

Tree Warden Input for Parish Council Meeting

3 October 2019

(attached are relevant abstracts from Parish Council meeting minutes)

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

(a) Quotes for the digital mapping of areas of land within the parish of a big enough area in order to identify boundaries and contact details of owners.

The sole quote received is the one previously reported of £1,448.08.

AiRS has recently suggested a digital mapper that it uses and suggestions have also been requested from the National Association of Local Councils, publisher of the Digital Mapping Toolkit. At the July Parish Council meeting, decision-making about digital land ownership mapping was referred to the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group. However, this group is not yet fully functioning.

As it's proving difficult to identify suitable providers, would it be acceptable to the Parish Council to obtain two rather than three quotes for comparison ?

The Parish Clerk has been informed by Chris Mewse, Parish Online Team, GeoXphere Ltd., that it will be possible to download the resulting data onto East Dean & Friston Parish Council's Parish Online digital mapping account. This would be a manual process that would need to be done by GeoXphere and would be free of charge if a one-off. The best format for the data would be an ESRI Shapefile.

It would be useful to know whether the Parish Council intends to use its Parish Online account in the future, e.g. for neighbourhood planning, as the digital mapper will need to know how to format the data produced.

(b) Quotes for Survey, Report & Management Plan

As the quote already received to conduct an i-Tree Eco survey was viewed at full Council Meeting in June this year as prohibitively expensive in relation to Parish Council budget available, financing this option will depend upon contributory funding from sources other than the Residents' Association, as any contribution from the RA is unlikely to be significant enough.

For this to be affordable, the Tree Warden seeks the Parish Council's approval to approach the Davies-Gilbert Estate, the National Trust and the SDNPA as significant landowner/land managers within the parish for a joint funding contribution bearing in mind that the survey report and management plan will presumably be of interest and value to them. If approved, could the Council suggest who to contact ?

In response to the Tree Warden issuing a call in August for expressions of interest in a survey by a professional arboriculturalist, one quote of £1900 (no vat) has been received from a local arboriculturalist. As this option is smaller scale, it incurs less expense.

(2) DED

The Planning Committee decided at its June meeting that subsequent reports on this will go to full council.

In the Tree Warden's opinion, the service provided by ESCC has not been fit for purpose and may even be contributing to the continuing spread of DED within the parish – this an opinion voiced by tree surgeons and other tree wardens. Although the Parish Council

recently decided to make up for the shortfall in subsidy available to tree owners agreeing to the removal of infected trees from their properties, it is the timing of their removal that is critical to preventing further spread. ESCC has claimed for some time that it cannot guarantee timely removal due to financial cutbacks. The County Councillor has been approached by a parishioner on this issue.

The Tree Warden has so far been unsuccessful in securing agreement that the Tree Health Officer at ESCC will report back to the Parish Council via the Tree Warden on DED reports and cases for monitoring purposes. He has subsequently emailed Robert Ainslie, Development Manager at the SDNPA, to ask whether, in light of the SDNPA's plans to invest in a sector base at the Seven Sisters, it would consider taking over from ESCC to provide an effective DED service from there into the parish

The Tree Warden:

- ***proposes to include information about DED in the above bulletin***
- ***requests the Committee's approval to submit a Fol request should his attempts to establish a monitoring mechanism directly with the Tree Health Officer not, in the end, succeed***

(3) Tree Works on the Greensward

The Residents' Association has agreed to fund the quote of £1008 inc VAT submitted by the Climpson Brothers. The work should be carried out in late Summer/early Autumn.

***Peter Williamson
Tree Warden – East Dean & Friston Parish
September 2019***

Abstract from Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting - Thursday 7th March 2019

C.722 TREES IN MICHELDENE ROAD

The council considered Report 6, with an annexed map of Tree Preservation Order areas in the parish. These included the line of false acacia trees near the entrance to Michel Dene Road, on the eastern verge behind Gore Farm Close. Much dead wood could be seen in the canopies, some overhanging the road and adjacent buildings. It was recommended that the dead wood be removed for health and safety reasons. The ownership of the land on which the trees stood had lapsed to the Crown and the trees were effectively unmanaged. It was therefore proposed that the parish council should undertake the work. Members agreed that the Tree Warden should be authorised to obtain quotes with a view to work being carried out at the end of July.

RESOLVED – That the Tree Warden be authorised to obtain quotes for removing dead wood from the false acacia trees in Michel Dene Road.

Abstract from Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting - Thursday 4th April 2019

C.732 BUSINESS IN PROGRESS

d) Report of the Tree Warden – (i) the Tree Warden had obtained quotes for work to the trees in Micheldene Road, as requested, for work to be carried out in July; (ii) the Warden also recommended that a digital map of the parish be prepared both as a resource for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and for general management. This proposal was referred to the NPSG for consideration. It was agreed that in the meantime the Warden should have access to the council's Parish Online mapping service. ACTION: KL/SM

Abstract from Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting - Thursday 6 June 2019

C.51 Tree Warden Report

Members considered Report 10 from the Tree Warden.

The Warden stated that his main request was for the council to have a professional tree survey done. This would depend on first assembling information on the extent of land owned by the parish council, and land over which the council might have influence, to ensure that the information obtained could be acted upon, e.g. by planting more trees where appropriate. Private residential properties would not be included. One of the interested suppliers, not required to be VAT-registered, had provided a quote of £1,448.08 for the parish-wide provision of digital land ownership mapping. It would be helpful if major land ownerships bordering the parish could also be included. Ideally the data should also be downloadable onto the Parish Online mapping service to which the council subscribed **[ACTION: KL to check with Ordnance Survey]**. In discussion, members noted the complexity of land ownerships in the parish, particularly on the Downlands Estate, but agreed that the information could be valuable and that further quotes should be sought **[ACTION: NPSG to seek recommendations from Action in Rural Sussex]**.

The second phase would be a professional tree survey based on the land known to be relevant to the council, and this would give a full sense of the value of what was growing to the community. However, the cost would exceed the budget of £14,500 for the NPSG in the current year, even though grants might be obtained. The Residents' Association would consider support. It was agreed that the NPSG be invited to consider this further and make any recommendation for expenditure to the council **ACTION: NPSG.**

The Warden recommended certain tree works, as follows:

a) TPO line of Robinia (False Acacia trees) – a resident had complained several times about one of these trees near the Micheldene Road entrance to the Downlands Estate having a dead bough overhanging a neighbouring garden and possibly placing her own property at risk. There was also dead wood in the canopy. The trees were on Crown Estate land, and therefore not maintained. There appeared to be no public safety issue as the affected branches overhung private property. The cheapest quote obtained was £672 incl. VAT which exceeded the budget of £250 for tree maintenance in the current year. Members agreed that the resident should be advised, in view of these limited resources and the fact that the council had no liability in the matter, to negotiate with neighbours to have the work carried out privately. **ACTION: KL**

b) Ash Dieback - it was recommended that the council ensure that any ash trees for which it might have responsibility should be monitored, owing to the safety hazard potentially caused by this disease. Members agreed

c) Trees on the Greensward – there was evidence of some trees having been damaged by strimming, and the council was recommended to contact its contractor to ensure that no contact was made with the trees when strimming. In addition, the Greensward Company would be advised to undertake remedial work to include removing a small amount of turf from around the base of all young trees and then applying mulch. **ACTION: KL**

The Warden advised that other matters he had raised could be referred to the Planning Committee for consideration. Members thanked the Warden for his comprehensive report.

RESOLVED – To note the report of the Tree Warden and take action as discussed.

Abstract from Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting - Thursday 1 August 2019

C.81 Dutch Elm Disease: felling subsidies

The council considered Report 14 and noted the withdrawal of East Sussex County Council's felling subsidy for householders removing infected trees. No action had been taken to fell trees on highway land alongside the Twitten (Footpath 25 from Upper Street to Friston Church) and as a result the disease had spread into adjacent gardens. [Note: Cllr Hill declared an interest as his garden was affected]. The parish council had assured residents that it would try to keep services going during austerity, and members agreed it should do so in this case, making good the budgetary shortfall from reserves if necessary, i.e. the parish would pay 50% of the cost instead of the current 25%, provided that householders took prompt action. Householders would be free to use any contractor. The revised policy would be publicised, the Tree Warden notified and householders contacted where cases were identified. **ACTION: KL to contact the Tree Warden/ MK to publicise.**

RESOLVED - That the parish council should increase its subsidy for the felling of diseased elms in private gardens from 25% to 50% forthwith, using money from reserves if necessary.

C.83 Reports

The following items were discussed:

g) Fund Raising – (iii) Dutch Elm Disease – Cllr d'Urso would also research any sources of funding for tackling this disease.