

To Councillors: J Aldridge, A Baker (Chairwoman), S Compton, M Gemmell Smith (Vice-Chairman), A Layland, S McGregor, A Read, J Streets, S Sumner.

Notice is hereby given of an Open Spaces Meeting to be held in Rickards Hall on 12 February 2024 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
7 February 2024

To assist in the speedy and efficient dispatch of business members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Council Meetings may be recorded. Any person intending to make recordings is advised to notify the Clerk in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made

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Meeting Papers & Report

1 **Apologies for Absence**


2 **Declarations of Interests, or Predeterminations**


The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If an interest becomes apparent to a member during the course of a meeting that has not been disclosed under this item, the member must immediately disclose it.

3 **Public Questions**

Members of the public, and Members with prejudicial interests on items on the Agenda, may make representations, answer, ask questions and give evidence at this meeting in respect of items on the Agenda. (This is the only opportunity for the public to make a contribution during the meeting.) Both public and Members are limited to three minutes each to speak, and the total time allocated for public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.

4 **To receive and sign minutes of The Open Spaces Committee meetings of 18 September 2023-18/1-5; and 06 November 2023-026/1-5**


 [Open Spaces | 18 September 2023 v.1 - Minutes \(Pages 2023-018/1-5\)](#)

 [Open Spaces | 06 November 2023 v.1 - Minutes \(Pages 2023-026/1-5\)](#)

5 **To receive analysis of income and expenditure to 31 January 2024**

See the *attached paper*./link below which provides a comparisons on last year, current 2023-24 budget, expenditure to 31 January, and a projected year-end; as well as 2024-25 budget. There are some notes also provided on the paper.

Do Members have any questions?

 [Annex 1: 240131 Open Spaces I&E.pdf](#)

6 **To ratify operational decisions for Open Spaces activity**

None.

7 **Correspondence**

To receive at the meeting residents correspondence re Open Spaces matters.

8 **Head Groundsman's Report**

Routine seasonal work continues with:

- Tree and hedge pruning all sites
- Weed treatment
- Maintaining planters through town, including Doggetts barn. and beds in cemetery
- Topping up sunken graves
- Rose pruning

Other activities have included:

The team installed a concrete slab in the cemetery for us to keep our bulk deliveries on. We also extended the road way slightly in front of the skip to hopefully avoid this area getting muddy. (Approved by Committee at its November meeting.)

The team are now well into our winter tree maintenance programme. This covers all sites and will incorporate some larger projects in the millennium wood and at Forge croft allotments.

The new Pump at the Mill Leat has been installed and this feature is now fully functioning.

Due to adverse weather conditions the pitch decompaction didn't take place before Christmas. I am in regular contact with the contractor who will be carrying out said works and as soon as ground conditions allow we will make a start.

I have now carried out the winter tree inspection and any remedial works have been scheduled.

We have taken delivery of a sand and soil top dressing mix that will be used on the more worn areas of the Councils pitches through the remainder of the season. This purchase was made using grant money received from the FA.

The winter headstone check was carried out late last year with any memorials of concern reported and where possible families notified.

8.1 **To consider the replacement of two damaged/vandalised waste bins and the expenditure of up to £1,600**

We have recently had one of the metal bins vandalised in Stangrove Park by the outdoor gym area. Also one of the same kind of bins in the Market Yard Car Park has been damaged for some time now. The cost for replacing these two bins with the new model to match those recently installed in the park is approximately £1,600. (Last one ordered in November was £816 net with large ground anchor).

Do members sanction the purchase for two new style bins to replace the above?

8.2 **To consider additional turfing for cemetery maintenance improvements and the expenditure of £450**

Whilst digging out the footing for our new concrete base we used the majority of the spoil to top up sunken graves in the cemetery. I would like to turf over said graves and also make good around the newly installed base. The price for the turf and topsoil required is £450. This would allow us to make good approximately 50 graves.

Do members sanction these works?

9 **Open Spaces Business**

Update on matters on previous agendas and upcoming activities:

Budget: the Council's full budget was approved in January; Open Spaces budget was confirmed.

Byelaws: the revised and updated byelaws for the Council's open spaces and car parks have now been submitted to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval. Once we receive this, we will look to update signage across the Council's sites.

Dogs on leads consultation results: Following the November meeting which received feedback from the consultation on dogs on Council site, this has been published on the website and

Facebook. (see link below.)

Gardening Competition: Following the success of the previous two years, preparations to start promoting this year's event are in progress. The April agenda will include confirming the categories, closing dates for entries and the awards presentation.

Family summer fun days: We are waiting information on the proposals and costs from SDC for this year's summer play days, this will be include on the April agenda.

Kent FA Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund - To receive an update: the first year (of 6) payment of £3,520 has been received. This has already enabled the order of top dressing (80/30 of sand and soil) to go at the goal mouths and worn pitch areas.

Level 1 Football Grounds Maintenance qualification: Head Groundsman and Assistant, have both passed this course.

Pavilion replacement windows and new electric shutters update: The project for new windows with shutters has been offered to the successful contractor and contract issued. However, in the meantime the Rugby Club asked if the project could be delayed to coincide with the end of its season and some works they are planning in June. The contractor has confirmed that they are able to hold the tendered price, so we will now look to firm-up a date in June.

Rugby Club Minis Rugby Festival: This year's event hosted by the Club will be on **Sunday 3 March**. From a logistics perspective, including parking the Club will be sending out prior to the Festival further information including safe areas to park within Edenbridge. They will also have plenty of volunteers located in the surrounding areas to ensure footfall moves throughout the town. Members of the Council are also warmly invited to attend.

Seesaw replacement, Stangrove Playground: At the September Committee meeting, £2,500 was approved for a replacement seesaw. An order was placed, but transpires that the old base will need to be removed, replaced and some surface repairs. Unfortunately, the contractor was slow obtaining a revised quote to include the grounds work, and was not received in time for this agenda. The revised quote is now ££3,595.65 which is above the approved amount. This will be added to the April agenda to reconsider. It would be possible to consider using the playground reserves in 30-year maintenance plan 2023-24 (£5k budget to move into reserves for such cases); or small projects budget. Lead time for work from order is 10-12 weeks.

Winter Maintenance: Kent Highways has delivered its annual one-tonne salt grit supplies. Another 60 sand bags have also been received from SDC.

🔗 <https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/thank-you-for-taking-part-in-our-dog-fouling-survey/>

9.1 **To receive the Burial Report**

November to January there were no burials or ashes. February there is one burial, and two ashes.

However, the Council office has been busy with several enquiries regarding Grants of Right, researching individual burials and interments, liaising with stonemasons on new Memorials and inscriptions, and updating records. Another project which officers are looking to start is to scan the historic paper records on the Epitaph.

The ongoing memorial health and safety inspections have led to some letters to Grant of Right holders asking them to contact one the approved stone masons to address any potential safety issues, for example leaning stones.

9.1.1 **To receive a further update on memorials in cemeteries which are not compliant with**

the Cemetery Regulations

At the September and November Committee meetings, Committee had considered two requests to allow additional memorials and an extended area. Committee noted previous requests over the years for grander memorials, photos, badges, artificial flowers/plants were all declined. Committee agreed to uphold the regulations for Memorials in the cemeteries, and would not amend its policy and regulations. (These rules are in line with the guidance from the ICCM.)

Since September, we have contacted 22 Grant of Right holders who had exceeded the permitted memorial area on grave plots in the Lawn Cemeteries (three and four). In some cases we had no new contact details, and a couple remain outstanding. The majority of people contacted re-instated their memorial areas to comply with the cemetery rules. However, despite being given notice, a small number had not, so in mid January these were made good by staff (as permitted by the regulations). Officers also noted that there had been a significant increase in the number of artificial flowers, which are also not permitted. Notices were displayed in the cemeteries advising that artificial flowers (and other memorabilia exceeding the permitted memorial area) would be removed in due course. The notices were removed, but are in the process of being replaced. This work will not take place until early spring, giving people fair notice and will coincide with spring flowers.

9.1.2

To consider additional signage in the Cemetery with map and some dos and don'ts, and the expenditure up to £1,500

Following recent concerns raised by some residents, that visitors to the cemeteries were not aware of the rule of no artificial flowers, or the differentiation between the older cemeteries and the lawn cemeteries, the office has looked at potential signage options. Having researched other cemeteries, the Council's regulations are consistent with others including no artificial flowers, and some do provide signage advising of some of the rules. For example, suggested wording and extracts from the regulations book:

"Thank you for making our cemetery a peaceful resting place"

- Glass, pottery or china items are not permitted
- Only natural flowers are allowed to be placed on the graves in a non-breakable container. Flowers will be removed when their appearance has deteriorated
- Fresh flowers may be put in the communal vases provided at the Wall of Remembrance; no other containers or individually dedicated vases are permitted
- The planting of trees, shrubs, bushes is not permitted at Memorials
- Dogs must be kept on leads
- No unauthorised vehicles permitted
- No cycling
- All persons visiting the cemetery should be quiet and show reverence

To be included on notice, are that the full regulations are available from Edenbridge Town Council or on its website. Address and contact details.

There are numerous options.

Dibond signage could be attached to the existing signage (four would be needed).

New purpose signs could be installed.

The costs range from £100 each to £1,500 respectively. Some options have been higher. Another option would be to use the existing posts but replace new purpose designs, or a mixture of all of these. A slightly higher budget would allow for a new purpose notice, plus the replacement of the existing signage with the same branding (using the existing posts).

The above wording and options are examples, Members are asked to consider and approve a budget.

How do Members want to proceed?

9.2

Allotment matters

The Town Clerk and Open Spaces Officer met recently with the Plot Office, Edenbridge Allotment Gardens Association (EAGA). We covered several areas including the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, which we have made some suggested amendments to make it clearer about maintaining the plot area, not to use the areas that boarder the site, and clearance at the end of the tenancy. We also discussed a proposal for a community group project and agreed the Tenancy Agreement could allow for shared plots but to be in the name of up to two people so that there is nominated responsible person(s). See *the attached (confidential) draft Agreement for approval (item 9.2.1)*.

Other items discussed included poly tunnels and small sheds and if this should be incorporated into the Tenancy Agreement or remain as a stand-alone policy. On reflection, as Committee has already approved the policy, I feel it should be an addendum of the Agreement. The site rules were adopted by the EAGA in June 2022, I see no need to change these presently, *(item 9.2.2.)*

I also raised the draft Agreement between the EAGA and the Council, something that Committee had discussed in 2018-19 but the details had not been finalised. This was something that apparently the EAGA was not aware of. I have presented a draft copy to them to look over and provide some feedback *(item 9.2.3)*.

We also discussed a request from a community group wanting to take on a couple of plots. Whilst the principle of this sounds great, there are issues to consider in how to manage groups on the site, who is responsible for the potential vulnerable members of the group and requirements we would expect to see from the group i.e. safeguarding policy, and insurance as the EAGA's insurer would not provide cover so the group would be responsible to obtain its own *(item 9.2.4)*.

We also discussed the fees and how Council agrees its fees in December for 1st January, yet the allotments seem to be a year behind using previous year agreement. I have asked the EAGA to consider if they would be prepared to come inline with the Council's fees policy, effective from 2026. They are considering this.

The insurance for the Swan Lane Allotments (arranged and paid for by the EAGA direct on behalf of the Council and Swan Lane tenants) had not been paid; 2023 fees have now been agreed with EAGA and payment is being processed.

The site itself is extremely well managed by the EAGA, with the help of the groundstaff. The Council is responsible for - the kitchen/mess room and the to the rear the store building. The later has a damaged door which is beyond further repairs. The Buildings Manager will look at options to replace this and will present to Committee to consider at a future meeting.

9.2.1

To receive and approve the updated Tenancy Agreements for the Forge Croft Allotments and Swan Lane Allotments

Since preparing the agenda, propose to consider item 9.2.4 first, before 9.2.1, as this may influence the Tenancy Agreement wording.

Do Members agree to bring forward item 9.2.4?

Item 9.2.1:

As referenced above (9.2) this reflects providing clearer information on what allotment tenants can and can't do. Both the EAGA has had to liaise with tenants regarding unauthorised storage of items (usually none gardening items for example, car engine and

parts, building materials, furniture and general rubbish). Tenants who give up their plots are expected to leave the plot cleared of all items that they used, and cut back and remove old planting - a number of plots are left in an unmanageable condition leaving either the EAGA volunteers or the groundstaff to clear. The amendments proposed are aimed to make this clearer. *(Proposed changes are highlighted on the attached.)*

Changes for the Swan Lane Allotments to reflect similar is also attached.

Do Members support and confirm the updated amended Tenancy Agreements of the Forge Croft Allotments, and the Agreement for Swan Lane Allotments?

- 🔒 Confidential Annex 2 (omitted from public documents):
- 🔒 Confidential Annex 3 (omitted from public documents):
- 🔒 Confidential Annex 4 (omitted from public documents):

9.2.2 **To review the Temporary Structures Policy for poly tunnels and small sheds on allotment plots**

The attached policy was adopted by Committee in February 20022, to be reviewed annually; this should be an addendum of the Tenancy Agreement.

Do Members confirm to continue with the Temporary Structures Policy, and remain under annual review?

- 🔒 Confidential Annex 5 (omitted from public documents):

9.2.3 **To receive and consider the draft Agreement between the Town Council and the Edenbridge Allotment Gardens Association (EAGA) and**

Back in 2018-19 it came to light that there was no formal documentation between the Town Council and the EAGA despite a good long standing arrangement between the both parties.

The volunteers of the EAGA do an excellent job overseeing the plot holders activities, managing the renewals and insurance, as well as organising some events. However, they are volunteers and this is an onerous and sometimes time consuming job. Most people want to tend to their plot and not have to manage the issues that arise with individual plot holders. The EAGA is just three people (I believe) and they manage 130 allotment plots. The Agreement is not supposed to be designed as a rigid document, but to provide clarity for them on their role and the support that the Council provides. For example, where some tenants have become unmanageable Council officers have helped liaise with these individuals. It also provides an guide for future EAGA volunteers.

Advice was taken from Wellers Headley Solicitors and a draft Agreement was prepared. However, for a number of reasons this had not progressed further. When the Town Clerk and Open Spaces Officer met with the Plot Officer recently, this was raised and a draft copy has since been sent to the EAGA to comment on; which we await their feedback. Attached (*confidential document*) is the first draft to consider. Some of the obligations are already reflected in the site rules (*attached under item 9.2.1 with the Tenancy Agreement*) and others are included to confirm the current arrangements.

Members are asked to review the draft Agreement, mindful that the EAGA effectively manages the day-to-day running on behalf of the Council.

Are Members satisfied with initial draft Agreement?

- 🔒 Confidential Annex 6 (omitted from public documents):

9.2.4 **To consider permitting a community group use of two allotment plots at Forge Croft Allotments**

The Town Council and the EAGA has been approached to request use of two plots to support an Community Garden at the Forge Croft Allotments. The proposal is to support an activity for a group of residents from Hever and Four Elms parish. The project aims to help towards improving one's overall health, both physical and mentally. Community gardens can have a very powerful impact on the overall wellbeing of local residents and volunteers, they promote social connections and community engagement as well as fostering sustainable practices and encouraging healthy food habits. The garden would be a space for volunteers to come together, grow their own food, learn about gardening, and promote environmental stewardship. It should be available for all members of the community from children to adult - see the attached paper (*confidential*) from the group with details of their proposal.

The function of allotments already achieves the above, fostering sustainable practices, grow own food, socialise, improve wellbeing and are available to all members of the community of all ages. The proposal suggests the need for a small shed for socialising and seating area. This is already provided at Forge Croft Allotments, and we are not sure how other plot holders feel sharing this area; it would not be appropriate to provide separately on the plots for a group. Other details of the proposal would need to be considered further and if suitable for this site.

The Plot Officer has had several conversations with the lead person of the Group. Issues raised include, management of numbers on the site, responsibility for vulnerable people of the group, and safeguarding issues (and a policy would need to be provided), and insurance. The Group has looked in to their own insurance. The site rules and plot holders responsibilities have also been discussed. In principle, the EAGA are prepared to pilot this initiative subject to the Tenancy Agreement and site rules accepted, and the Group provide clear details on how they propose to manage its members, provide a list of members, and restrict numbers attending at one time, insurance and safeguarding policy. The Town Council also needs to consider if they would permit an exception for none residents and to allow a Group, as has previously been individual lets.

How do Members want to proceed? Do Members support providing plots for this community garden site for Hever and Four Elms parish residents, subject to agreement also by the EAGA? Do Members support to waive the plot fees, or for a one year pilot, or for nominal charge? Or, do Members not support a community garden project at this location?

 Confidential Annex 7 (omitted from public documents):

9.3 **To receive an update on the Annual Works Programme and other approved works** **Annual commissioned works update:**

Annual hedge cutting for Blossoms Park, Recreation Ground, Mowshurst is in the process of being carried out across the Council's sites by the contractor
MYCP Interceptor tank annual empty, December.
Replacement litter bin in Stangrove Park installed

Outstanding - planned for current year 2023-24

Mowshurst car park resurfacing - agreed with Head Groundsman to review February (budget £2,160)

Market Yard car park Repainting bollards - groundstaff agreed to carry out this work rather than pay contractor (to save money in budget, had allowed £1,312)

Cemetery memorials and path repairs, if works not done to c/o funding to reserves (£2,700)

Outstanding - to be moved to reserves for works 2024:

- Doggets Courtyard - Repointing courtyard slabs £890 (10 year maintenance plan) - repair work on 5 sqm of the paving in the vicinity of the flower cart well within the

budget allowed in the 10-year Plan.

- Stangrove Playground - Replacement seesaw, noted above (item 9). Due to a delay in quote and review of expenditure this will be on agenda for April. Budget has £240 surface repairs (10-year) could be used towards the seesaw additional costs
- Line marking Rec East & West car parks - budget £1,652 - works yet to be assessed and commissioned
- Replace hanging baskets, Doggetts Barn - £777
- Tree works - to move unspent budget to allow for future unexpected tree work. Est. £2,160
- Kent Brook stabilisation (Riparian ownership) - 10yearr 2023-24 had allowed £2,160 move for future maintenance works
- Flood bund hedging relay - this will need doing, but is on hold, move budget £1,644
- Marsh Green - replacement of posts - budget £4,276. These are currently not needed and have been replaced as needed - propose move half of budget to reserves
- Repaint bomb shelter - £324
- Closed Churchyard - memorials repairs budget £648
- Bench replacements (replace Eastgate) - £801

Advance note - unplanned works 2024

The perimeter Churchyard wall (south side) along Church Street is going to need 'repointing and repairs'. This will need quoting and scheduling for ideally late spring/summer. Last year we moved £8,530 into reserves for the three stone churchyard walls. Quotes will be provided to the April meeting.

Do Members have any questions? Do Members support the proposed unspent budgeted projects to be moved to reserves for future delivery?

9.4

Vandalism report

Over the past few months there has been quite a bit of vandalism: perspex of notice boards damaged which we have and replaced, twice (£165); damage to waste bins; Recreation Ground playground two play items damaged both were replaced, but since been vandalised again; Stangrove Park had a bench damaged which the groundstaff were able to fix; some graffiti which the Community Warden has cleaned.

Below are requests to consider repeat expenditure for replacement items. (Expenditure for the waste bins have been requested under Head Groundsman report.)

Vandalism budget was was £3,000. Expenditure to date, £3,426.18. Yet to be added, £82 for replacement perspex, streetlighting vandalism to four smashed lights cost £1,750. This putting the vandalism expenditure to £5,184.38.

9.4.1 To approve the expenditure for a replacement button seat for the zipwire, and expenditure of £250 plus vat

The zip wire seat was vandalised during the late summer and replaced, cost for seat, chain and fixings of £367.25 plus carriage costs £25. The replacement for the seat this time will be £25.00 plus vat.

Do Members support replace and expenditure of £250 plus vat plus carriage costs, to provide a new button seat for the zip wire?

9.4.2 To consider replacing the damaged children's sensory rain wheel/spinner and the expenditure of £367.00

The main metal centre section of the sensory rain wheel/spinner for the toddlers section

of the playground was badly dented in the summer and replaced at the cost of £327.00 plus £40 carriage costs. Recently this was attacked and dented again. HAGS had suggested Members may want to consider an alternative item, to fit the same post but unfortunately having looked they do not have a suitable alternative. To replace the damaged section would be the same cost as before. This is a popular item with the young children developing sensory and motor skills through touch and sound. Members have the option to replace or remove this item.

How do Members want to proceed?

9.5 **Hanging Baskets - To approve the budgeted expenditure of £5,797 plus vat, for the 2024 hanging baskets for the High Street and Doggetts Barn**

Amethyst has provided its annual quote for the Spring Flower Baskets for 58 baskets. It is within the budget (£6k); 2024-25 expenditure.

Do members approve the expenditure of £5,797 plus vat, for the 2024 hanging baskets?

9.6 **South and South East in Bloom 2024 - how many categories would Members like to enter this year**

Last year the Town Council entered the South and South East In Bloom which is part of Britain in Bloom with annual competitions across the counties of Kent, Surrey, East & West Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, East & North Dorset and East Wiltshire. Each year entries participating from Villages, Parishes, Towns, Cities, Coastal Towns, Town & City Centres, Urban Communities and Business Improvement Districts. The judges/assessors visit communities and awards are presented to recognise the entries achievements. Last year the Town Council entered two categories for the first time and was delighted to receive two Silver Gilt Awards (just a few points off Gold) for the Council's Cemeteries and Stangrove Park. Attached is a list of the categories and entry fees. We propose to re-enter the small cemeteries and park categories. In addition to enter the Millennium Wood in to small conservation area.

Do Members support entering its sites in to South and South East in Bloom, and the total expenditure for three entries of £215?

 Confidential Annex 8 (omitted from public documents):

9.7 **Site visits: to confirm dates for the 2024 visits**

Members of the Committee visit the sites at least three times yearly. It is proposed that from this year we focus on two or three sites per visit, selected by the Open Spaces Officer and Head Groundsman. This year's visits are proposed for (though are subject to change):

April - Monday 8th, 11.00 am
July - Tuesday 2nd - 11.00 am
September - Thursday 5th - 11.00 am

Members are asked to note these dates and confirm direct to the Open Spaces Officer their attendance. Details of sites and meeting location will be advised in advance of the meeting.

10 **Streetlights maintenance plan and works update**

10.1 **Update 2023-24 works programme**

The budget for 2023-24 was £25k. An update was provided at the November meeting including the additional 30 lights being replaced for 30 LED funded partially by a reserves movement and a UK Power Networks refund. Members had already approved a budget

overspend to facilitate the LED upgrades.

2023-24 programme:

Columns: 241 (Swan Lane), 244 (Victoria Road); and the two pole boxes 81 and 82 (Hilders Lane) have been replaced. 137, 138 and 139 Mill Hill are expected to be completed by end of February.

Total 2023-24 £20,189 planned replacement programme.

10.2 **Update on proposals for 2024-25 replacement programme**

At the November meeting an update on the Council's 245 streetlights was given, noting there was 53 remaining for replacement.

Committee agreed to the proposal for 10 replacement columns, three pole boxes, and the twin set in MYCP. The 30-year Plan has allowed £45k budget. At the time of the meeting, not all costs from UKPN had been received to confirm total expenditure.

11 **10-and 30-year maintenance plans - approval of programmed expenditure**

11.1 **Tree Survey: To approve the expenditure for the two-yearly tree survey of trees on Council sites, £5,090 plus vat**

Quaife Woodlands have provided the cost for the two-yearly arboricultural tree survey for sites controlled by the Town Council. They always provide a detailed inventory survey of all significant trees at the sites listed below, and to include adjacent neighbouring trees only where they present a significant risk or major inconvenience to Council property. They have the necessary plans of the ten sites: Blossom Park, Marsh Green, Edenbridge Cemetery, Forge Green, Forge Croft Allotments, Stangrove Park, Swan Lane Allotments, Mowshurst and the Millennium Wood, Pound Green, and Lingfield Road Recreational Ground, along with the handful of trees in the Market Yard car park. The survey will record pertinent dimensions, species, estimated age, and condition. Each tree is numbered with an aluminium tag fixed with an aluminium nail positioned in the least obvious position and at a height of up to 2 metres or so to minimise any tampering. They will replace missing tags but the numbering of them will cease to be consecutive. The survey will be conducted from ground level which in the vast majority of cases is entirely sufficient.

This does include sounding zones of potential or actual decay at the base and lower bole of the tree but they do not carry out invasive investigations or take any tissue or soil samples for laboratory analysis. If in the unlikely event that the condition of a tree should require such further investigation or a climbed inspection this will be discussed with Officers first and only proceed with written agreement. Where a tree is identified as having a defect or other feature that constitutes a risk that requires attention they will provide a specification for remedial or preventative works together with a priority. They will provide a separate appendix listing of all such works which can be used for tendering purposes.

They will not investigate the statutory protection status of any tree as in the circumstances, have no doubt Council know of it. The pertinent tree safety guidance document is the National Tree Safety Group publication "Common sense risk management of trees" 2011 – a free download on www.ntsg.org.uk. In summary this reinforces the principle that a duty holder needs only to act in respect of tree safety in a manner that is proportionate and reasonable (page 31).

To allow for approximate number of trees to be around 500, the survey is offered at a fixed fee quotation of £5,090 plus VAT (this is an increase of 5% from the fee of our previous survey). Quaife confirm they are insured to provide professional opinions and public liability

cover, and will supply a copy of insurance schedule. This work would take place April/May 2024.

Do Members confirm Quaife Woodlands to continue as tree survey company and the expenditure of £5,090 plus vat. 2024-25 budget?

12 **To consider hiring Stangrove Park to allow for a children's Fun Fair for two weeks from 24 May to 2 June**

The Council has been approached by a Fun Fair company looking to hire Stangrove park for a small children's fun fair for the spring bank holiday period, ideally for two weeks. The fair would last for ten days and would be trading from 12 noon until 8.00 pm and would require a couple of days before the event for set up and also a day after to dismantle the equipment and dispose of any rubbish. They would provide around 20 attractions and a couple of food units, attractions would be aimed at families and children up to 12 years of age and require only the use of small vehicles (4x4's & vans) to set up thus reducing the risk of damage to ground. They have already provided copies of insurance certificates and would provide other paperwork including risk assessments, test certificates and first aid certification.

They have visited the site and said that their vehicles would fit through the gates with no need to remove. They are aware that wet weather can be an issue and have sufficient boarding the can put down.

We have obtained one reference from the operations manager of a shopping centre in Hemel Hempstead and are awaiting a second reference.

The fees and charges for circus and fairs has not been reviewed since 2019, when it was £763.45 (£636.21 net, £127.24 vat). There is also no confirmed deposit fee, though in the past Members have said suitable significant amount.

Attached as confidential papers are the company's details and references.

How do Members want to proceed? If supporting, how much do they want to set the weekly hire fee and deposit?

- Confidential Annex 9 (omitted from public documents):
- Confidential Annex 10 (omitted from public documents):

13 **News Release**

14 **Date of next meeting - 15 April 2024**