

Agenda Item: 19
Report to: Planning, Transport & Environment Committee
Date: Wednesday 7th April 2021
Subject: Project Report for Tree Warden Initiative.
Summary: To review the tree warden initiative .

Recommendation

To consider the project plan and agree if it should be forwarded to the Finance & Human Resources for consideration.

1. Background

1.1 In September the following motion was put forward by Cllr Barker.

To consider a volunteer tree warden role for Kings Hill.

*It was **RESOLVED** to invite David Carey to the November Planning, Transport & Environment Committee meeting.*

1.2 David Carey attended the November Planning, Transport & Environment Committee where the following was agreed:

*It was **RESOLVED** to advertise for volunteers for the tree warden role in January 2021.*

1.3 The vacancy was advertised on websites, noticeboards and social media.

1.4 The following was agreed in January 2021.

To note that a recruitment campaign for a tree warden is taking place this month and the results will be reported at the next committee meeting.

*This was noted. It was **RESOLVED** to approach the Oracle and Kings Hill Mums to see if they could share the poster providing there is no cost.*

- 1.5 In March it was agreed that a project plan would be undertaken for recommendation to FHR for the next financial year.

2. The Case

The business case must demonstrate that a tree warden is needed.

{What the business case must demonstrate} {Finer details}

{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

3. Strategic Case

3.1 Is the proposal needed?

{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

3.2 Will it further the aims and objectives?

The parish council do not currently have any aims or objectives.

3.3 Is there a clear case for change?

{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

4. Economic Case

4.1 Is it achievable? Is the parish council capable of delivering the project?

{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

- 4.2 The Planning, Transport & Environment Committee have agreed a job description for the tree warden (please see attached).

- 4.3 There will be a voluntary contribution of approximately £50 per annum per tree warden to cover the cost of membership to the Tree Council, insurance and training.

- 4.4 When meetings return face to face there will be a charge of £10 per person for any training sessions attended to cover the cost of refreshments and hall hire etc. There are currently approximately 8 Zoom sessions per annum but the frequency may change with face to face training.

- 4.5 The PTE Committee would like four tree wardens at a cost of approximately £400. This is including five training sessions each throughout the course of the year.
- 4.6 The tree warden areas have not yet been agreed, this will be undertaken upon acceptance of the project.

4.6 Is it value for money?

4.6.1 Has a range of options been considered?

No other options have been considered.

4.6.2 Is it the best balance of costs/ benefits and risks?

{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

5. Commercial Case

5.1 Is it viable: Is there a supplier who can meet the needs?

There are currently four volunteers.

6. Financial Case

6.1 Is it affordable? - Are the costs realistic and affordable?

{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

The approximate costs without any additional costs will be £400.

6.3 Is the required funding supported and available?

The Planning, Transport & Environment are asking that the funding be included into the 2022/ 2023 budget.

7. Management Case

Is it achievable?

- *Is the parish council capable of delivering this project.*
{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}
- *Is there robust systems and processes in place.*
{For the Committee to decide at the meeting}

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The parish council have the power to repair and maintain public footpaths in their area under the Highways Act 1980 S30 and S43.
- 8.2 A further power would be the Public Health Act 1875 S164 which gives the power to provide and maintain land for public recreation.

9. Impact on Local Crime and Disorder

This project has no impact on crime and disorder.

10. Impact on Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 10.1 Trees contribute to their environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate amelioration, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. During the process of photosynthesis, trees take in carbon dioxide and produce the oxygen we breathe. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people." Trees, shrubs and turf also filter air by removing dust and absorbing other pollutants like carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide.
- 10.2 Trees control climate by moderating the effects of the sun, rain and wind. Leaves absorb and filter the sun's radiant energy, keeping things cool in summer. Trees also preserve warmth by providing a screen from harsh wind. In addition to influencing wind speed and direction, they shield us from the downfall of rain, sleet and hail. Trees also lower the air temperature and reduce the heat intensity of the greenhouse effect by maintaining low levels of carbon dioxide¹.

11. Community Consultation/ Engagement

No community engagement was undertaken.

12. Risk Assessment

- 12.1 To undertake anything with a financial cost whilst the reserves are being replaced would be a high risk strategy for the council. The financial investigation laid out that the parish council does not have the required amount of reserves to function and the council is in a three year replacement programme, to spend any of these reserves whilst they are being replaced puts the parish council at risk.

¹ <https://www.savatree.com/whytrees.html>

Decision Required

To consider the project plan and agree if it should be forwarded to the Finance & Human Resources for consideration.

Contact Officer: Georgina Jackson, Deputy Clerk

Date: 26th March 2021