

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY POWERS

Decision No:	D230006URG
Decision Taken By:	Leader of the Borough Council; and Cabinet Member for Community Services
Authority under which Decision Taken:	Departure from the Council's adopted Budget and Policy Framework and in accordance with paragraph 4 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules
Decision Type:	Non Key Decision
Date:	19 January 2023

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

HEALTH AND SAFETY OF TREES – BUDGET PROVISION

The Council undertakes 'Expert' tree inspections of all its tree stock in accordance with an approved Tree Safety Policy with these inspections only identifying works required for health and safety reasons. Inspections have been undertaken for the 2022/23 financial year and subsequently quotations sought from 3 contractors. Given pressures that have been applied to the current budget, including follow up work required in regard to Storm Eunice, the revenue budget as presented in the Revised Estimates 2022/23 will not adequately cover the works identified or any other potential works required before 1 April 2023.

With specific regard to the costs arising from the 'Expert' tree inspections these costs are higher than anticipated and may have been influenced by a number of factors including, the significant increase in costs for labour, plant and fuel, the impact of Ash Dieback that is now been seen on the Councils tree stock and the drought/hot weather experienced during summer 2022 that impacted on tree health.

Taking the above into consideration, £50k will be required over and above the draft Revised Estimate for 2022/23 to enable the works to proceed both in terms of the 'Expert' inspections and potential urgent works ahead of the next financial year.

The Revised Estimate for 2022/23 due to be approved by Full Council therefore needs to be uplifted by £50k to accommodate these essential works.

Details of any alternatives considered:

To not undertake the works or delay them.

Reason why departure from Budget and Policy Framework:

There is now an urgency for these works given the prescribed time frames within the Council's Tree Safety Policy for completion.

Reason(s) why rejected:

The works are required to remain in accordance with the Council's Tree Safety Policy, therefore, the alternatives highlighted above have been rejected in order that it does not expose any risk to the public or the Council.

Conflicts of Interest/Dispensations Granted:

N/A

Background Papers (if any):

N/A

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) The essential works proceed prior to the end of the financial year for the reasons given; and
- (2) The Revised Estimate for 2022/23 in relation to 'Health & Safety – trees' be increased by £50k to a sum of £130k.

Taken in accordance with paragraph 4 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules set out in the Constitution and in agreement with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Signed Leader:	M Boughton
Signed Cabinet Member for Community Services:	D Keers
Signed Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	A Oakley
Signed Chief Executive:	J Beilby
Date of publication:	20 January 2023

In accordance with Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rule 4 it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the Full Council due to the timescales required for the health and safety works to be undertaken and with the consent of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, this decision is considered urgent and is not subject to call-in.