

Harrietsham Parish Council

Environmental Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 2nd November 2017 at 7:30pm

1. **Present:** Cllrs Dean (Chairman), Allerdyce and Stanley, D Oversby and M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
2. **Apologies:** Mrs S Amos **Members of the public:** None
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (21st September 2017) were signed (without amendment) at the September Council meeting. A second set was signed for our records.
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. **Amenity Contracts:**
 - 5.1 The Amenity Manager provided an update on progress relating to the letting of the new contracts. He confirmed that adverts had run for two consecutive weeks in the Kent Messenger, and that the same advert was now in November's edition of the Downs Mail. These had produced one further enquiry, from a company doing parish council work, based in Nettlestead, making a total of six expressions of interest. He also stated that he has site visits with two contractors arranged over the next two weeks.
 - 5.2 He then went on to say that, in his opinion, there were a couple of minor amendments required to the specifications. The first related to the Wild Flower meadow in the Garden of Remembrance. The specification currently calls for two cuts during the year, but further advice had been received via Mrs Amos, who indicated that only one, in September, is required. The second related to the contract for treating the benches. Currently, it has the same payment terms as the others – ie, equal payments each month over 12 months. However, this particular contract is actually for all the work to be done within a couple of months of the start date. It therefore seems sensible to amend this contract's terms to be payment in full on completion. Both were briefly discussed, and unanimously agreed.
 - 5.3 Other matters relating to the contracts, and associated items, were then discussed.
 - A query was raised as to whether the Benches contract should have included one outside the Post Office. This, it transpired, had been vandalised a while ago, but we were unsure as to whether it had been replaced. The discussion therefore turned to whether we should have one there. It was agreed that the Amenity Manager would have a look to see what (if anything) was still there, and then refer the matter to Council to see if there was a consensus on whether we should have one or not, if necessary.
 - Similarly, the question of the vandalised bench on the Glebe Field arose. The Amenity Manager, in his role of RFO, commented that, so far as he was concerned, there was probably no point claiming on insurance, because when replacement costs were looked into, they were only marginally above the insurance excess. So far as he was concerned, therefore, there was no outstanding finance issue. It was therefore agreed to recommend to Council that the bench be replaced as soon as possible. Proposed Cllr Stanley, seconded Cllr Dean, all in favour.
 - The Amenity Manager was asked if there was any progress on Teers Meadow. He stated that he hadn't heard anything, and it was agreed that the Cllrs Sams be asked if there was any update.
 - There was a general discussion about the allotments, covering a number of topics. At the end, it was agreed that when the new tenancy agreements are sent out, allotment holders should be reminded, perhaps by way of a covering note, that they should ensure that they adhere to the currently agreed process concerning parking their cars in BAM Nuttall.
 - Cllr Dean provided a brief review of Woodlands Walk. The main need at the moment is that one of the duck houses needs refixing to its moorings. Cllr Allerdyce kindly volunteered to borrow Cllr Dean's boat and to have at a go at this. She also reported that Mr Trussler's aerator had been installed, and could already be seen to be making a difference to the water quality in its immediate area.

6. **Tree Survey:** The Amenity Manager stated that he was still awaiting clarification from one of the contractors as to which quote related to which tree, as this would influence the letting of the contract to do the work.
7. **Items for Discussion:** Replacement of two dead beech saplings in the Village Hall car park hedge, where the salt had been spilled. (Mr Oversby)
8. **Date of next meeting** – Thursday 11th January 2018 in the Parish Office

Meeting closed at 8:20pm.

Items for Council:

- If necessary, does the council wish to install a bench outside the post office?
- Recommendation to Council : That the Glebe Field bench be re-instated as soon as possible.