

Harrietsham Parish Council

Environmental Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 15th March 2018 at 7:30pm

1. **Present:** Cllrs Dean (Chairman) and Stanley, Mrs S Amos and Messrs D Oversby and M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
 2. **Apologies:** Cllr Foster **Members of the public:** None
 3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (11th January 2018) were signed (without amendment) at the January Council meeting. A second set was signed for our records. (The meeting of 22nd February was cancelled due to lack of agenda items.)
 4. **Disclosures:** Cllr Dean declared a potential interest in any matters relating to Woodlands Walk, as she lives nearby. However, she has dispensation previously agreed.
 5. **Woodlands Walk update:** Cllr Dean informed the meeting that
 - (a) The fencing work previously ordered had now been done. The fence posts themselves had protective guards fitted to help them withstand any over-enthusiastic strimming. She also noted that the contractor had kindly fixed a couple of broken rails at Percy the Pilgrim at no extra charge.
 - (b) The aerator, together with the other two privately-supplied ones, had been installed and seemed to be working well – we now wait with interest to see how effective they are.
 - (c) The contractors who installed the aerators had also re-fixed the duck house at no extra charge.
 - (d) Hawkhurst Fish Farm had given a date of 23rd March for the second application of chalk to the lake. In response to a question from Cllr Stanley, it was noted that this would fulfil our contractual obligations to the supplier, and the whole issue could be reviewed next year.
 - (e) The island in the middle of the lake required cutting back and tidying up. A local resident had kindly offered to do this for us, which the Committee was happy to accept that this should be done on behalf of the council.
 - (f) In order to assist with the health of both the water and the ducks, we had been advised to get a “Do not feed the ducks” sign. Cllr Dean has sourced an appropriate template, and obtained a quote for its production. At £35, it was felt that this was a worthwhile investment, and procurement should proceed under delegated powers. We will then need to find someone to put it up, on a post, for us.
- The Amenity Manager reported that the TPO for the tree work required following the Woodland Walk tree survey had been granted, and work on the one tree that we had decided to deal with was scheduled for 22nd March.
6. **Amenity Manager update:** The Amenity Manager informed the meeting that
 - (a) The amenity contracts finish at the end of this month, and the new ones come into force on 1st April. One contractor had contacted him to check for any changes, (and were told of the plans to plant bulbs in the war memorial garden), and he was meeting with another on Monday to confirm the requirements.
 - (b) Although he had done some research into local mole-catchers for the West Street Green, he had yet to contact any, but he would aim to do so in the next few days.
 - (c) He had written to a local resident who has a shared boundary with Woodlands Walk, and was awaiting a reply.
 - (d) The Cllrs Sams had arranged for the Kent Field Club to visit Teers Meadow and conduct a wildlife survey. This was due to happen on the 19th May, after which we will, hopefully, have a better idea of what’s on the land.
 7. **West Street stream – Irises:** We had been contacted by a resident concerned that the irises in the stream were, once again, threatening to multiply and block the stream. The Amenity Manager had asked the contractor responsible for the stream behind the green to have a look and offer a price for reducing them by 50%. If this is at a sensible level, we will ask them to proceed, being preferable to asking councillors to don wellies and do it themselves. There was a question as to who actually owns the stream and this is being looked into.

8. **Hanging Basket Competition:** It was agreed that we wished to run the competition again this year (all being in favour). Baskets tend to at their best at the end of July. It was agreed that Cllr Dean would produce the application forms again, and Mr Oversby would arrange a judge. The forms would be available in Network, on the website and Facebook, as well as the post office and surgery. Cllr Stanley volunteered to deliver some by hand, as per last year. The prize would be handed out at the Village Show in September.

9. **Items for future discussion:** Cllr Stanley asked the Amenity Manager to have a look at the hedge round the Glebe Field, which he felt had been damaged, ready to consider at the next meeting.

A question arose as to whether the provision of a safety barrier between the Glebe Field play area and Church Lane was within this committee's remit. It was concluded that because it would be on the pavement, this was a Kent Highways issue.

10. **Date of next meeting** – Thursday 17th May 2018 at 7:30pm in the Parish Office

Meeting closed at 8:25pm.