
- 2.8 Prior to the receipt of the funds, the accountant will be analysing fully the value of capital spent in recent relevant financial years that needs to be repaid to revenue and will provide a detailed report in this regard.

3.0 Financial, Legal, Equality, Environmental & Risk Issues

- 3.1 A reorganisation of the Councils capital and revenue reserves will have a negative impact on the investment receipts such that the investment returns will be less as the end position will be less money invested in the Property Fund and more in the Deposit Fund which generates less of a return.

The critical issue at this time is serving notice to draw down the funds. The Clerk will then work with the accountant to produce for members a detailed trail of where funds have been spent (but funded by revenue reserves in recent years) since they were originally received from the sale of land assets.

Background Papers:	Working papers
Lead Officer:	Matthew Gleadell Tel: 01636 684801 Email: matthew.gleadell@newark.gov.uk