



## Crawley Borough Council

### Cabinet

Agenda for the **Cabinet** which will be held in **Committee Rooms A & B - Town Hall**, on **Wednesday, 10 January 2024 at 7.00 pm**

Nightline Telephone No. 07881 500 227

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Khan', written over a light grey rectangular background.

**Chief Executive**

**Membership:** Councillors

M G Jones (Chair)	Leader of the Council
I T Irvine	Cabinet Member for Housing
Y Khan	Cabinet Member for Public Protection
C J Mullins	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Wellbeing
S Mullins	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Culture
A Nawaz	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
B Noyce	Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change
T Rana	Cabinet Member for Resources

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Town Hall  
The Boulevard  
Crawley  
West Sussex  
RH10 1UZ

The order of business may change at the Chair's discretion

## Part A Business (Open to the Public)

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1. Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2. Disclosures of Interest</b>	
In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, councillors are reminded that it is a requirement to declare interests where appropriate.	
<b>3. Minutes</b>	5 - 14
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Cabinet held on 29 November 2023.	
<b>4. Public Question Time</b>	
To answer any questions asked by the public which are relevant to the functions of the Cabinet.	
Public Question Time will be concluded by the Chair when all questions have been answered or on the expiry of a period of 15 minutes, whichever is the earlier.	
<b>5. Further Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and Notifications of any Representations</b>	
The Monitoring Officer will report on any responses to representations received in relation to why item(s) 10 & 11: <i>Crawley Homes Staffing Growth and Five Year Business Plan for Tilgate Park &amp; Nature Centre</i> should not be held in Part B Business – (Closed to the Public).	
<b>6. Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission</b>	
To consider any matters referred to the Cabinet (whether by a scrutiny committee or by the Council) and those for reconsideration in accordance with the provisions contained in the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Budget Procedure Rules and the Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.	
<b>7. Crawley Borough Council Tree Planting Strategy</b>	15 - 36
Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change Portfolio	
To consider report HCS/069 of the Head of Community Services, which was referred to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 8 January 2024.	

	<b>Pages</b>
<p><b>8. Supplemental Agenda</b></p> <p>Any urgent item(s) complying with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.</p>	
<p><b>9. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public (Subject to Agenda Item 5)</b></p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider passing the following resolution:- That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraphs specified against the item.</p>	
<b>Part B Business (Closed to the Public)</b>	
<p><b>10. Crawley Homes Staffing Growth</b></p> <p>Housing Portfolio</p> <p><i>Exempt Paragraphs 1 &amp; 3 Information Relating to an Individual; and Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)</i></p> <p>To consider report CH/203 of the Head of Crawley Homes, which was referred to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 8 January 2024.</p>	37 - 50
<p><b>11. Five Year Business Plan for Tilgate Park &amp; Nature Centre</b></p> <p>Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio</p> <p><i>Exempt Paragraph 3 Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)</i></p> <p>To consider report HCS/068 of the Head of Community Services, which was referred to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 8 January 2024.</p>	51 - 84

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## Crawley Borough Council

### Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at 7.00 pm

#### Councillors Present:

M G Jones (Chair)	Leader of the Council
I T Irvine	Cabinet Member for Housing
Y Khan	Cabinet Member for Public Protection
C J Mullins	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Wellbeing
S Mullins	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Culture
A Nawaz	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
T Rana	Cabinet Member for Resources

#### Also in Attendance:

Councillor D Crow and M L Ayling

#### Officers Present:

Carolin Martlew	Head of Corporate Finance
Siraj Choudhury	Head of Governance, People & Performance
Ian Duke	Chief Executive
Chris Pedlow	Democracy & Data Manager
Georgina Bouette	Head of Community Services
Vicki Basley	Chief Accountant
Amanda Kendall	Head of Crawley Homes
Clem Smith	Head of Economy and Planning

#### Apologies for Absence:

Councillor B Noyce

#### 1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

#### 2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 27 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

### 3. Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

### 4. Further Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and Notifications of any Representations

It was reported that no representations had been received in respect of agenda item 15: Crawley Innovation Centre - Additional Towns Fund Monies.

### 5. Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

It was confirmed that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet for further consideration.

### 6. 2023/2024 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2

The Leader presented report [FIN/635](#) of the Head of Corporate on the quarter 2 budget monitoring, which set out a summary of the Council's actual revenue and capital spending for the quarters to September 2023 together with the main variations from the approved spending levels and impact on future budgets. It was added that the council had made significant in-year savings.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/315](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 27 November 2023, which included:

- Explanation provided on the latest revenue and capital budget.
- Acknowledgement that the interest rate projections would be kept under regular review.
- Clarification sought and obtained on the costings on various elements for the new town hall.
- Confirmation that Project Jupiter referred to the works at Metcalf Way Depot.

Councillor C Mullins spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

### RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) agrees to note the projected outturn for the year 2023/2024 as summarised in this report.
- b) approves the addition to the Capital Programme of £202,191 for CCTV funded by £59,300 contribution from Sussex Police, £33,291 from S106 and £109,600 from capital receipts. (as detailed in paragraph 8.3 of report [FIN/635](#))

# Agenda Item 3

Cabinet (24)  
29 November 2023

- c) approves the addition to the Capital Programme of £50,000 for the replacement of the Hawth Main Theatre Lights funded from the K2 Crawley and Hawth replacement reserve. (as detailed in paragraph 8.3 of report [FIN/635](#))

## Reasons for the Recommendations

To report to Members on the projected outturn for the year compared to the approved budget.

## 7. Budget Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27

The Leader presented report [FIN/636](#) of the Head of Corporate on the Budget Strategy 2024/25-2026/27. The report set out financial projections with particular reference to the period 2024/25-2026/27 as well as the policy framework for improving financial efficiency and meeting the long-term investment needs of the town, as well as proposals for the annual budget process. It was noted that the strategy assumed several factors including that:

- Government grants would rise in line with inflation and rolled forward into 2024-25
- That Council Tax be increased at 2.99%
- That fees and charges be increased by 7% where feasible.

It was emphasised that the increasing cost of temporary accommodation was a having a real impact on the Council's finance and the strategy as such proposes shorter term focus of 12-15 months to enable better control and monitoring of the budget gap.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/315](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 27 November 2023, which included:

- Recognition that Ashdown House may remain vacant for a period from 2024 and this would allow the building to be refurbished and a new tenant to be sought.
- Explanation provided of the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) review having identified a saving of £778k in 2023/24 being due to technical adjustments.
- Recognition that additional cost pressures were predicted to impact the budget, some of these related to homelessness, pay award, town hall rates and inflation.
- It was commented that whilst there had recently been changes to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), the overall impact was yet unknown.

Councillor S Mullins spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

## RESOLVED

That Full Council be asked to:

- a) approve the process for of balancing the budget over the next 12 to 18 months, including the use of reserves to balance the budget as outlined in Section 8 of the report [FIN/636](#).
- b) approve the minimum recommended General Fund Balance remains at £3m.

# Agenda Item 3

Cabinet (25)  
29 November 2023

- c) approve the growth items for the General Fund as outlined in sections 6.3 of the report [FIN/636](#).
- d) approve the inclusion of new capital schemes in future budgets with the value of £652,000 as identified in section 9.2 of the report [FIN/636](#).
- e) note the following highlights of the Budget Strategy:
  - i. that the Budget is aligned to the Council's Corporate Priorities.
  - ii. the outline 3 year forecast as shown in table 6 paragraph 6.5 of the report [FIN/636](#).
  - iii. that the current budget deficit of £1.012m for 2024/25 (section 6.5 of the report [FIN/636](#)) is based on a Council tax increase of 2.99% which is £6.74. However, table 10 highlights that the gap could be higher when looking at sensitivity analysis.
  - iv. that there are uncertainties around Government funding prior to the settlement in December and the delay in Local Government Funding reforms such as business rates retention and the future of New Homes Bonus.

## Reasons for the Recommendations

- 1) To agree the Council's Budget Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 including the assumptions made.
- 2) To agree growth items and capital schemes outlined in the report.
- 3) The 2024/25 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Budgets and the revised capital programme will be set by the Full Council in February 2024. The Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy will be considered at the same meeting.
- 4) To note that until the Local Government Finance Settlement is published in December 2023 these projections are highly likely to change.

## 8. Treasury Management Mid Year Review 2023-2024

The Leader presented report [FIN/637](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. The report provided an update on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24. The report detailed that the current projection was that the Council would earn an additional £2.4m income from investments, which was up by £600k from the forecast in quarter 1. It was noted that the Council prioritises its investments as security of capital, liquidity, yield and ethical.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/315](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 27 November 2023, which included:

- Acknowledgement that the ethical investment policy was considered prior to every investment undertaking.
- Explanation was sought on the investment limits across detailed holdings and portfolios.
- Recognition that the new strategy would be approved by Full Council in February 2024 (having been considered at OSC and Cabinet).

# Agenda Item 3

Cabinet (26)  
29 November 2023

Councillor Crow was invited to speak on this item. Matters raised included disappointment with some of the levels of interest rates achieved on some of the Council's investments including the 1.5% with Derbyshire CC.

Councillor Jones and the Head of Corporate Finance spoke as part of the discussion on the report and provided clarification on several of the comments raised.

## RESOLVED

That the Cabinet considered and notes report [FIN/637](#) and the treasury activity for the first two quarters of 2023/2024.

## Reasons for the Recommendations

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management (the TM Code) recommends that members be updated on treasury management activities regularly (Treasury Management Strategy, annual and mid-year reports). This report, therefore, ensures this Council is implementing best practice in accordance with the Code.

## 9. Crawley Station Gateway - Phase 1

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development presented report [PES/443](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning. The report presented the refreshed concept designs for the Station Gateway (Phase 1) public realm and bus station improvements. It sought approval to go out to public and stakeholder consultation and to combine two funding streams (Crawley Growth Programme and Towns Fund) already allocated within the Council's capital programme.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/315](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 27 November 2023, which included:

- Acknowledgement that the delivery of the detailed designs of the scheme would be delivered as part of the Crawley Growth programme.
- Clarification was obtained regarding various elements of the concept design including connectivity improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, together with route access and pick up/drop off areas.
- Confirmation was provided regarding the £7.4m funding to deliver the scheme ("Phase 1") which was in anticipation of a renewed bid to be led by WSCC to the Department for Transport in the future for "Phase 2" Station Way highway/bus lane infrastructure upgrades.

Councillors Jones, S Mullins, C Mullins, Irvine and Rana spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

## RESOLVED

# Agenda Item 3

Cabinet (27)  
29 November 2023

That the Cabinet:

- a) approves the refreshed concept design for the Station Gateway Phase 1 project found at Appendix A of report [PES/443](#); comprising a public realm and bus station improvement scheme focusing on Friary Way, Haslett Avenue West and The Martlets.
- b) approves the refreshed concept design to go out to public and stakeholder consultation, prior to the submission of a planning application and procurement of a construction contractor.
- c) delegates authority to approve the final designs for Station Gateway Phase 1 to the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services, in consultation with the Head of Economy & Planning and Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development, following the period of stakeholder consultation and undertaking minor modifications as required.
- d) delegates to the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services the submission of a planning application to the Local Planning Authority on behalf of Crawley Borough Council
- e) delegates authority to the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services to undertake a procurement tendering exercise to appoint a construction contractor in accordance with the Council's Procurement Code.
- f) delegates authority to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services, to approve the award of the construction contact following an appropriate procurement process.
- g) delegates the negotiation, approval and completion of all relevant documentation, including legal paperwork, to the Head of Economy and Planning, Head of Governance, People and Performance and the Head of Corporate Finance  
(*Generic Delegations 2 & 3 will be used to enact this recommendation*).
- h) that the Full Council be asked to approve the amalgamation of the two funding streams (£5.4m from the Crawley Growth programme and £2m from the Towns Fund) already allocated within the Council's capital programme to enable delivery of the project as set out in section 7.2 of report [PES/443](#);

## Reasons for the Recommendations

To enable the successful delivery of the Station Gateway Phase 1 scheme which will deliver significant public realm and bus station improvements whilst future-proofing future town centre regeneration schemes.

## 10. Western Boulevard Scheme - Crawley Growth Programme

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development presented report [PES/442](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning. The report updated Cabinet on the progress of the Western Boulevard scheme as part of the Crawley Growth Programme with a recommendation that Full Council agree to add £2m of BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plan) monies to the scheme, which have been secured, subject to a funding agreement with West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/315](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 27 November 2023, which included:

- Recognition that the scheme was set to deliver significant improvements to bus connectivity in the town centre alongside better sustainable transport facilities.
- Clarification was obtained regarding various cycle lanes within the scheme, together with the exit closures and carriageway improvements.
- Acknowledgement that funding would be required in order for the scheme to be fully completed along The Boulevard.

Councillors C Mullins, S Mullins and Jones spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

### RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) notes the progress of the scheme to date.
- b) delegate authority to the Head of Economy and Planning (in consultation with Head of Governance, Performance and People and the Head of Corporate Finance) to sign a funding agreement with West Sussex County Council with regard to £1,949,419 of BSIP monies.  
*(Generic Delegation 3 will be used to exact this recommendation).*
- c) delegate the negotiation, approval and completion of all relevant documentation, including legal paperwork, to the Head of Economy and Planning, in consultation with the Head of Governance, People and Performance and Head of Corporate Finance  
*(Generic Delegations 2 and 3 will be used to enact this recommendation).*
- d) That the Full Council is asked to approve the addition of the of £1,949,419 of BSIP (Bus Service Improvement Plan) monies to the Crawley Borough Council capital programme as part of the Western Boulevard scheme, subject to a funding agreement with West Sussex County Council.

### Reasons for the Recommendations

The recommendations will allow Crawley Borough Council to progress the Western Boulevard Scheme to the on-site delivery phase.

## 11. Forward Programme of Key Programmes (January – June 2024)

The Leader presented report [FIN/634](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. The report requested approval of the current forward programme of key procurements (over £500,000) and sought delegated authority for contract award approvals following the appropriate procurement process. Also provided was an update on the previously identified procurements from July to December 2023.

### RESOLVED

The Cabinet:

- a) endorses the procurement forward programme January – June 2024 (appendix A of report [FIN/634](#)).
- b) delegates authority to the Leader of the Council in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, relevant Head of Service, and Head of Governance, People & Performance to approve the award of the contract following an appropriate procurement process.
- c) delegates the negotiation, approval and completion of all relevant legal documentation, following the awarding of the contracts to the relevant Head of Service, Head of Governance, People & Performance, Head of Corporate Finance, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member.  
*(Generic Delegations 2 & 3 will be used to enact this recommendation)*

### Reasons for the Recommendations

- 1) By approving the procurement forward programme there is greater transparency of future procurement processes allowing more scope for internal stakeholders to input into how future contracts are delivered.
- 2) The approval of the forward programme provides a key decision that will enable the individual procurement processes to be awarded under delegated authority once the tender process has concluded giving the Council the ability to reduce the time required to complete a procurement process

## 12. Exempt Information - Exclusion of the Public

### RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.



## 13. Crawley Innovation Centre - Additional Towns Fund Monies

### *Exempt Paragraph 3*

*Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)*

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development presented report PES/449 of the Head of Economy and Planning. The report sought agreement to add Towns Fund monies to the Crawley Innovation Centre project and seek additional delegations to ensure the project can commence without delay.

The draft Towns Fund business case for the Crawley Innovation Centre was agreed by Cabinet on 2 February 2022 and Full Council on 23 February 2022.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/315](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 27 November 2023, which included:

- Confirmation provided of the processes which had taken place throughout the project were highlighted.
- Clarification sought and obtained on the financial aspects contained within the report.
- Whilst there was support for the proposal which was poised to play a key role within the town, concern was raised regarding the reallocation of £2m of Crawley Towns Fund monies from the Town Centre to Manor Royal cycle route project and this should be noted for the future.

Councillors C Mullins, Irvine, Rana, S Mullins and Jones spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

### **RESOLVED**

That the Cabinet noted the progress with the delivery of the Crawley Innovation Centre project and recommended to request Full Council to reallocate £2m of Crawley Towns Fund monies from the Town Centre to Manor Royal cycle route project to the Crawley Innovation Centre project, subject to confirmation of approval of the transfer from the government

### **Reasons for the Recommendations**

To ensure that the project has sufficient capital budget for the required building conversion works for the Crawley Innovation Centre to be delivered in full.

### **Closure of Meeting**

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.11 pm

**M G JONES**  
Chair

# Agenda Item 3

Cabinet (31)  
29 November 2023

# Agenda Item 7

## Crawley Borough Council

**Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission**  
8 January 2024

**Report to Cabinet**  
10 January 2024

### **Crawley Borough Council Tree Planting Strategy**

Report of the Head of Community Services **HCS/069**

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#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. To endorse and approve the Crawley Borough Council Tree Planting Strategy (as outlined in Appendix A) to provide a clear and consistent strategic approach the council will follow to support healthy and sustainable tree stock and tree canopy for future planting of its trees.

#### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission consider the report and decide what comments, if any, it wishes to submit to the Cabinet.

- 2.2. To the Cabinet

- 2.3. The Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Crawley Borough Council Tree Planting Strategy as set out in Appendix A.
- b) Delegate authority to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member, to review and make minor amendments to the Crawley Borough Council Tree Planting Strategy as further changes to legislation and statutory guidance are introduced or following any review. (Generic Delegation 7 will be used to enact this recommendation).

#### **3. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 3.1. The proposed Crawley Borough Council Tree Planting Strategy (Appendix A) has been created to guide and inform the Council's decisions to deliver a coherent approach for its tree planting, clearly outlining the standards for all tree planting, young tree maintenance and woodland sustainability. It identifies a clear approach for selecting tree species, location and a process for providing tree planting on council land across the town.
- 3.2. Crawley Borough Council declared a [climate emergency in 2019](#) and the associated action plan identified the need for a sustainable tree planting strategy to help tackle the effects of climate change. This strategy fulfils the response to this requirement whilst also delivering other tangible benefits that will assist officers in taking an agreed and consistent strategic approach for future planting of council trees across the Borough.

# Agenda Item 7

## 4. Background

- 4.1. This is the first proposed Tree Planting Strategy for the council (Appendix A).
- 4.2. Alongside fulfilling the council's requirement for a strategy as outlined in its climate change action plan the proposed strategy provides multiple benefits including:
  - 4.2.1. Developing and improving the local urban tree cover
  - 4.2.2. Increasing species diversity and resilience which ensures improved overall health of the tree stock.
  - 4.2.3. Sets the replacement programme for council trees that have been removed
  - 4.2.4. Embeds continuous improvement through requiring regular review of the practices to improve planting and aftercare, thus keeping up to date with modern practice.
  - 4.2.5. Supports the council in being open and transparent as to how it will manage future tree planting.

## 5. Description of Issue to be Resolved

- 5.1. The proposed Tree Planting Strategy (Appendix A) fulfils the identified need for the council to have its own agreed strategic approach and methodology to achieve future maximum success for planting its own trees.
- 5.2. The Strategy provides a concise plan of the council's approach and protects future financial exposure through a clear planned and managed method for future tree requirements.
- 5.3. Having a clear and agreed Tree Planting Strategy will enable council officers to support and sustain local biosecurity in a responsible and sustainable manner, thereby protecting the health of our existing trees through planting trees from a known source, free from pest and diseases and that are in keeping with the local climate conditions
- 5.4. In response to increasing pressure on the availability of local open spaces, having a strategic and sustainable approach to tree planting by the council will assist stakeholders and residents to understand the rationale and principles that will be applied to ensure that new trees planted have the maximum opportunity to thrive and survive.

## 6. Information & Analysis Supporting Recommendation

- 6.1. Adopting a Tree Planting Strategy for all future council trees provides multiple benefits in having a clear strategic and agreed methodology which officers can implement thus enabling a consistent and transparent response. It fulfils a climate change action plan requirement as outlined in the document. Furthermore, the Strategy ensures that the right trees are planted in the right place, assisting the council in mitigating future financial and health and safety risks.
- 6.2. Should the proposed Strategy not be approved, there will be continuation of ad-hoc council tree planting in the vacuum of agreed principles, posing levels of risk to the council including randomised planting, difficulty in ensuring effective aftercare, inappropriate selection of species that do not have maximum survival rates with the changing weather patterns as well financial and wellbeing considerations.
- 6.3. A public version of the Strategy is shown in Appendix B. This summarises the key points for residents and stakeholders in an engaging format and this publication will be available on the council's website.

# Agenda Item 7

- 6.4. The Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change has been consulted and is supportive of the proposed Tree Planting Strategy (Appendix A).

## 7. Implications

- 7.1. Financial: there are designated and ringfenced section 106 funds to provide trees for planting on Crawley Borough Council land going forward and sufficient is in place for the duration of this Strategy. Therefore, there are no direct and / or adverse financial implications for the council.
- 7.2. Legal and Procurement: there are no legislative and /or regulatory requirements associated with the council adopting the proposed Tree Planting Strategy and this Strategy will only apply to council owned land. Formal procurement does not apply as future tree purchases are under the stated thresholds but the principle of value for money will be consistently applied for future purchases of stock.
- 7.3. Environmental: future planting of trees as outlined in the Strategy has clear environmental benefits including improving air quality, carbon absorption and offsetting carbon emissions, reducing the risk of flooding and increasing biodiversity and ecological habitats. On average, each tree absorbs around 10kg of carbon dioxide per year (dependent on the type and age of tree), making tree planting a good value strategy for carbon sequestration. Having a clear Strategy for tree planting will support the council to take advantage of this benefit.
- 7.4. Staffing: there are no known implications. The Strategy will be delivered by existing specialist council officers.
- 7.5. Equality Impact Assessment:

The Council must have regard to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The public sector equality duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under that Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and,
- foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it, which involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:-
  - (i) tackle prejudice; and,
  - (ii) promote understanding.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out and does not identify any implications and / or further action that needs to be taken as a result of the proposed Strategy plan.

## 8. Background Papers

[Crawley Borough Council Climate Change Action Plan Report PES/390](#)  
[Crawley Borough Council Climate Change Core Principles for Action](#)  
[Crawley Borough Council Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)

Report author and contact officer:

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# **Crawley Borough Council**

## **Tree Planting Strategy**

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## Foreword

**It is my pleasure to introduce Crawley Borough Council's Tree Planting Strategy, to thank everyone who has worked on its production and, of course, everyone who works in some way to look after our trees.**

This is an area of environmental stewardship in which the council occupies a position of strength. There are more than 250,000 trees in a variety of species owned by the council, plus tens of thousands more owned by others around the borough. Visitors to Crawley will surely never have imagined a new town this close to London with a globally significant airport could be so leafy. We're also fortunate that our trees are not subjected to a vigorous timber industry. If you look down from space, you'd see them covering more than a quarter of Crawley, far more than the national average, and we're fortunate to have the amenity value of several forests and wooded parks.

This strategy will prevent us from becoming complacent or losing the advantage we already have. We know trees are a vital component of a successful ecosystem and provide us with a raft of economic and social benefits. We also know we need to care for them, but we are fortunate to have a team of tree officers and park staff who intimately know the trees, our soil, climate and environment to manage them effectively over the previous decades. Our focus is on maintaining the coverage we already have and ensuring the species best suited to surviving and thriving in our local environment are selected. This strategy will ensure that we plant trees for the future using organisational expertise which is rooted in our past.

**Councillor Bob Noyce**

**Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change**

With reference to The England Trees Action Plan 2021 – 2024 Sir William Worsley, Chair of the Forestry Commission states;

"As well as tackling climate change and providing vital habitats, trees and woodlands are a pivotal part of our landscapes, particularly when planted and supported in and around our towns and cities and can provide space for people to connect with nature.

Trees and woodlands also play an increasingly important role in building thriving rural economies, helping to level up the whole of the UK, and supporting a green recovery by stimulating markets for timber and wood products as renewable resources.

Our trees are facing unprecedented environmental challenges and our woodlands need to be resilient to this, including those that we plant over the coming decades.

Alongside planting more trees, we must protect the precious ancient woodlands and veteran trees which have stood for hundreds of years. The oldest tree in England is estimated to be 2,000 to 3,000 years old. By preserving these and planting more to withstand the test of time, trees can form a central part of our vision to leave the environment in a better state than we found it for generations to come.

We must come together to protect, improve, and enhance our trees and woodlands across England which is why we will be providing improved funding options for different types of treescapes and landowners and managers. This includes the new England Woodland Creation Offer which will support landowners and managers with establishing trees and woodlands as we transition into our new Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery Schemes.

It is not just about funding the trees and woodlands of tomorrow but supporting their long term management and protection. That is why we will develop better guidance, provide more advice, develop platforms and opportunities for innovation and encourage more people into this thriving sector as we create more jobs throughout the whole supply chain.”

## Introduction

This strategy sets out how Crawley Borough Council will carry out its responsibilities for

- Urban tree planting
- Diversity of species
- Woodland management
- Communal tree projects

It sets the standards for all tree planting, young tree maintenance and woodland sustainability for Crawley Borough Council trees across the borough. The strategy adheres to the relevant British Standards:

- BS8545 Trees: From nursery to independence in the landscape
- BS5837 Trees in relation to design, demolition, and constructions
- BS3998 Tree work

## Aims

Crawley Borough Council aims to:

- Create a sustainable tree planting strategy that supports evidence-based decisions to continue developing and improving urban tree cover
- Increase species diversity across the town (based on the tree survey being carried out) to ensure overall health of the tree stock and improving resistance to current and potential threats
- Replace all council trees which have been removed (excluding self-seeded trees) from amenity land where practicable
- Review practices periodically to improve tree planting and aftercare
- Record progress, maintain the tree database and use the experience and lessons learnt to inform future decision making and strategies

In summary, planting and establishing the right tree in the right place will deliver benefits for people, for wildlife, the climate and the economy.

## Benefits

Efficient management of the urban tree cover provides many benefits including:

- Conserving heating and cooling of the environment by providing shelter and shade
- Tree foliage removes and processes pollutants from our environment

- Intercepting rain and water runoff which reduces flooding
- Providing noise barriers
- Creating desirable landscapes and increasing amenity value
- Providing important ecological habitats and wildlife corridors
- Providing health and wellbeing benefits, proven that a walk in the trees reduces stress

## Background

The 2016 survey by Forest Research identified that Crawley Borough exceeded the 20% canopy cover recommended by the Urban Forestry and Woodland Advisory Network for inland towns and cities. The national average for canopy cover is 16.4%; Crawley has 26.6 per cent coverage which is 10.2 per cent above the national average.

Canopy cover is defined as the percentage of the ground covered by a tree crowns when viewed from above. The forest survey includes all trees and does not distinguish between public and privately owned trees.

Planting more trees is not the only way to maintain this canopy cover. Good management of the existing trees and woodlands will maximise the current benefits and protect future cover.

Some diseases such as Ash Die Back (ADB) will have a significant detrimental effect on the canopy cover.

CBC's tree database holds valuable information on the council-owned tree stock including existing quality, variety and quantity of canopy coverage. This information directs decisions on planting and maintenance.

CBC current policy and service level determines that work will be undertaken on trees that are reported/inspected and deemed to be dead, dying or dangerous. This policy should deliver a robust tree stock that can withstand impact from the urban environment and environmental conditions.

## Reasons for a tree planting strategy

There are an estimated 250,000+ trees across the Borough, approximately 13,000 have been surveyed as they are risk assessed as high interest (trees that are deemed to be likely to strike people or property). The tree survey is still ongoing and it is estimated that it will take a further two years to survey the remaining 7,000 high interest trees.

CBC declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. The subsequent Climate Emergency Action Plan directed the need for a sustainable tree planting strategy to support the council in tackling the effects of climate change. This Tree Planting Strategy has been developed and is presented as a realistic, affordable and sustainable approach.

Crawley by design has always enjoyed a high level of tree cover throughout the town, in its many parks and woodlands as well as within the amenity spaces in the urban environment. The available space to replace trees on a like for like basis is no longer sustainable or viable due to:

- Increasing urbanisation which diminishes suitable space
- Changes to insurance specifications which requires greater distances between buildings and trees
- An increase in the provision of Wi-Fi enabling infrastructure such as posts and underground cables across the Town. Trees cannot be planted on top or near underground services

New and increasing pests and diseases incur additional responsibilities in managing biosecurity to ensure the tree stock is protected e.g., procurement of stock from reputable, disease-free source.

The overarching principal widely supported by industry experts such as The Tree Council, Woodland Trust and Forestry Commission is to have “the right tree in the right place”. This document will set out the strategy for Crawley Borough Council that will support that principal. The process will ensure that pertinent information is considered so that sound, objective and evidence-based decisions are made.

## Future Plan

### Recording of tree planting and aftercare

The tree database will continue to be used to capture newly planted trees and their aftercare. This will produce a healthier more reliable tree stock in future as essential maintenance will be planned and executed.

It is expected that trees planted as part of new developments will be protected and managed responsibly by developers. If further assurance and safeguarding is required, this could be achieved by amending planning conditions.

### Species Diversity

Future planting and selection of species will consider:

- The continuation of existing native species
- Urban compatible species e.g.
  - Not planting fruiting species in areas where it will increase risks of slips and falls, and pests such as wasps.
  - Not planting species with a high water take-up that may affect nearby building foundations.
  - Not planting species that have an invasive root structure which has the potential to damage property e.g., pavements and walls.
  - Not planting species that will obstruct or interfere with overhead or underground services
  - Ensure that the size of the planting area is sufficient to maintain a mature tree.
- Compatible with existing ecology
- Tolerant of predicted future climates. This may involve diversifying the stock as traditional native species are less tolerant to drought e.g., birch trees
- Disease-resistant and disease- tolerant where possible.

### Funding

Section 106 funds, provided through the planning application tree mitigation scheme, is sufficient to fund planting for this strategy, including aftercare. The mitigation scheme provides sufficient funding to purchase the tree and one replacement if required along with staff time to plant the tree and maintain it for five years. After that time the tree should be established and will be funded from the normal tree maintenance budget.

Woodland Trust funding can be allocated to other organisations that may wish to plant trees within their land e.g. schools, volunteer organisations or private bodies. As there is sufficient funding

through Section 106 there is no requirement for the council to draw on this, therefore providing opportunity for other organisations that are unable to fund tree planting themselves.

## Tree Planting Process

The Councils Tree Officers will assess locations and suitability for tree planting and choose a suitable species, size and age of tree to be planted, taking into account the following factors:

- Trees will only be planted in land owned by the council to avoid liability and maintenance issues
- To prevent property damage and to adhere to insurance specifications, small trees will not be planted within 5m and large trees within 15m of a property
- In most circumstances trees will not be planted over pipes, cables and other services running underground to prevent damage in the future
- Avoid species where the canopy will overhang into highways or obstruct sight lines etc
- The existing tree stocks will not be adversely affected by new planting
- Trees will be procured from a safe and reputable source that can provide plant passport documentation
- To prevent the introduction of pests and diseases that could be detrimental to the Councils tree stock donated trees will not be accepted
- Experienced council staff or approved contractors will plant new trees. Members of the public/volunteers will only be permitted to plant under the supervision of a council Tree Officer to ensure this essential task is completed correctly giving the tree the best chance of survival
- In order to maintain urban tree cover, all felled trees will be considered for replacement (this excludes self-seeded trees and saplings which have established as weeds). However, it may not always be possible to replace on a one for one basis
- Wherever possible re-planting should take place in the same location the tree was removed from. In cases where it is not possible to replace in the same location then a location nearby will be sought
- Where trees are removed due to disease the ground shall be quarantined for two years to allow the disease to disperse before new trees are planted to avoid reinfection.

## Tree Pests, Diseases and Risks

Current threats to the tree stock are varied and are being managed within the standard dead, dying or dangerous process. If it is determined that a diseased tree poses a threat to other trees then the tree will be removed to prevent contamination.

New threats such as ADB and oak processionary moth (OPM) are managed following the guidance which has been provided from organisations such as DEFRA or the Forestry Commission. Further details can be found by visiting government websites – [www.gov.uk/environment/forest-and-woodland](http://www.gov.uk/environment/forest-and-woodland)

The council has managed the impact of ADB within its existing policy and budget, however, if this escalates, further resources may be required. In this circumstance it should be noted that replacement of felled diseased trees may not be possible due to sheer numbers.

## Volunteers

An area in Tilgate Park has been earmarked for a new Community Woodland as part of the Queens Green Canopy pledge.

Volunteers (and other stakeholders) were offered the opportunity to assist Tree Officers with planting a range and variety of suitable trees to create the Community Woodland (approximately 500 trees). Further volunteer work will take place over a number of years to maintain and establish the woodland.

If successful other woodland schemes in different locations can be considered, in conjunction with ward members, neighbourhood volunteer groups, resident forums, Gatwick Greenspace etc.

### **Justin Roberts**

Neighbourhood Services Support Manager

November 2023



# Crawley Borough Council tree planting strategy







## Foreword

**It is my pleasure to introduce Crawley Borough Council’s Tree Planting Strategy, to thank everyone who has worked on its production and, of course, everyone who works in some way to look after our trees.**

This is an area of environmental stewardship in which the council occupies a position of strength. There are more than 250,000 trees in a variety of species owned by the council, plus tens of thousands more owned by others around the borough. Visitors to Crawley will surely never have imagined a new town this close to London with a globally significant airport could be so leafy. We’re also fortunate that our trees are not subjected to a vigorous timber industry. If you look down from space, you’d see them covering more than a quarter of Crawley, far more than the national average, and we’re fortunate to have the amenity value of several forests and wooded parks.

This strategy will prevent us from becoming complacent or losing the advantage we already have. We know trees are a vital component of a successful ecosystem and provide us with a raft of economic and social benefits.



We also know we need to care for them, but we are fortunate to have a team of tree officers and park staff who intimately know the trees, our soil, climate and environment to manage them effectively over the previous decades. Our focus is on maintaining the coverage we already have and ensuring the species best suited to surviving and thriving in our local environment are selected. This strategy will ensure that we plant trees for the future using organisational expertise which is rooted in our past.

### **Councillor Bob Noyce**

Cabinet member for Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change



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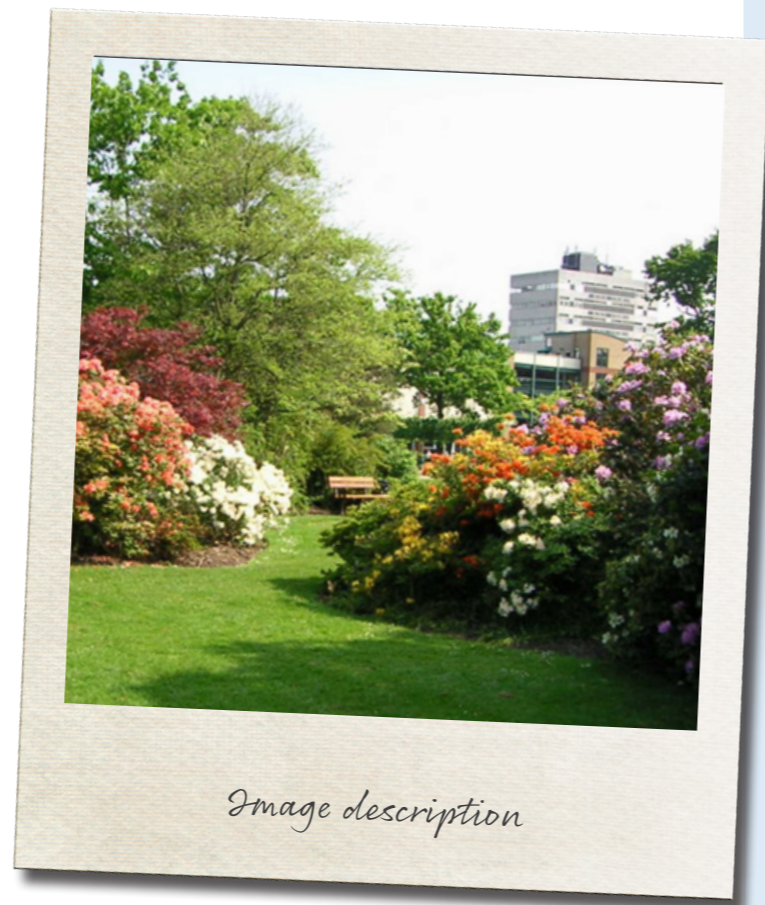
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## Background

Trees are an essential element of a healthy balanced environment. They improve wellbeing for our residents, businesses and visitors.

The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. The action plan identified the need for a sustainable tree planting strategy to help tackle the effects of climate change.

Crawley Borough Council is responsible for the management of trees on its land including woodlands, residential and commercial areas.

Crawley has always had a high percentage of tree cover. When trees fail it is becoming ever more challenging as the available and suitable open space is reducing.

There are an estimated 250,000 council-owned trees across the Borough, 13,000 have been surveyed so far as they are 'high interest' which means trees that have been identified as likely to strike people or property if they were to fail or fall.

The tree survey is ongoing and a further 7,000 trees will be added to the tree database over the next two years.



*Image description*

Crawley Borough Council's current tree policy prioritises work on trees that are dead, dying or dangerous.

This tree planting strategy has been created to inform future management decisions that will support a healthy and sustainable tree stock and tree canopy.

## Strategy aims

A sustainable planting strategy will help manage and maintain Crawley's trees and tree canopy to ensure they meet the needs of the present and future generations by:

- Replanting the tree stock where possible and appropriate, planting the right tree in the right place
- Preserving, maintaining and managing the existing tree canopy cover
- Planting a diverse range of tree species that will thrive in a warmer and wetter climate
- Purchasing tree stock only from reputable and safe suppliers, ensuring as far as possible that new trees are disease and pest free.

*Did you know?*

There are an estimated  
**250,000 council-owned trees**  
across the whole borough.



## The benefits of trees

### Environmental

- Conserves property energy by reducing the need to heat or cool because they provide shelter and shade
- Removes and processes pollutants from our environment through tree foliage
- Reduces the risk of flooding by tree roots soaking up rainwater
- Trees provide a very efficient barrier to noise
- Provides important ecological habitats and wildlife corridors.

### Social

- Increases amenity value and creating desirable landscapes
- Provides physical health benefits and increases feelings of wellbeing
- Psychological improvements by providing a link with the natural environment which reduces stress
- Creating a pleasant community areas to be, exercise or meet others.

### Economic

- Reduces heating and cooling costs by providing shelter and shade to properties
- Reduces the health care costs to a population by improving health and wellbeing
- Increases property values in areas with high tree canopy cover.

*Did you know?*

**Trees are an essential part of a healthy environment, they improve people's wellbeing and provide an efficient barrier to noise.**





## The planting process

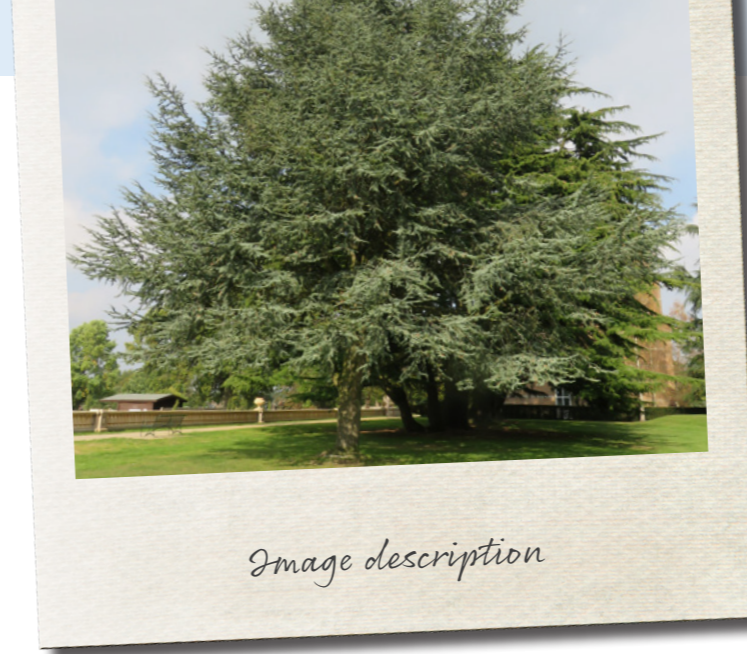
An annual planting plan will be created using information from the tree survey database.

Newly planted trees will be maintained to the British Standard best practice.

Maintenance and management of newly planted trees will be recorded on the tree database.



*Image description*



*Image description*

## Tree selection criteria

The council's Tree Officers will select tree species for planting using the following criteria:

- Is it an existing native species?
- Will it suit the location?
- Is it the right size and spread in relation to the surrounding structures?
- Is there enough open space for the tree to thrive?
- Is it compatible with existing ecology?
- Will it be tolerant of future warmer/wetter climates?



*Overview of the planting process:*



*Did you know?*  
Crawley has 26.6 per cent tree canopy cover which is 10.2 per cent above the national average.





## Planting criteria

### Trees will only be planted on land owned by Crawley Borough Council.

Felled trees will be considered for replacement, however it may not always be possible to replace on a one for one basis. (N.B. this excludes self-seeded trees and saplings).

Small trees will not be planted within 5m, and large trees not within 15m, of property to prevent encroachment and property damage. This also adheres to current insurance requirements.

In most circumstances, trees will not be planted over pipes, cables or other services running underground.

Species where the canopy will obstruct highways, footpaths or sight lines will be avoided.

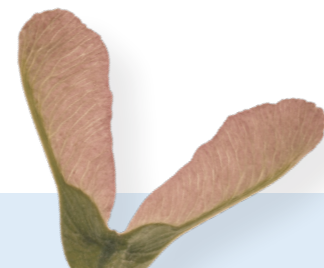
The existing tree stock will not be adversely affected by new planting.

Trees will be procured from a safe, reputable, disease and pest-free source that can provide bio passport documentation. Donated trees will not be accepted.

Experienced staff or approved contractors only will plant new trees. Volunteers will be supervised by a council Tree Officer to ensure correct planting, therefore giving the tree the best chance of survival.

Wherever possible re-planting will take place in the same location the tree was removed from. In cases where it is not possible to replace in the same location, then a location nearby will be sought.

Where trees are removed due to disease the ground will be quarantined for two years to allow the disease to disperse before new trees are planted to avoid reinfection.

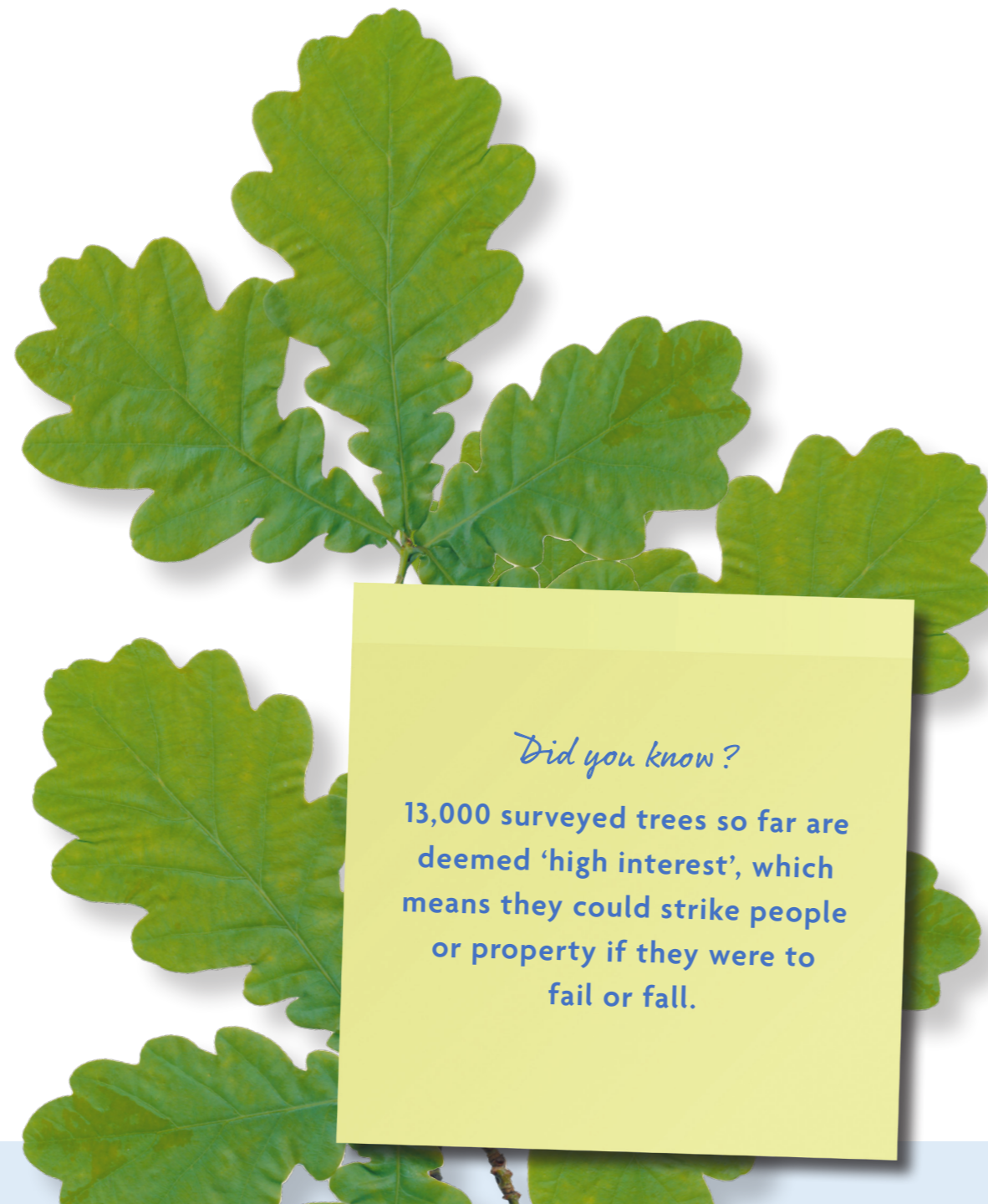


*Image description*



## Canopy facts

- Some diseases such as ash dieback will have a significant detrimental impact on the canopy cover. At present there is no known cure
- Canopy cover is defined as the percentage of ground covered by a tree crown viewed from above
- Good management of the existing trees and woodlands will protect future tree canopy cover
- Crawley has 26.6 per cent tree canopy cover which is 10.2 per cent above the national average
- Planting more trees is not the only way to maintain canopy cover.



*Did you know?*

**13,000 surveyed trees so far are deemed 'high interest', which means they could strike people or property if they were to fail or fall.**



*Image description*

## Funding

Current funding provided through Section 106 payments in the form of developer contributions for tree mitigations is sufficient for this strategy.

Funding includes tree purchase, planting and aftercare including one replacement if required.

Other organisations that wish to plant trees on their land will be encouraged to seek grant funding opportunities.

## Community woodland development

An area of Tilgate Park has been earmarked for a new Community Woodland as part of the Queen's Green Canopy pledge.

Volunteers assisted with tree planting and will continue to manage the trees for the next few years until the Community Woodland is established.





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# Agenda Item 10

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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# Agenda Item 11

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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