

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Questions to Portfolio Holders

Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel Monday 11 July 2022

Question received from Councillor Hoptroff:

Q1. "SMDC's Tree Strategy was due for renewal at the start of this year (it lapsed at the end of last year and the last promised delivery date was March of this year (*section 5.4 of Climate Change Plan*)). The Green Infrastructure Plan has not been put before Scrutiny since January 2021. When will there be further discussion of the strategy?"

Response from Councillor Porter – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change:

The Council has an existing Tree Strategy, which is perhaps somewhat of a misnomer in that it is an operational policy that sets out how the Council manages trees. The existing "Tree Strategy" will be refreshed in the next 12 months in the light of a wider review of the tree service, at which point it will be more appropriately re-titled.

As Councillor Hoptroff points out, our Climate Change Plan includes a commitment to encourage tree planting and create a framework for the planting of new trees. At the time of writing the report, our approach was to have a separate Tree Strategy to deliver that commitment. However, following further consultation with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, we now believe that the tree strategy should form part of an overall biodiversity strategy that emphasises the importance of all habitats. We are in the process of commissioning development of the biodiversity strategy – which we are going to call A Plan for Nature - with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and they have promised a detailed, costed proposal by the end of July.