



Councillor Jim Deans – Chair of Policy Review Committee

The Policy Review Committee has met twice on 13 March 2018 and 17 April 2018 since the previous update given to Council in February 2018.

The meeting on the 17 April 2018 was after publication of the agenda for Council, and therefore the update for this meeting will be given at the next meeting of the Council.

The Policy Review Committee is scheduled to meet again on 12 June 2018.

13 March 2018

The main items of business on the agenda for this meeting were the Draft Tree Management Policy and the Committee's Work Plan.

The Committee discussed a range of issues across the Draft Tree Management Policy including:

- The Council's statutory responsibility for the management and maintenance of trees on Council owned land. The policy would allow the Council to more efficiently manage the trees on Council owned land and enable a consistent approach to managing the range of enquiries and requests for works, and ensure that risks were managed effectively to ensure public safety.
- Members asked Officers about plans that showed which areas of trees the Council or Parish Councils were responsible for; these were maintained under the Environmental Services contract, and that these could be circulated to Members as required.
- The maintenance of the deciduous trees on Hambleton Hough was also queried by the Committee, as well as the Council's responsibilities if a site was jointly owned by the Council and the Local Health Authority.
- The Committee asked that the matter of privately owned trees affecting Council property should also be covered in the policy. Members also noted that there was no responsibility for the Council to clear up leaf or blossom fall from Council owned trees if they fell on private property. However, if naturally occurring tree behaviour like blossom or leaf fall occurred on adopted highways, this would be dealt with via routine cleansing.
- The Committee expressed its support for Officers exploring access to funds and projects, such as community orchards, to increase the number of trees in the District.

- Publicity around the consultation on the Draft Tree Management Policy would be carried out via the internet, social media, press releases, local or tenant newsletters and via Parish Councils. A web page was also being developed on the Council's website that would hold all relevant information relating to trees and their management that the public or Officers might find useful.
- The disposal of green waste resulting from tree felling or trimming was discussed by the Committee. Officers were asked to look into the potential market for the purchase of felled tree logs for fuel or firewood, although the small numbers may make this unsustainable. Historically, any felled tree was cut up and left for local residents to take away.
- Officers confirmed that the Committee's comments would be included in the draft policy where appropriate, and following consultation, the policy would be taken to the Executive for final agreement.

The Committee also considered the work plan for the rest of the 2017-18 year and the draft plan for 2018/19, and made the following suggestions:

- To confirm that the Policy Review Committee's Annual Report should be included on both the 2017/18 and 2018/19 Work Programmes for consideration in April 2018 and April 2019 respectively.
- To ask Committee Members to suggest topics they would wish to see on the 2018/19 Work Programme, and to send these to the Chair and Democratic Services Officer.

Councillor J Deans
Chair, Policy Review Committee