East Dean & Friston
Parish Council

Date:	**06 June 2019**
Title:	**Report Item 10 – Tree Warden Report**
By:	**P Williamson (Tree Warden)**
Purpose:	**To provide a comprehensive report on actions and expenditure required**
Recommendations:	**a) To note the report and approve the recommendations**

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(1) Parish Trees, Shrubs & Hedgerows – Survey, Report & Management Plan

The appended description of the scope and specification of the proposed work provides a general overview as well as details of the tasks involved.

1.1 Progress Update
Based on a 50 mile radius around the Parish, 24 professional arboricultural providers were identified using listings at the Arboricultural Association and the Consulting Arborist Society. In response to an email from the Tree Warden to request expressions of interest (attaching the abovementioned description), six potential providers have expressed interest with one providing an immediate quote.

A considerable amount of advice and information exchange between some of the interested parties and the Tree Warden took place whilst drawing up the overall proposal and led to its refinement, e.g. regarding appropriate survey methods.

1.2 Digital Mapping
One key deficit quickly became clear. It is not possible for interested suppliers to provide accurate quotes without same basic facts, e.g. how many trees there are or who owns what land within the parish.

As there is little point in spending money to collect data that cannot then be acted upon, the first step is to contract a digital mapping supplier to identify:

- Parish land owned by the Council, including Crown land
- land not owned by the Council but over which it has some influence regarding its use.

One of the interested suppliers, not required to be VAT-registered, has provided a quote of £1448.08 for the parish-wide provision of digital land ownership mapping. At least one other quote will be sought, e.g. by contacting Action in rural Sussex for suggestions, as they will be supporting Neighbourhood planning.

It should be possible for the results of this mapping to be downloaded onto Parish Online thereby making it available to approved users of the Council's Parish Online account. The appended Digital Mapping Toolkit by the National Association of Local Councils reports on

the benefits of digital mapping not only to Neighbourhood Planning but also to managing local assets, including trees (pp12-18).

Advice is now required regarding whether or not downloading onto Parish Online is possible and, if so, how and by whom ?

(2) Quotes for Tree Works

2.1 TPO Line of Robinia (false acacia) trees – bottom Michel Dene Road

One of the residents on Gore Farm Close has raised concerns three times to Council over the past few years about one of these trees as, in their opinion, a dead bough from the southern most tree in the line presents a risk of being windblown on top of the conservatory in the back garden. This resident had paid for remedial works to a nearer tree overhanging the garden at some point in the past, although it is unclear whether planning approval was ever sought to do so. Early last May, Climpson Brothers inspected the trees reporting that whilst no obvious disease was present, there is deadwood at canopy level, some of which, in their opinion, should be removed for health and safety reasons due to the road and private/commercial properties beneath them. Climpson remembered giving the Council a verbal quote for similar works 4 or 5 years ago.

The tree in question actually overhangs the rear garden of the neighbouring cottage. Now that these trees are in leaf it does appear that said bough is dead.

Following Council approval, two quotes were obtained by the Tree Warden for removal of dead wood from all seven trees in order to promote canopy growth as well as to manage any health & safety risk:

(A) £1512 inc VAT
(B) £672 in VAT.

The reasons for the variance are the perceived need or not for:

- a Highways Authority licence to install Stop & Go traffic management
- a MEWP (mobile elevated work platform) or cherry picker.

The Council budget allocation to trees for the year is £150.00 (half the previous year's allocation). An estimate of costs associated with the parish survey and management plan is not yet known. The line of trees in question has not been assessed by a professional tree inspector. ***The Tree Warden, therefore, recommends that:***

- *the Council writes to the resident, explaining its limited resources, to suggest that they approach their number to ask for the bough to be removed subject to planning approval.*

The Tree Warden would appreciate the Council:

i. informing him what roads and RoWs it is responsible for in the parish.
ii. whether it has had professional inspections of trees aligning such routes carried out previously and, if so, by whom, and with what resulting action, if any.
iii. considering – following the result of the inspections to be carried out via the planned survey – allocating budget for annual tree inspections alongside a contingency fund for any necessary remedial works.

Currently, this is particularly relevant to Ash trees in the parish because of Ash Dieback. The above NALC reports that "Around 6 people a year are killed by falling tree or falling branches. Around 55 people a year are injured." and that "Witley Parish Council, Surrey, had to meet the costs of a £500,00 claim due to failings in its inspection process."

2.2 Greensward Trees
Two quotes, one of £1140 inc VAT and one of £1008 inc VAT, have been passed on to East Dean Greensward Ltd. for remedial and other recommended works to a number of trees on the green. The Residents' Association will discuss funding a quote at its July meeting.

Note to Council - on inspection of all trees on the Greensward with a local tree surgeon, there is very clear evidence of historic and continuing damage to many tree trunks caused by strimming (photos available on request). ***The Tree Warden recommends*** *amending the contract specification with the provider to ensure, when strimming, that no contact is made with the trees*. Both above quotes include removing a small amount of turf from around the base of all young trees and then applying mulch.

(3) Updating Records

3.1 TPOs
Records available are contradictory, incomplete and out of date. With helpful assistance from a previous tree warden, the current volunteer is gradually checking TPO sites on the ground so that:

- a spreadsheet can used to record ongoing developments for the Council
- the current SDNPA map can be corrected
- updated information can then be shared with WDC, ESCC and the SDNPA.

3.1 DED
ESCC action and reporting back to EDFPC regarding the number of DED-infected English Elm trees in the parish and how the dedicated officer is managing them is inadequate and unreliable. ***The Tree Warden suggests that Council approve his requesting that Antony Becvar, the DED Officer, report back to EDFRA via the Tree Warden:***

- *on the current situation by providing uptodate information on the current number & exact location of infected Elms in the parish, when they were confirmed as infected, when they were removed and if/when replanting took place*
- *every 6 months on any Elm trees reported to him as possibly having DED, the date on which ESCC inspection of said tree will take place, the date by which the tree will be removed, if infected, and confirmation that the tree has been felled.*

(4) Watching Brief

Does Council believe Tree Warden time spent keeping an eye on ongoing developments at the listed sites below is worthwhile:

- *Crowlink Place – roadside trees*
- *Crowlink Corner – trees bordering red line of recently refused planning application*
- *Gilberts Drive – tree planting for landscaping: what are the precise conditions to be met ?*

Peter Williamson
Tree Warden – East Dean & Friston Parish
27 May 2019