

EX9. Forest Estate Plan

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Development Services seeking approval of six Urban Woodland Management Plans (UWMP) for submission to Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS). Together these formed the Falkirk Council Forest Estate Plan. Consultation on the six UWMP had been carried out. Details of the six UWMP were provided in appendices to the report, the areas were:-

UWMP Area	Woodland Compartments	Total Forest Inventory Area
Bo'ness	10	36.72ha
Bonnybridge	10	29.98ha
Denny	11	22.20ha
Falkirk North	8	74.28ha
Falkirk South	17	43.41ha
Polmont	14	65.04ha
Total	70	271.63ha

The programme of woodland management works prescribed within the suite of UWMP was significant. Woodland management intervention works would involve felling and thinning of individual trees in areas of existing woodland. This could be an emotive subject for communities due to the intensive nature of works within woodlands and the short term impact on the local landscape. However the implementation of the UWMP would lead to the planting of nearly 40,000 new trees.

The UWMP would be submitted to FCS for approval. Officers would then work to implement the programme of works prescribed in the Falkirk North UWMP. No further consultation with the public was planned, however, in advance of any on-site works local members would be made aware of any imminent works; works would be advertised on the Council's website and via social media, and warning signage would be erected so both locals and visitors were aware of any works and their duration.

The cost of implementing the Falkirk North UWMP was not known. More detailed work was needed to clarify costs and would be dependent on the price of carrying out works within the various woodland compartments and the price of timber when the works are carried out. Additional funding was likely to be required to implement the Falkirk North UWMP in 2020. Opportunities for additional funding support would be explored with Sustrans for the upgrade of existing paths and the provision of new paths.

Decision

The Executive:-

- (1) approved the suite of six UWMP which together comprised the Falkirk Council Forest Estate Plan;**
- (2) instructed officers to submit the six UWMP to Forestry Commission Scotland for approval;**

- (3) instructed officers to apply to the Scottish Government's Forestry Grant Scheme for Woodland Improvement Grant and Sustainable Management of Forest Grant and, depending on the outcome, begin the implementation of the Falkirk North UWMP in 2020; and**
- (4) instructed officers to continue to monitor funding availability from Forestry Grant Scheme and other sources and report back to Executive on progress and opportunities for implementation of the other 5 UWMP in 2020.**