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| Meeting Date: | 25th March 2020 |
| Report Subject: | Policy for Trees |
| Contact: | Clerk/Chairman |

Ref: 25 – Tree Maintenance

1. Each year a budget will be allocated for tree work after taking account of the Council's experience in the recent past years. Spending from the budget will be authorised by the Parish Council in advance of any work being undertaken except in the case of urgent work (for example dangerous trees following storm damage) which for amounts not exceeding £1,000 will be authorised by the Clerk under the Council's Financial Regulations.
2. An appropriate tree specialist will be appointed by the Parish Council before 31 March 2020 and once every three years thereafter. The specialist will carry out an audit of all trees situated on land owned by the Parish Council and will submit a report to the Council categorising the results of the audit work as follows:

Category 1 – Trees in such condition that they require urgent attention because they are considered dangerous and could potentially cause damage or injury. Early consideration will be given to the need to isolate the trees in question by cordoning them off. Work on Category 1 trees will, once reported, always be attended to promptly, using delegated authority if necessary.

Category 2 - Trees not in Category 1 condition but which nevertheless require attention to prevent them causing damage or injury. This work will be carried out using a programme of works agreed by the Council with the Tree Specialist and with the Council's Contractor employed to carry out the work.

Category 3 – Those trees requiring routine work. These works will be carried out subject to available budget.

Category 4 – Those trees requiring no work.

3. The Parish Council may, from time to time, receive requests from residents (usually living adjacent to land owned by the Council) for tree work to be undertaken by the Council. If the work has not been recommended as a result of the Tree Audit it is unlikely to be work that is essential either for the health of the tree or the safety of the public. It may, nevertheless be work the resident considers should be undertaken and in this situation the Council will seek advice either from its Tree expert or from BCP Council. If, as a result, it is found the work is needed to prevent a legal nuisance, such as an obstruction of a footpath or damage to a building, the Parish Council will take the necessary corrective action. It should be noted that legal nuisance does not cover overhanging branches (which may be removed by the complainant), right to light or bird mess from nearby trees. The Parish Council will not assume responsibility if there is found to be no legal nuisance.

4. If any resident living adjacent to land owned by the Council wishes to undertake work to cut back branches on Council owned trees that overhang their garden they may do so at their own expense provided that no critical damage is done to the tree itself.
5. The possibility of planting of new trees will be considered by the Council when setting its annual tree budget. Where trees are removed as a result of a Tree Audit or following storm damage or for any other reason consideration will be given to planting a suitable replacement.

Notes:

- Any reference to Trees is to be read as including reference to branches
- If any trees are the subject of protection under a Tree Preservation Order the Council will secure the necessary permissions before any work is undertaken.