

# Proposed Decision to be made Under the Council's Urgency Procedure by the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture

## Local Authority Treescape Fund – Round 4

<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture
<b>Date of decision</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
	Signed

### Decision taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture approves the submission of a grant application will be submitted to the Forestry Commission for £847k (of which c.520k will be to cover 3 years maintenance) to further the commitment to plant one tree for every resident of Warwickshire (in partnership with others).

### Reasons for decision

This will further the commitment to plant one tree for every resident of Warwickshire (in partnership with others).

### Reasons for Urgency

The decision is required under the Council's urgency procedure owing to the deadline of the grant round application.

### Background information

After the successful delivery of the previous Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF), WCC Ecology, Historic Environment & Landscape and WCC Forestry are looking to apply for further funds in partnership with District and Boroughs plus Parish Councils.

This will further the commitment to plant one tree for every resident of Warwickshire (in partnership with others).

Forestry Commission funds include 3-year maintenance budgets post planting, which will support the creation of a dedicated Forestry Teams to plant and maintain the 566,000 tree planting climate change pledge. It is expected that two members of these teams will be apprenticeship posts.

LATF Round 4 is set to be the last round being run. WCC is the lead applicant, working with the district and boroughs to develop the bids to identify suitable locations in predominantly parks, streets, and around LA housing stock that would benefit from increased tree planting.

If the bid is successful, the supply, planting and maintenance of the trees will be predominantly delivered by WCC's Forestry team, with support from the Natural Capital team. It is anticipated that the LATF grant value would be £847k to cover the capital costs of planting and establish about 2000 trees, half of which are large urban trees. The grant would cover one planting season and it will also importantly cover maintenance costs for three years after planting to help ensure the success of the trees.

The costs to plant and maintain the trees will be covered by the grants. Some tasks will be carried out by the District or Borough.

After the 3rd year's maintenance period the future maintenance will be either covered by the District, Boroughs' or Parish council maintenance budgets and/or from funds accrued from carbon and biodiversity net gain sales and other Nature Markets that are being established and will be presented in the Natural Capital Investment Strategy (in preparation).

## Financial implications

The costs to plant and maintain the trees will be covered by the grants. Some tasks will be carried out by the District or Borough.

After the 3<sup>rd</sup> year's maintenance period the future maintenance will be either covered by the District, Boroughs' or Parish council maintenance budgets and/or from funds accrued from carbon and biodiversity net gain sales and other Nature Markets that are being established and will be presented in the Natural Capital Investment Strategy (in preparation).

## Environmental implications

To support the Warwickshire County, District and Borough Councils tree planting aspirations for Local Authority Climate Change pledges.

It also contributes to the following strategies:

- Council Plan – Biodiversity Net Gain, Tree Planting aspirations, community cohesion

- WCC Biodiversity Strategy – statutory Biodiversity Duty evidence document
- WCS Green Infrastructure Strategy – ecological connectivity and Health & Wellbeing
- Sustainable Future Strategy – Tree Planting aspirations and potentially carbon insetting

The grant will also be recorded within the relevant KPIs and Monitoring Indicators.

<b>Report Author</b>	David Lowe, Service Manager: Ecology, Historic Environment & Landscape
<b>Assistant Director</b>	Scott Tompkins, Director of Environment, Planning and Transport
<b>Lead Director</b>	Executive Director for Communities, Executive Director for Communities
<b>Lead Member</b>	Cllr Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture

<b>Urgent matter?</b>	Yes
<b>Confidential or exempt?</b>	No
<b>Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?</b>	No

<b>List of background papers (If applicable)</b>
None

<b>Members and officers consulted and informed</b>
Portfolio Holder – Councillor Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture
Legal – Caroline Gutteridge, Senior Solicitor
Finance – Virginia Rennie, Director of Finance Sarah Pittaway, Senior Accountant, Rosemary Gowers, Accountant
Democratic Services – Paul Williams, Governance Services Manager, Helen Barnsley, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Councillors – Councillor Adrian Warwick (for consent to urgency)
Local Member(s): n/a