

Harrietsham Parish Council

Environmental Committee

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 11th September 2019 at 7:30pm

1. **Present:** Cllrs Dean (chairman) and Stanley, M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Dayes and Foster **Members of the public:** None
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (11th July 2019) were signed (without amendment) at the July Council meeting. A second set was signed for our records.
4. **Disclosures:** None.
5. **Amenity Contracts (Update):** The Amenity Manager reported that the contracts seem to be progressing well. He noted that
 - 5.1 We still haven't been able to find any records relating to the tree dedications in the New Burial Ground. We will continue looking, but there is a distinct possibility that these were lost in the hand-over from one previous clerk to another.
 - 5.2 The Glebe Field generally is in good order. The procurement of new play equipment is proceeding well under the guidance of our consultant. It was noted that we had received some £19,724 in S106 money, plus another £10,000 grant. It was proposed to spend the grant first (being solely for new equipment), and to then use the S106 to refurbish some of the equipment and the area generally. Any remaining will need to be ring-fenced in a Restricted Fund for future play area work.
 - 5.3 The medical centre and Church Road verges are fine. There has been an issue with a branch from the hedge behind the Centre growing sideways and breaking through a neighbour's fence. MBC have looked at it, and we expect that they will deal with it when they trim the hedge in the second half of this month.
 - 5.4 Woodlands Walk appears to have no issues, being in good order.
 - 5.5 The benches have all been re-done for the year. They are looking good, although the Amenity Manager noted that in a previous walk-round, he had noted that one of the benches in the Garden of Remembrance looked suspect – he will be going back to take a closer look..
 - 5.6 The war memorial is also looking good.
 - 5.7 Some of the A20 verges have been done, but some are looking quite sorry for themselves, and it was noted that the contractor is obviously doing what they can. Cllr Dean stated that the builders are parking on the verge south-side and Lenham-side of the railway bridge – the council will need to approach Bellways to ask that they ensure the area is made good.
 - 5.8 Teers Meadow – The Amenity Manager reported that the first-choice contractor had dropped out, citing staffing issues. He had therefore reverted to the second-choice, who seemed happy to take it on. However, a couple of questions have come up, being (a) given the large amount of wildlife found on a recent nature walk, do we still want to clear 80%, and (b) given the growth over the year, the contractor would find it helpful to be able to use some machinery. A site-meeting has been arranged for the following week with the contractor and our consultant in order to agree these points, with a view to starting work in early October.
 - 5.9 Saxon Place amenity land – Work has started, and the entire area is now looking a lot better.
6. **“Wild” Roadside verges:** The Amenity Manager has yet to contact the contractors for their general advice, but Cllr Dean stated that she was concerned that the “natural” areas actually would require a lot of managing, so to try to do this for all our verges would probably be impractical. The Amenity Manager agreed, noting that whilst going to Grove Green, he had seen some contractors weeding the (small) “natural” area there – so there is clearly a maintenance demand that we had perhaps not anticipated. He will still ask the contractors for their views.

7. **Percy the Pilgrim:** The area round Percy has now been renovated, and looks much better. Percy himself is still awaiting attention, but the contract has been placed.
8. **Allotments:** The Amenity Manager and Clerk had spent some time at the new allotments, and estimated that they would provide about 14 standard plots. It was intended to mark these out more formally, and decide what watering facilities should be placed where. Currently, to have two 2,400 litre tanks, placed centrally within the area is favourite, but we are waiting for confirmation from MBC that they could reach these when supplying the water. Wherever they go, it will require a concrete base and/or brick pillars to raise the tanks above ground level.
9. **Items for Discussion:** Village Christmas tree.
10. **Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 12th November 2019 at 7:30pm in the Parish Office

Meeting closed at 8:10pm.