

# **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council**

**Full Council 10/02/2022**

## **Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath**

**Agenda item 21/118 4: To RESOLVE to authorise Ridge & Partners to commission Option 2 in the quote (Appendix 2) from Aspect Arboriculture at a price of £13075 +VAT.**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Preapp report for the Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath indicated that (among other reports) WBC would expect to receive the following arboricultural information as part of the full planning application:

- Tree survey in accordance with BS5837:2012
- Tree constraints plan
- Arboricultural implications assessment
- Details of proposed tree protective fencing, including type, layout (on a plan), informed by the above assessments
- Indicative landscaping proposals

Our project manager, Steve Watts (Ridge & Partners), obtained a quote (Appendix 1) for this work from Aspect Arboriculture, with whom they generally work. As the figure seemed somewhat high to the Working Party, it was not included in the items put forward for agreement at the last full council meeting. Further information was sought.

A meeting was arranged between the Clerk, 4 members of the working party, John Thomas (Tree officer at WBC), Steve Watts and Richard Curtis (Aspect Arboriculture).

After some discussion it was ascertained that the quote covered all the above work and also some additional work that hadn't been specified in the Preapp. John Thomas, however, indicated he would prefer to see this additional work in the planning application. Richard Curtis explained that the additional work would be required both for detailed design (after planning application approval) and for future maintenance planning and would be more expensive if carried out at a later date (eg. revisiting all the trees to tag). He was asked to produce a breakdown of the costs which showed how much more it would cost to do the additional work if commissioned at a later date. Appendix 2.

The additional work is:

- Tree tagging – this identifies and tags each tree, would be used on all the plans and make future identification a simple task rather than trying to match trees to older plans
- Visual Tree Inspection - includes diagnosis of structural defects, evaluation of significance and is presented as a schedule of recommended tree works and plan corresponding to location and priority of risk.

The Working Party met on 28<sup>th</sup> January to discuss this letter. After some debate we concluded that it made sense to commission all the work now:

- It will help to providing a very robust planning application that shows WBC we are serious about the project and doing a good quality job
- There is at least £2k saving overall and possible twice that
- Englefield Estate has already indicated that this type of work would be expected by them. At a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021, it was agreed that all parties expected SMPC to be responsible for the maintenance of the path. Englefield additionally stated that the increased use of the cycleway/footpath (compared to the current lightly-used, informal permissive path) will increase the risk factor and the subsequent maintenance expense and that the estate would expect SMPC to be involved in that. This work will show them that we listened and will be the basis for the future management of risk.