

## Harrietsham Parish Council

### Environmental Committee

#### Minutes of meeting held on Friday 19th November 2021 at 2:30pm

- 1. Present:** Cllrs Dean (chairman), Luck, and Stanley, M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr Dayes, Sharon Amos **Members of the public:** None
- 3. Minutes of the last meeting** (20th September 2021) were approved at the following Council meeting. Another set was signed for our records.
- 4. Disclosures:** None.
- 5. Amenity Contracts (Update):** The Amenity Manager reported that the contracts seem to be progressing reasonably well, although he noted that he is having to chase the contractors more than usual – possibly “contract fatigue”? The contracts themselves are nearing the end, and we would be starting afresh from April next year.

He then raised some specific items that require attention:

- the gate post between the Access Road and the New Burial Ground has rotted through and is very wobbly, possibly being held up by the surrounding vegetation! He recommended getting it replaced. Cllr Luck observed that if one post has gone, then probably so has the other one. The Amenity Manager was asked to get prices for replacing both posts from the incumbent contractor and our usual fencing firm.
  - The map showing what commemorative trees should be in the New Burial Ground and the Garden of Remembrance had been located, and he reported that he was having trouble reconciling this to what was actually in the ground. He had sought assistance from JB’s “tree-man”, who had identified that some were missing, and others, notably the Ash trees, were dead/dying (Ash Die-Back). JB had quoted £320 to do a proper tree survey, with recommendations on how to proceed. It was agreed that we should accept this quote – Proposed Cllr Dean, seconded Cllr Stanley, all in favour.
  - Although most of the verges are looking ok, it was felt that we should have one last cut of the year, so the Amenity Manager was asked to contact Kent Valley to arrange this.
  - It was noted that the hedges had been cut, and were looking good. The contractor had managed to do the top and sides of the hedge between the Burial Ground and the footpath, and one side and most of the top of the parallel hedge bordering the Garden, but it now needed finishing off. The Amenity Manager was asked to contact JB to arrange this.
- 6. Renewal of Open Spaces contracts:** The Amenity Manager reported that the two adverts had been placed in the KM, and that these had resulted in two new contractors requesting copies of the specifications. A total of 7 copies had now been sent out. Essentially, we are now waiting for January 7th, when we should have received the tenders, and these could be evaluated.
  - 7. Teers Meadow:** The Amenity Manager reported we now had a padlock on each of the three large gates into Teers Meadow – the combination being the same as the padlock on the main gates off the road. He had also now fixed the signs concerning the cows, and keeping dogs under control, at each entrance – and noted that we now have 8 cows in residence. They will remain until their owner decide to take them in for the winter. He also noted that we shall shortly have to start making firm plans to spend the lottery money. This will need to include a replacement sign, one from the southern pedestrain gate having vanished.
  - 8. Glebe Field bench:** The Amenity Manager reported that the council had received a letter from some of the residents of Harrisons Drive, asking if the bench that is sited quite close to their homes could be moved to further away. After some discussion, it was agreed that it should be moved to the other side of the field, pretty much opposite the war memorial. The Amenity Manager was asked to seek a price from the incumbant contractor. Prop Cllr Luck, sec Cllr Stanley, all in favour.
  - 9. Woodlands Walk:** A resident had written in, asking if there was any mileage in setting up a “Friends of Woodlands Walk” to assist in monitoring and maintaining the area. After some discussion, it was concluded that with the combined input of the contractor, the Amenity Manager and the residents living adjacent to the

lake, coupled with the fact there is a fairly steady footfall round the Walk, it was felt that a formal body wasn't required, but all residents were encouraged to walk round the area, and report anything untoward that they might find.

- 10. Saxon Place play area:** It was noted that we still haven't heard anything from the management company concerning the land transfer for the existing play area. It was felt that we should enquire as to what is happening, but in the meantime, we should ask our usual consultant to advise us on possibilities for the area. Cllr Dean observed that there is, presumably, nothing to stop us from creating our own play area, which just happens to be directly adjacent to the existing one, and we could then ask the management company to remove their (small) fence. The Amenity Manager concurred that this would probably be possible, but it would still be better to have formal ownership of the whole play area. The question of a multi-sport hard surface area was deferred until we could get Cllr Dayes' comments.
- 11. Recycling:** The Amenity Manager read out the email received from Maidstone Lions regarding setting up an enhanced recycling regime in the village. After some discussion, it was concluded that the obstacles of sourcing, then siting the bins, keeping them tidy, and then finding the volunteers to sort, check and bag up the recycling would probably prove insurmountable. It was also noted that the Lions expected us to deliver the waste, rather than collecting it. This is not, therefore, something that the council wishes to pursue.
- 12. Date of next meeting:** Thursday 20th January 2022 at 2:30pm

Meeting ended at 3:50pm.