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Southend-on-Sea City Council

Executive Director (Strategy, Change and Governance):
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13 February 2024

Dear Councillor

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 2024

Please find attached the questions from members of the public, together with the respective responses from the relevant Cabinet Member(s), at the meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee held on 12th February 2024.

Tim Row
Principal Democratic Services Officer

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Questions for Place Scrutiny Committee Meeting

On 12th February 2024

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Question 1 from Kay Mitchell for Cllr Davidson (Environment)

The housing crisis and environment so often clash when discussing new developments. Whilst council housing would certainly benefit our residents, the vast majority of additional housing seems only to place greater pressure on our elderly infrastructure rather than lift people out of poor, overcrowded and temporary accommodation. This does not address Southend specific housing needs, but does damage the environment while developers profit.

Tree canopy mapping does not provide the clear and specific data required on the trees lost in this way.

In order for residents to fully appreciate and for members to make informed decisions with a Southend City wide view, can the portfolio holder for environment let us know if a map of the removal of established trees that have made way for development is available, and if not can the portfolio holder commit to one being provided, covering the preceding 10 years?

Response:

Thank you for your question. The trees which the Council is responsible for are inspected and monitored regularly. We have data about these trees which underpins our tree canopy map. We aim to mitigate the risks and maximise the ecosystem benefits as effectively as possible with the data and limited resources we have.

Creating a map of established trees which have been removed from private land over the past ten years would be no easy task. As a first step, this could be looked at as part of the forthcoming review of the Council's Tree Policy.

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