



**Galway
University
Hospitals**

Ospidéal na h-Ollscoile Gaillimh
UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL GALWAY
MERLIN PARK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

**General Manager's Office
University Hospital Galway
Newcastle Road
Galway
Tel: (091) 544200**

9th August, 2023

REF: PQ 35902/23

RE: To ask the Minister for Health further to Parliamentary Question No. 707 of 27 June 2023, if he will provide the public procurement rules that allow a tree-removal company which has been offered a substantial commercial contract by a State entity to remove 70 trees from Merlin Woods, Galway can have its identity concealed under the pretext of protecting its privacy rights; the name of the contractor; if an independent arborist assessment was carried out; if so, the name of that company or individual; the names of the other contractors who offered quotes for the works and the sums involved; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Neasa Hourigan

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply to you directly in the context of the request for information referenced above.

In response to your query, the most competitive quote for these works was provided by an approved Contractor. We received two quotes for the proposed works. We are not obliged to give the name of this Contractor. I am not sure what the purpose of this would be or serve as they conducted the works on behalf of the HSE as requested.

This work was completed as part of normal annual maintenance work within the grounds of Merlin Park hospital. The HSE engaged a Tree Surgery contractor to remove trees that were decaying and at risk of falling and also those of particular concern affected by Ash Dieback Disease. These trees were adjacent / overhanging on walkways and in a small number of cases, too close to buildings, therefore in the interest of public health and safety, a small number of trees and scrub within the campus grounds that were encroaching onto footpaths and too close to buildings were also trimmed back.

Before the works commenced, the HSE ordered 60 replacement trees, which have now been planted within the Merlin Park. Approximately 70 trees were removed. This work was done in conjunction with the MPUH Grounds Maintenance Team, which is led by a qualified Horticulturalist. An independent arborist assessment was not carried out.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Kane
General Manager
Galway University Hospitals