

## Report of the Strategic Director

**TREE PLANTING – FREE FRUIT TREES**1. Purpose of report

To update members on the initiative to provide 500 fruit trees free to Broxtowe Residents.

2. Background

The Council has a target to plant 2,000 trees each year across the borough. This year, as part of the contribution towards this, an initiative was brought forward following discussions with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee to offer 500 free fruit trees to residents in the Borough. Details of the scheme are provided in the appendix. Response to this scheme has been very positive and more than 850 requests have been received for trees. The successful applicants have now been informed and collection days arranged at Devonshire Avenue car park, Beeston and Kimberley Depot on Saturdays in January 2020. Given the success of the initiative it is proposed to repeat the initiative next year taking on board comments and feedback following the events.

3. Financial implications

The cost of the 500 trees was £3,250. The estimated cost of distributing the trees on two days in January 2020 is £1,650. It is anticipated that these costs will be contained within the 2019/20 revenue budgets allocated for Tree Management and the Clean and Green initiative.

**Recommendations**

**The Committee is asked to NOTE the report.**

Background papers

Nil

**APPENDIX**

**Details of Free Fruit Trees**

Fruit trees were chosen for this initiative to generate the public's interest in the Councils policy to plant 2,000 trees a year. Trees have the benefit of connecting people and families for the purpose of planting and then observing them grow and establish. Fruit trees also have the added benefit of providing a source of food. The trees chosen, 3 varieties of apple and 2 varieties of pear, all have been grown on dwarfing rootstocks so they are suitable for a small garden or even a large container.

The trees were sourced locally and the varieties determined by what was available in the numbers required.

**Apples**

**James Grieve**

Popular dual purpose variety, can be used for cooking when young and then as an eating apple. Attractive red blush colour to the skin. 90 trees.

**Cox**

One of the UK's favourite apples. Fruit is juicy and sweet with a mellow taste. 90 trees.

**Discovery**

An early season desert apple. Fresh yellow/green in colour with dark red patches. 70 trees.

**Pears**

**Conference**

Very old established variety, reliable and well suited to the UK climate. 125 trees.

**Doyenne du Comice**

Very sweet variety and full of flavour cropping in mid to late autumn. 125 trees.

The trees will be between 1.0 and 1.5m in height and will be supplied with an information leaflet about the varieties of tree and details as to how the plant and care for them. The offer was limited to 500 trees for both financial and operational reasons. With approximately 250 trees to be given away at each event in Beeston and Kimberley the teams will be very busy on the day both administering the process and assisting people as they collect their trees.

The process to apply for the trees using a link on the Council's website worked very well with all the necessary information provided to allow the process of advising the successful applications to be administered.