

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting of the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee **on 14th October 2025**

Bolsover Tree and Woodland Strategy update

Report of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Classification	This report is Public.
Contact Officer	Chris McKinney

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To update Members on the preparation of the Bolsover Tree and Woodland Strategy and planned public consultation exercise.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Council has been delivering the Bolsover Community Woodlands project between 2021 and 2025 with funding from the Woodland Trust.
- 1.2 Bolsover District Council received just under £270,000 in funding across a four year period and with this funding the Council made great strides in tree planting across the District, seeing:
 - establishment of the Bolsover Community Woodlands project;
 - creation of a temporary Project Officer role to take the project forward;
 - planting of over 25,000 trees across more than ten projects across the District, covering the parishes of Elmton-with-Creswell, Old Bolsover, Whitwell, Clowne, South Normanton, Langwith and Shirebrook;
 - engagement with over 1,000 volunteers on these tree planting projects and other environmental activity days;
 - working with social enterprise Bolsover Woodlands Enterprise to deliver the majority of the tree planting programme;
 - taking part in the National Tree Week campaign, including our wonderful school children's painting competition that led to the delightful banner on the wall in our building's reception; and

- work commence on the preparation of a Tree and Woodland Strategy with consultancy, Treeconomics, to carry forward the legacy of our positive work with the Bolsover Community Woodlands project.
- 1.3 In addition to internal officer and Member engagement, the preparation of the Tree and Woodland Strategy has to date involved engagement with a number of relevant external stakeholders, including the District's Parish and Town Councils, Derbyshire County Council officers, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and National Trust representatives.
 - 1.4 This has led to the preparation of a Consultation Draft Strategy that seeks to set an ambitious strategy that will continue the great work of the Bolsover Community Woodlands project and see further opportunities for tree planting across our District. This draft Strategy is now being readied for public consultation and is due to be reported to Executive on 3rd November 2025 to seek approval for the draft Strategy and the commencement of the consultation exercise.
 - 1.5 Before this takes place, it is considered appropriate to update Members of the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee on the contents of the draft Strategy and seek any appropriate advice on the matter. To aid this, the draft Strategy forms an appendix to this report and its contents are summarised below.

2.0 Details of Proposal or Information

Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy

- 2.1 The prepared draft Tree and Woodland Strategy is a comprehensive document that sets out a vision, a baseline of the District's existing tree and woodland coverage and condition, sets out a range of targets, priorities and actions and is supported by a Delivery Plan and a Monitoring & Review Plan.
- 2.2 In terms of what the draft Strategy seeks to achieve, based on the undertaken stakeholder engagement Chapter 3 of the draft Strategy sets out the following vision.

“To create a greener, healthier, and more connected Bolsover by nurturing and expanding our trees and woodlands, fostering community pride in them, enhancing biodiversity, and taking care of our trees and woodlands for the benefit of current and future generations.”
- 2.3 This vision is intended to capture the Council's desire to look after the District's existing trees and woodlands, increase the canopy coverage in the District and to ensure this both involves local communities and fosters their pride in their local environment.
- 2.4 Chapter 4 sets out a baseline of the District's existing coverage and provides both an assessment of tree canopy coverage by ward as a percentage of the total land area of each ward and information about public access. This shows

a range from 6% coverage in the Bolsover East Ward up to 30.6% coverage in the Langwith Ward. For information the national average for tree canopy is 14%.

2.5 Through the initial stakeholder engagement, the following three themes have emerged:

- Taking care of existing trees and woodlands;
- Expanding tree and woodland coverage;
- Fostering community pride in trees and woodlands.

2.6 Chapters 4, 5 and 6 outline these three themes and expand on how the draft Strategy seeks to deliver the vision through these themes via a range of targets and key performance indicators. These are:

Taking care of existing trees and woodlands

- T1 – Establish comprehensive tree and woodland inventory
- T2 – Ensure operational plans exist for key woodland assets
- T3 – Promotion of tree benefits
- T4 – Tree protection policy development, monitoring and enforcement
- T5 – Secure resources to support existing tree and woodland assets

Expanding tree and woodland coverage

- E1 – Increase overall canopy coverage
- E2 – Expand tree canopy cover in Wards with low coverage
- E3 – Establish community planting across all parishes
- E4 – Expand existing key woodland assets
- E5 – Secure resources for new tree and woodland planting

Fostering community pride in trees and woodlands

- C1 – Establish more Tree Warden / Champions
- C2 – Community involvement and neighbourhood action
- C3 – General appreciation of trees as a community resource
- C4 – Utilities cooperation
- C5 – General industry cooperation

2.7 Each of these targets has information about its link to corporate policies, the actions proposed and an assessment of the Council's current performance.

Proposed public consultation exercise

2.8 On the basis that the draft Tree and Woodlands Strategy is approved by Executive, it is proposed that a four week period of public consultation will take place and that this exercise will involve:

- a digital copy of the Consultation Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy and consultation questionnaire will be available to read and print off on the Council's website;

- a link on the webpage will direct people to a digital version of the consultation questionnaire that can be completed online;
- the same questionnaire will also be on the Ask Derbyshire webpage as many residents use it as their 'go to' when finding out what consultations are live across the district;
- paper copies of the Consultation Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy and consultation questionnaire will be made available at the District's libraries and Contact Centres throughout the 4 weeks of the consultation period.

2.9 Following this consultation period, the outcome of the consultation exercise and a final version of the Tree and Woodland Strategy will be reported back to Executive for approval.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 That the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee are informed with progress on the Tree and Woodland Strategy.

4.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 None

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee note the update on the preparation of the Tree and Woodland Strategy and provide any appropriate advice to officers on this matter.

Approved by Councillor Rob Hiney-Saunders, Portfolio Holder for the Environment

IMPLICATIONS:

<u>Finance and Risk</u>		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Details: There are no specific finance or risk issues arising from this report. Financial matters will be addressed in the Executive report.		
On behalf of the Section 151 Officer		
<u>Legal (including Data Protection)</u>		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Details: There are no specific legal or data protection issues arising from this report.		
On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council		

<p><u>Staffing</u> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Details: There are no human resources implications arising from this report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Head of Paid Service</p>
<p><u>Equality and Diversity, and Consultation</u> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Details: There are no specific direct or indirect negative impacts on any person with a protected characteristic or any group of people with a shared protected characteristic arising from this report.</p>
<p><u>Environment</u> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Details: The Tree and Woodland Strategy will make a notable contribution to enhancing the environment as outlined in the report.</p>

DECISION INFORMATION:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies:	
<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue (a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.</p> <p>Capital (a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.</p> <p>District Wards Significantly Affected: <i>(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)</i> Please state below which wards are affected or tick All if all wards are affected:</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>All <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? <i>(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation carried out: <i>(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing
<u>Environment</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing biodiversity across the district. Working with stakeholders, regional and local partnerships to deliver shared strategies and priorities that support the local environment.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title
1	Consultation Draft Tree and Woodland Strategy

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>