

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All Wards

Cabinet

12 May 2008

10,000 Trees – Project Outline

Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Culture

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with details of the project to plant 10,000 trees across Leicester, as per the Labour manifesto pledge of 2007. The report presents a summary of how the project will be managed including associated timescales and costs.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The pledge to plant 10,000 trees is a challenging commitment and will have a significant impact on tree numbers within the City, increasing the existing stock by over 10%.
- 2.2 The project will be lead by the City Council and delivered in conjunction with Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire (GWLL).The project will be delivered within the Corporate Capital Programme 2008/09 to 2011/12 budget allocation of £300,000. A project delivery plan will be developed before planting starts during Autumn / Winter 2008.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet approve the project management and delivery arrangements.

4. REPORT

- 4.1 The commitment to plant 10,000 trees is a challenging one, both in terms of project delivery and also finding the necessary space across the city to plant such a large number of trees.
- 4.2 The project will add to the existing stock and will help extend the tree cover in Leicester and its environs. The project will also cover any necessary replacement of existing trees, and these will count towards the 10,000 target.
- 4.3 The project will be led by the City Council. Officers from the Parks & Green Spaces Service will work closely in partnership with Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire in delivering the project. A task & finish group will be established to develop proposals and manage the project in line with agreed timescales and budget. The group will report

progress via the Head of Parks and Greenspace Services to the Cabinet Lead for Environment & Sustainability.

4.4 Areas already identified for potential planting include:

Parks and Open Spaces
Arterial roads and highways
School grounds
National Forest (A50 corridor)
Local Nature Reserves
Community Orchards
Allotments
Private gardens (trees donated to City residents)

4.5 A comprehensive consultation exercise will be required prior to any planting works, in order to determine various factors such as:

- where the trees should be planted
- appropriate species and sizes.
- whether to plant individual trees or group planting
- levels of community participation in tree planting and aftercare
- future uses of the trees (i.e. orchards, screening, habitat creation & conservation)

4.6 Consultation will take place with relevant Council Services, for example Highways and Housing, together with a range of groups and organisations such as schools and community groups.

4.7 The new Ward Community Meetings will provide an ideal mechanism for involving local people in coming up with ideas and taking decisions about where trees should be planted. It is envisaged that each ward will be provided with a provisional allocation for trees within their area, funded through the project, which will enable them to make initial suggestions and to take final decisions on planting locations and options. Much of the consultation will be carried out during the summer preceding planting starting during late Autumn.

4.8 To date a total of nearly 1,500 trees have already been planted since May 2007. These include things such as high profile plantings in the City Centre and Nelson Mandela Park, and whip planting work in Beaumont Leys. This will be marketed positively at the start of the project by making reference to those trees already planted.

4.9 Total project costs will be contained within the Corporate Capital Programme 2008/09 to 2011/12 with an allocation of £300,000. Subject to the outcome of consultation, site selection and tree size etc it is estimated that £260,000 will be allocated to tree planting and related activities with £40,000 allocated to project management.

4.10 Every effort will be made to secure external funding to add value to the project, while the establishment of a City Tree Warden Scheme will be explored with a view to engaging local people in monitoring the

aftercare and welfare of the trees working in partnership with Parks and Greenspace Services.

- 4.11 A Communications Plan to promote the project, activities and benefits will be prepared in consultation with the Council's Communications Unit. The main council website will be utilised to provide information for the project and will keep the public updated on the number of trees that have been planted and promote feature tree plantings to celebrate the achievement of milestones, for example the planting of each thousandth tree.
- 4.12 The tree planting project links into other corporate strategies such as the Leicester Environment Strategy and Climate Change Strategy and complements the proposed planting of naturalising spring flowering bulbs on arterial highway verges as part of the Leicester in Bloom project.
- 4.13 There could be significant revenue implications for these new trees, on already overstretched maintenance budgets. A growth bid will be required in the near future to ensure that costs for these extra trees are adequately covered.
- 4.14 A detailed project delivery plan is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 It was agreed by Cabinet on March 17th 2008 to allocate £300,000 for the project, as part of its Capital Programme. This was ratified by Council on 27th March 2008.
- 5.1.2 The project will be led by the City Council and delivered in conjunction with an approved partner organisation over a three-year programme to 2011.
- 5.1.3 A full project delivery programme will be developed and agreed by stakeholders before the tree planting begins in Autumn/Winter 2008.
- 5.1.4 This allocation will be spent over a three-year timescale, with approximately £260,000 put towards the cost of the trees and related services with the remaining £40,000 spent on development costs and payments to the approved partner organisation for their part in project delivery.
- 5.1.5 The revenue implications of maintaining this level of additional tree stock has yet to be quantified, in particular the tree type, location and land owner will have a significant bearing on the cost. The impact of the revenue costs, once assessed in detail will be included in future budget strategies.

Martin Judson, Head of Resources, Tel:297390

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 This procurement has been discussed with the department. It is understood that the procurement route will be determined following consultations and local decisions. The department has been advised

on the impact of Contract Procedure Rules and (to the extent that it applies, dependant on project value) EU procurement law.

Greg Surtees, Senior Solicitor, Legal Services, Tel: 296453

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph references within the report
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	YES	4.12
Sustainable and Environmental	YES	4.12
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	

7. RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Risk	Likelihood L/M/H	Severity Impact L/M/H	Control Actions (if necessary/appropriate)
Funding being withdrawn	L	H	
Slippage in programme	L	M	Development of project programme and robust management against this.
Overspend	L	L	Agreed expenditure during project development and robust management against this.

L – Low L – Low
M –Medium M – Medium
H - High H - High

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Leicester City Council Cabinet – 17 March 2008

Leicester City Council – full Council 27 March 2008

9. CONSULTATION

Greg Surtees, Senior Solicitor, Legal Services

Martin Judson, R&C Finance

10. REPORT AUTHOR

Brian Stafford

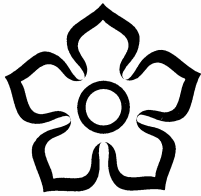
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Key Decision	No
Reason	N/A
Appeared in Forward Plan	N/A
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)

Appendix 1



Leicester
City Council

10,000 Trees Project – Project Delivery Plan

1. PURPOSE OF THE DELIVERY PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to outline how the project will be delivered across its three-year life cycle. The plan will outline key features and issues of the project, such as how the consultations will be structured, associated costings for the project, partner organisations and their roles, marketing and media coverage of the project and future maintenance of the trees.

2. PROJECT OUTLINE

The project will run over a period of approximately 3 years, with £300,000 funding being made available to support the project. Approximately £260,000 will be used for the purchase of trees and sundries (stakes, ties etc) and approx. £40,000 for project management costs.

There are a number of possible areas already identified for planting – these include

- Parks and Open Spaces
- Arterial roads and highways
- School grounds
- National Forest (A50 corridor)
- Local Nature Reserves
- Community Orchards
- Allotments
- Private gardens (trees donated to City residents)

There are also a number of other factors to consider, such as

- appropriate species and sizes.
- whether to plant individual trees or group planting
- levels of community participation in tree planting and aftercare
- future uses of the trees (i.e. orchards, screening, habitat creation & conservation)

The project will be managed through the authority's Parks & Greenspaces service. A project group will be created to manage the scheme, with representation from LCC Trees & Woodlands Section and Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire (GWLL).

Appendix 1

With regards to tree planting, this will be undertaken by a number of different sections. Street trees and new plantings on parks will be undertaken by LCC Trees & Woodland Section and ground maintenance staff, using existing planting specifications that will ensure the maximum chance of tree survival. Community group planting events will be facilitated by LCC officers, and will be positively marketed to ensure that there is maximum involvement from residents and volunteers.

To date, approximately 1500 trees have already been planted since May 2007. Information regarding these will be built into any marketing and information literature for the project, and will be marketed positively at the start of the project.

Whilst the overall aim of the project is to extend the existing tree cover in the city, it is anticipated that any replacement works that occur or are deemed necessary, can be covered also by the project.

3. CONSULTATION PLAN

There will be a series of consultations throughout the life of the project; these will be carried out in the summer months in preparation for planting over the winter. The first set of consultation will involve the public and Ward members through the second cycle of Ward Community Meetings that will take place from July – September 2008.

The project will provide funding for each Ward to have an allocation of trees, and councillors and local residents will be encouraged to make initial suggestions and final decisions as to locations and species selection. There will undoubtedly be some restrictions to this, especially with regards to street trees and highway management, but requests will be catered for wherever possible. The Project Group will be able to advise on appropriate tree species, give advice and/or make recommendations wherever possible. If anything cannot be decided at this level, or there is a contentious issue, the Cabinet Lead Member will have responsibility for making the final decision.

There will also be an open consultation on the main LCC website in line with e-government requirements – a request form / questionnaire will be designed to go along with this consultation as necessary.

The City Council will work closely alongside Groundwork Leicester & Leicestershire (GWLL) in delivering the project to schools and the Ward Community Meetings. Through their EMAS in Schools programme, GWLL will be able to work closely with all schools in not only planting trees, but also teaching children about their benefits through a Tree Warden Scheme, which will be extended to other sites across Leicester.

The other rounds of consultation will target other open spaces, such as allotments, local nature reserves and other LCC properties (e.g. Elderly People's Homes, Sheltered Housing sites). An allocation cannot be formally quantified until the first round of consultations and the "demand" determined for Year 1.

Appendix 1

4. Communications Plan

There will be a full marketing programme throughout the life of the project, in order to stimulate public interest at various different stages. The project will be “launched” in June 2008 in readiness for the second round of Ward Community Meetings beginning in July, and there will be press coverage at major milestones.

The marketing of the project will take a variety of forms – there will be web pages specifically created, with a “tree-o-meter” which shows the number of trees planted at any given date. This will be coupled with things such as flyers or leaflets available from normal outlets (museums, libraries, leisure centres). A project logo will also be created which will be used throughout the literature and questionnaires etc.

Milestone Plantings

As part of the media campaign, there will be a number of milestone “plantings” throughout the life of the project to ensure maximum publicity. These could include, for example, start with the 2000th tree to be planted and each thousandth thereon. It could be possible to combine these with some “iconic” trees that have big impacts on the landscape of Leicester. There would also be a media event to officially finish the project in March 2011.

A full communications plan is attached at the end of this document.

5. Project costs

A provisional table of project costs is given below:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Trees & sundries	155,000	55,000	50,000
Project management	15,000	15,000	10,000
<i>Total</i>	170,000	70,000	60,000

Trees and sundry costs will include the following:

- Costs of the trees
- Tree stakes, ties and water pipes
- Additional costs for e.g. reinstatement works, planting into hard surfaces etc.

The project management costs include:

- Payment to GWLL for carrying preliminary consultation work
- Payment to GWLL for carry out tree planting events at schools
- GWLL – development of Tree Warden Scheme
- Marketing costs (such as leaflet printing, display costs)

Appendix 1

GWLL fees will be paid over the three-year project life (approximately £10k per year). Management costs for LCC officers will be met from within existing staffing budgets, with no additional costs for this paid from within the project.

There will need to be flexibility in the project costs, due to the uncertainty over the public “uptake” of the scheme – for example, there may be an oversubscription in the first year that could lead to increased costs at this stage.

A tender process will need to be carried out for the tree supply contract, as per European Procurement regulations. This will be carried out over the summer of 2008 in readiness for planting over the winter.

6. Tree Selection and Choice

Members of the Project Group will advise on appropriate tree selection where necessary. As mentioned previously, there may be requests or issues that become contentious; these will need to be managed sensitively and appropriately, with the Cabinet Lead arbitrating on the decision as required. The authority will also need to ensure that where possible, future maintenance or management issues are not complicated by inappropriate species selection or planting.

Appendix 1

10k TREES PROJECT – OUTLINE PROGRAMME

2008	2009	2010
<p><u>June</u> – launch of project</p> <p><i>Milestone: launch of project and related consultation information circulated</i></p> <p><u>June</u> – consultation exercise begins</p> <p><u>July – Sept</u> – consultation with Ward Community Meetings</p> <p><u>Oct – Jan (09)</u> – planting season begins</p> <p><i>Provisional milestone: 2,000 – 3,000 trees planted</i></p>	<p><u>Feb</u> – recount of previous planting</p> <p><u>March – September</u> Begin 2nd phase of consultations - ensure related media coverage</p> <p><u>Oct – Jan (2010)</u> 2nd phase of planting</p> <p><i>Provisional milestone: 6,000 to 7,000 trees planted</i></p>	<p><u>Feb</u> – recount of previous planting</p> <p><u>March – September</u> Begin 3rd phase of consultation – ensure related media coverage</p> <p><u>Oct - July (2011)</u> 3rd phase of planting</p> <p><i>Provisional milestone: 9,000 - 10,000 trees planted</i></p> <p><i>Media event to mark successful completion of project.</i></p>

Appendix 1

10k TREES PROJECT – COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Interested party	Information required	Information provider	Frequency of communication	Method of communication
Cabinet Lead	Briefing notes at key stages	HoS/Project Manager	Regular monthly updates/as required	Briefings and briefing notes
Project Group	All project plans etc. Other documents arising from specified reports	Project Manager	Project plans and stage plans as completed. Regular project group meetings	Project plans updated Verbally at project meetings
Local Ward Members	Project updates Consultation information	Project Manager	Quarterly - as per Ward Community Meeting dates	Verbally at Ward Community meetings Written briefing notes/questionnaires Newsletter & WebPages
Local community groups	Project updates Consultation information	Project Manager, Project Group, other LCC officers as required	Quarterly - as per Ward Community Meeting dates Varying as dictated by project status	Verbally/presentation at meetings Written briefing notes/questionnaires LCC WebPages/ Leicester Link

Appendix 1

10k TREES PROJECT – COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Interested party	Information required	Information provider	Frequency of communication	Method of communication
Local community	Project updates Consultation information	Project manager, Project Group, Other LCC officers as required.	Quarterly - as per Ward Community Meeting dates Other Key dates as per project programme	Verbally at meetings Written briefing notes/questionnaires LCC WebPages/ Leicester Link
Local Media	Project News/Updates	Project manager, Project Group, Press Office	Key dates as per project programme	Press releases Photo opportunities LCC WebPages/ Leicester Link