

Report on Potentially Dangerous Trees

In Spring 2019 a report had been received via the Tree Warden relating to concern about a dead Oak tree in the verge adjacent to the corner of the Rattlesden Road allotment gardens. The Clerk reported the matter through Suffolk County Council Highways "Report a Problem" website (Ref: 00237523), and an automatic response was been received confirming that the Highways Team would investigate the report and make a decision on any action which may need to be taken, and by when.

For the purposes of making an assessment of the likely cost of works which would need to be funded, a quote was obtained from a local tree surgeon, indicating a cost of £600.

It had been reported by the Tree Warden that that it was dangerous and a quote from a local tree surgeon was obtained advising that to make the tree safe it will be about £500 [Dans written quote will follow]

At its April meeting the Parish Council was asked to authorise the likely cost of any works which would need to be undertaken in order that any contractors could be instructed at the earliest opportunity in the event that SCC Highways ask the Parish to undertake the work, or bear the cost of the works. The substantive proposal not having been carried, the meeting agreed to await advice from Suffolk County Council on action or works required.

No report was forthcoming from SCC, other than to advise that it took the view that the responsibility for the tree lay with the Parish Council.

Cllr Edmondson's September Allotments portfolio report identified two Parish trees which it was considered required work (see **Appendix 1**) in respect of a dead crown in the Oak Tree, and Ash dieback in another tree. Cllrs discussed the Parish Council's obligation to undertake work to the trees identified to undertake works to the trees identified and, the substantive proposal to authorise the cost of works not being carried, agreed that further information should be sought by the Clerk.

The Clerk and Cllr Edmondson have confirmed that the Parish Council has a responsibility under the management policy (5 f & G) for:

- Carrying out/commissioning an paying for all repairs to hedges, fences, gates, sheds, water supply; and
- Commissioning and paying for one off items of capital expenditure e.g. tree maintenance, new fences/gates etc, drainage.

The agreement makes further provision under items 12 and 13 that

- Any surplus generated by rents for the allotment and the other Parish lands should be held in the general parish reserve account, subject to an upper limit of £500. This surplus should be earmarked for costs resulting from the council's responsibility for maintaining and improving infrastructure on the allotment sites.
- Any income above this limit should be made available to fund other Parish Council activities.

The allotments account currently has a balance of £954.13. Of this £452.24 was recently credited back from Hudson Electricity which had erroneously withdrawn funds by Direct Debit. The sum withdrawn had already been refunded under the Direct Debit Indemnity Scheme. These funds could be used towards the cost of works to the trees.

The Parish Council budgeted £1100 in 2018.19 (earmarked funds) and a further £500 in 2019.20 budget, so there is a total of £1600 in earmarked reserves allocated to tree maintenance.

The financial regulations (11.h) require the Parish Council to strive for 3 quotes for works under £3000.

Quotes currently received on the works identified have been:

- **April 2019** – Dan Brown
£500 [Dans written quote to follow]
- **August 2019** – Further quote sought, awaiting advice
- **September 2019** – Josh Parry –
T1 is a mature oak which has large dead limbs throughout the crown mainly over rattlesden road. The tree should have major deadwood remove. With its location roadspace would be required.
Cost £550 plus vat.

T2 is a early mature ash located also on the roadside. The tree is Ivy clad and has some large dead branches over the road. This tree should have the ivy severed and deadwood removed.
Cost £150 plus vat.

T3 is a mature Ash located to the side of the allotments. The tree has large deadwood over the allotments which should be removed.
Cost £175 plus vat.

Taking into account the risk that dead wood may drop during autumnal storms, the Clerks advice is to proceed with undertaking the works to the trees to make them safe.

Recommendation:

The Parish Council authorise up to £1000 plus VAT to cover the cost of an inspection by a qualified tree surgeon/arboriculturalist and any works identified in the inspection report as necessary.

Relevant Minutes:

19.04.11

A written report (*circulated*) on potentially dangerous trees. Further information reported from the Tree Warden indicated that a significant amount of wood had come down from the crown of the tree.

11.2 Proposal: Cllr Youngs

That the Council authorise up to £600 to undertake any necessary work to the Oak identified at the north east corner of Rattlesden Road Allotment Gardens in the event that Suffolk County Council determine that the Parish is responsible for bearing the cost of any works to the tree to make it safe.

The substantive proposal having not been carried, the meeting agreed to await advice from Suffolk County Council on any action or works which might be required to be undertaken to the trees.

19.09.5.2

5.2 A written report from Cllr Edmondson (**Report DPC.19.09.01** *circulated*). Cllrs discussed the Parish Council's obligation to undertake works to the trees identified and agreed that further information should be sought by the Clerk. The meeting noted that tree T2 identified on the roadside adjacent to the allotments was not a Parish Tree and asked the Clerk to report this to Suffolk County Council.

The substantive proposal below

The Parish Council authorise up to £1000 plus VAT to cover the cost of an inspection by a qualified tree surgeon / arboriculturalist and any works identified in the inspection report as necessary. The Parish Council to approach the Allotments Trustees requesting that the charity make a contribution to the cost of the any work to be undertaken.