Developing a Partnership Street Tree Strategy for Sheffield

CONFIRMED NOTES AND ACTIONS

Meeting 4: Friday 29th November 2019

Attending
Chair: Liz Ballard, Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust (LB)
Joe Coles, Woodland Trust (JC)
Christine King, Co-Chair of Street Tree Action Groups (CK)
Brian Stocks, Amey (BS)
Darren Butt, Amey (DB)
Karen Ramsey, Sheffield City Council (KR)
Mick Croft, Sheffield City Council (MC)
Paul Selby, Street Tree Action Groups (PS)
Glen Gorner, Leeds City Council (GG)
Alison Holt, Natural Capital Solutions (also Trustee SRWT) (AH)

Invited: James Watson, Treeconomics

Apologies:
Deepa Shetty, Street Tree Action Groups (DS)

Welcome & Introductions

LB thanked everyone for coming.

LB noted that the minutes had been circulated some time in advance and the few comments received had been included so it was assumed that everyone was happy with the minutes. All agreed.
The minutes will be uploaded to the SRWT website.

1. Actions & Decisions from 8th November 2019 minutes

- All: to seek reference for health & wellbeing value of trees –JC had sent through a number of references
- LB: Had circulated draft vision and there had been further work done on this by email. Also on the agenda – **work in progress**
- JC has agreed to fund the visit from Treeconomics on 29th November for presentation of the report.
- LB updated the contact she had with Alun Watkins reference UKWAS. Paul Sandys (UKFCG) is available for a meeting on 18th December, to explore further, if anyone else is available for this date. GG, DB would be interested. LB will send out an e-invite. The meeting may be at Sheffield Technology Centre which should be easily accessible. **Action LB Send E-Invite**

- KR: A decision making process based on the outline by GG and Leeds City Council Tree Guidelines booklet to be developed by SCC and Amey.
  ACTION: KR/DB Draft for December meeting
- BS has circulated the key questions he and his assessors ask themselves as they work through tree species selection this will be on the agenda today.
- **ACTION: DB/BS to provide a clear narrative on the current position of street tree numbers to be included in the strategy.**
- KR had sent the Council decision-making timelines to LB. It was noted that for a mid-March sign-off by the council, a draft strategy would be needed by mid to end January. One option to be considered was a policy discussion at a scrutiny committee. The decision making process needed to be agreed with the lead Cabinet Member. **ACTION: MC/KR to confirm the approach to Council sign-off with the lead Cabinet Member.**
- KR: had updated SCC comms team but timeline needs to be pinned down.
- **ACTION: PS, KR, CK** to draft an introduction to the Strategy. **Ongoing**
- **ACTION: LB** to draft text for accreditation section of strategy **following pefc meeting**
- BS has sent some initial test to LB about species profile
- LB has updated the strategy template – on the agenda

2. Theme 1: Vision and Aims

James Watson from Treeconomics presented the report commissioned by the group.

JW introduced himself and information on the type of work and projects he has worked on.

- Benefit of trees – including a pictorial representation. MC asked if we could use this.
- What is I Tree? – peer reviewed software
- Focus on I Tree Eco and I Tree Canopy
- Field data, Structure, Function and Value
- CAVAT – Street trees and park trees are public amenities, lots of insurance companies using CAVAT as a tool for claims.
- Sheffield Street Tree Inventory Report (see copy on website)

JW asked for any questions.

MC asked for clarification on replacement costs. There was some discussion. LB clarified that it is the cost of the tree when planting plus all the expense of maintaining it until it was the same age and providing the same benefits as it is now. JW, Replacement costs are estimating using the CTLA formula.

JW gave some examples of Islington with information being broken down by ward level, and a tree planting strategy looking at indexes of deprivation and air pollution levels.

JW then gave examples of street trees in Cornwall not being planted in appropriate places and not maintained.

GC asked about ozone. JW explained the calculations consider net ozone.

A discussion on comparison to Sheffield and requested that JW use a football pitch or similar as a comparison for leaf area. **ACTION: LB to send to JW**

Potential pests and diseases. Discussion ended up with agreement to replace Xyella with impact of Phytopthora. JW will focus on this, we can estimate the replacement cost by ward.

PS potential to overlay including with local air quality pollution data for Sheffield, but there are not many sensors. PS the University had worked with community leads to ensure there are now large number of pollution sensors across the city of Sheffield, in a larger number of small geographic areas, and that these gave a more accurate and more local picture than the official sensors owned by SCC.

MC felt it was best to use common names in the report. James will put in brackets the Latin names and use the common name.

MC asked how this data fits in with the Woodland Strategy. One of the crucial pages in the report is how we use this report and integrate into the strategy.

CK discussed Stannington and feels that work on levels of social deprivation is important.

MC the strategy needs to drive what we are going to do to explain to the public.

LB thanked James and will be emailing him any questions and minor amenda. JW will make the changes requested and will work to produce the final report. **ACTION: LB to send amends to JW**

3. Drafting the Strategy

LB The strategy now needs to be our focus, we have lots of ideas and discussions and we need to start getting them down in writing.

(Please refer to strategy template for more details of drafting actions)

KR asked how we can collectively do this, LB suggested sharing by google drive. PS believed this could not be used by SCC internally. LB will set up the google drive and to let her know if it was an issue. **ACTION: KR to let LB know asap if google drive can be used – or suggest an alternative**

Introduction

MC felt we hadn't talked enough about the highway and that is should be referenced in the strategy. PS/KR the element they have partly written does reference this. MC feels we ought to give the reader an understanding of the extent and benefits of the highway network. DB suggested using infographics to do this**. ACTION: PS/KR/CK/DB to review introduction – include highways and current tree narrative.**

LB we need the whole introduction ready for the December meeting.

JC felt it sounded like we needed a "road map" with the context of this.

GC Network rail has included how they manage trees & vegetation and may be worth looking at this report. To be circulated.

O1.

Accreditation meeting 18th December **ACTION: LB**

O2.

Establishing a baseline from CAVAT – this has been estimated by Treeconomics. MC proposed we use Treeconomics as a baseline but continue to build on improving the dataset through the strategy.

PS At this point BS and his team have now reached something like 20% of the 36,000 trees with the more detailed measurements required for CAVAT and I-tree(eco). And that this work should continue over time, to get ever closer to the magic figure of 100%. In doing this, the CAVAT and I-tree(eco) values would become more accurate over time.

I Tree Eco will be recalculated every year by Amey and reported as a moving average. LB will add in the baseline date from the report.

LB asked if KR has the data for the targets on air pollution. AH offered to review the air quality data from SCC against the itree eco data if it could be made available. **ACTION: KR to establish if SCC have data to share with Alison.**

BS had drafted a process for species selection. Amey has undertaken to plant as close to the original site as possible depending on site considerations. There was some discussion on the process and general agreement that this was a useful piece of work to be included in the strategy. PS offered to develop the draft further for a future discussion. **ACTION: PS to develop a second draft of Brian's species selection paper for the next meeting.**

O3 and O4.

Discussion about whether the numbers of street trees or the size of street tree canopy cover were important to monitor and increase over time. CK felt strongly that canopy was important. JC felt that for smaller wards the numbers would be useful as we need to decide on the right tree, right place. PS commented that we need to include canopy cover.

LB has been sent to an I Tree Canopy online tool that we may be able to use. LB commented the actions on O4 will be the same as O3.

ACTION: LB to follow up on itree canopy tree tool.

O5.

BS sent through via e mail to LB who will review. **ACTION LB to read through and comment**

O6.

Discussion about future actions to involve the wider community, include school awards system.

PS put forward a proposal for community funding of trees. Based on the slides from the last meeting he feels there could be an approach to funding planting in tree pits: one using existing tree pits and the other using new tree pits. This is a key outcome that STAG want as part of the strategy.

LB had also started a draft terms of reference for a future street tree partnership.

Agreed these both need further discussion and development as part of the strategy and not as separate issues. **ACTION: All to discuss further – next meeting agenda**

LB suggested a Tree Warden Scheme, DB supported this. Agreed to explore potential further. **ACTION: LB to find out more about national Tree Warden Scheme.**

4. Next Steps

LB at the next meeting on 20th December making a decision on the PR and launch.

Next meeting: Drafting the Strategy, Timeline, Certification, Related Issues.

A further 2 to 3 more meeting will be needed in the New Year, these will be circulated by doodle poll.

JC feels that early spring would make sense to launch the strategy to enable the planting.

The meeting closed at 1pm

Next meeting is Friday 20th December at 9:30am in Room 2 at Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust H.Q.