

**REPORT TO:** Environment & Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Operational Director – Community and Environment

**PORTFOLIO:** Environment and Urban Renewal

**SUBJECT:** Working Party Review of Coppicing Works

**WARD(S):** Borough-wide

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on progress with work of the Working Party that was established to review the Council's coppicing works programme.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- 2.1 Members of the Board receive and comment upon the report.**

## **3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Coppicing is a pruning technique where a tree or shrub is cut to ground level, resulting in regeneration of new stems from the base. It is a popular conservation practice for the benefits it offers to wildlife and to the trees themselves. Trees naturally retrench (shedding their branches to extend their lifespan) and coppicing can be an excellent way of simulating this to increase the life of the tree. It also increases biodiversity, as greater amounts of light can reach the ground, allowing other species to grow there. Many of these species are food sources for butterflies and other insects, which in turn provide food for birds, bats and mammals.
- 3.2 Management of the Council's structure planting (tree and shrub plantations where this type of management is applied) is currently being carried out in accordance with horticultural best practice standards and in accordance with a specification that was set out within a grounds maintenance contract established in the late 1990's.
- 3.3 In March 2022, it was agreed that a Working Party would be established to undertake a review of the Council's coppicing works

programme. The Working Party consists of Councillor Mike Fry as Chair, and Councillors Angela Ball, Tony McDermott, Bob Gilligan, Andrea Wall and Noel Hutchinson.

- 3.4 Since the establishment of the Working Party, a number of discussions have been held between The Chair, Councillor Fry, and the Divisional Manager for Environment Services and evidence has begun being gathered to help inform the work of the Working Party. At the time of writing this report evidence was still being gathered and, as a result, the Working Party had not met, however, the first meeting of the Working Party is scheduled to take place on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022. This meeting will establish the scope of the review and a further progress report on the work of the Working Party will be presented to Members at the next meeting of the Board in September.

#### **4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

#### **5. OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial or other implications arising from this report.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

No direct impact

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

No direct impact

##### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

No direct impact

##### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

No direct impact

##### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

No direct impact

#### **7. RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 None identified at this time.

**8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality or diversity issues as a result of this report.

**9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 There are no background papers associated with this report.