

Harrietsham Parish Council

Environmental Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 10th July 2017 at 7:30pm

1. **Present:** Cllrs Dean (chairman) and Stanley, D Oversby, S Amos and M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Allerdyce **Members of the public:** None
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (18th May 2017) were signed (without amendment) at the May Council meeting. A second set was signed for our records.
4. **Disclosures:** Cllr Dean on matters connected with Woodlands Walk, as she lives nearby – form on file.
5. **Amenity Contracts:** The Amenity Manager (AM) reported that he had walked round in the previous week, and thought that everything looked generally ok. Cllr Stanley agreed, but commented that, comparing the New Burial Ground with the Garden of Remembrance, he couldn't be sure that the Garden had been cut as well. The AM said he'd try and have a look in the next day or so. He also commented that the only area that seemed to require attention was the treatment of the various benches, which didn't seem to have been done. He noted that this might be because they were all in quite a bad state, having not been treated at all in the past few years (so far as we could tell), and there might be a need for wholesale replacement..

Discussion then turned to other areas under contract. There is a vacant allotment that needs strimming. C&A have been asked to do it, but, as yet, haven't done so. This may be because they don't know where the key is – Mr Oversby said that Keith Leedham, the nearby holder, should be able to help in that.

The damage to Syd's Tree on West Street Green was discussed. The consensus was that it was unlikely to recover, and should be replaced. The AM will ask the incumbant supplier (C&A) to quote, with a view to having this done later in the year.

The AM again re-iterated that the contracts will shortly be coming up for re-tender. In the case of Woodlands Walk, the algae treatment had been done, and at the time we had acknowledged that it would probably require repeat treatment for the next year or two. However, as it was a specialist supply, he did not feel that it should form part of any new open spaces specification, as it would probably need to be done by the same people who did it last time. This was generally agreed. Mention was also made of the suggestion from a local resident that placing an aerator or two in the lake would also help address the problem. It was felt that, as we have committed to a two or three year programme of treatments, we would wish to see how well the treatments work. The consensus of the meeting was that, as a council, we would not wish to pursue the aerator further, although if private residents wished to place aerators and supply electricity to the units then the Parish Council would have no objection.

6. **Grass mound, west end of Hook Lane Triangle:** The AM had got two quotes from our contractors (the third declining to offer a price). There was some discussion as to whether it needed doing at all, especially as Cllr Dean was still awaiting a response from HIB as to what they want to do, and where a new planter might go. It might not even be in the way at all. The general consensus was that rather than removing it, it would be adequate to just have it strimmed for now. The AM will make the necessary arrangements.

7. **Glebe Field – weedkiller & fertiliser:** The general view was that this wasn't the right time of year to do this task. It ought to be done in spring, at the start of the growing season, so this item should be deferred, probably until next spring, which means April, and would constitute part of the new contract. The new specification should therefore include this as a requirement, and will need to include all necessary health & safety steps, such as fencing off the treated areas as necessary.
8. **Glebe Field – removal of barbed wire:** It was agreed that this should proceed at the quoted cost. The AM will let the contractors know.
9. **Woodlands Walk – replacing post-and-rail fence:** We have received a quotation for £810 to replace 20 bays of the fence around the bottom of the lake. There was then some discussion as to whether we needed to do all of it, as it seemed that there might only be one post and six (or so) rails in need of immediate replacement. The general feeling was that if we replace some, and then someone falls through one that wasn't, then we would be in weak position to justify ourselves from .It was therefore agreed, for H&S reasons, that we should accept the quotation.
10. **Woodlands Walk – tree survey:** The tree survey has been received, and details two trees requiring attention. One is an immediate risk, and should be taken down, whilst the other will require attention in the short to medium term. The concensus was that the report should be accepted in its entirety. Having agreed that, the discussion then turned to whether we seek quotes just do the immediate threat, or should we address both trees (plus a branch leaning against a neighbour's garage) at the same time. Again, there was concensus that we should tackle both, as they will need doing eventually, and it would probably be cheaper overall to do two at the same time rather than the contractor having to come back. The AM will seek to get three quotes on that basis, and then we will need to get planning permission from MBC as all these trees are subject to TPOs.
11. **Hanging Basket Competition:** It was noted that, as yet, we have only had three entries to the competition. Whilst the response is disappointing, there is still a little time, so it was hoped that some more can be drummed up.
12. **Maintenance of Teers Meadow:** The committee noted the progress that Cllr Sams is making in obtaining a grant, and advice, towards the maintenance of the meadow, and we look forward to receiving future updates. It was noted that there is mention of a council contribution of £775, which we take to be our side of a match-funded grant – the RFO will clarify that at the forthcoming F&GP meeting. There was some discussion regarding the lock on the gate into Teers Meadow, which needs to be removed to facilitate our accessing the field. Due to its size and construction, this might not be easy.
13. **Items for Discussion:** None.
13. **Date of next meeting** – Thursday 21st September 2017, at 7:30pm in the parish office.

Meeting closed at 9:15pm.