

## Harrietsham Parish Council

### Environmental Committee

#### Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 21st September 2017 at 7:30pm

1. **Present:** Cllrs Dean (chairman) and Stanley, D Oversby and M Cuerden (RFO/Amenity Manager)
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Allergyce, Mrs S Amos **Members of the public:** None
3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (10th July 2017) were signed (without amendment) at the July 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:** The Amenity Manager had previously circulated draft specifications for the new contracts. These were considered individually, and were generally found to be suitable. Various minor amendments were proposed, and these are to be incorporated into the drafts, ready for final consideration/approval at September's Council meeting.

There were a couple of major changes, being (a) all mentions of treating benches are to be removed, and a separate specification be drafted purely to cover these. (b) When the specification for the allotments was discussed, the question of the rents currently charged arose. It was agreed by the councillors that the rent should be increased from the current £11 per plot to £13. (c) That when we send out the specifications, we enclose an addressed A4 envelope marked "Tender" to assist the contractors in following the correct procedure. (d) The Amenity Manager stated that he intended to incorporate a summary form for quotes with each specification in order to make subsequent comparisons a little easier.

It was also noted that, at some point, we shall probably need to arrange for some fencing work, as there are several places in which the fencing needs repair.

6. **Tree Survey:** The Amenity Manager updated the group on progress on the Woodlands Walk tree survey. Having contacted several contractors in early August and failed to elicit any response, he had tried again and had two so far. One will be quoting in the next few days, another has expressed a willingness to quote, and a response is awaited from a third. It is hoped that there will be at least one quote to offer to Council in a week's time.
7. **Woodlands Walk Lake:** Cllr Dean reported that following this summer's treatment of the two lakes with Aquaplankton, the privately-owned small lake had been completely clear of algae, whilst our lake was considerably improved. It therefore appears that this does work, and it was agreed that we should proceed with another treatment. Cllr Dean had been in touch with the specialist supplier, and been told that the best time to apply the treatment is February or March, and that the cost this time would be £670/tonne, plus £740 to apply. It was noted that the materials cost is slightly up on the first occasion, but that the application cost has increased substantially, due to an error made last year not being repeated this! It was agreed to propose this to Council for final approval.

Cllr Dean also reported that a near-neighbour wishes to put an aerator in the lake near his property, having been informed that this too would help improve the quality of the lake. The Amenity Manager thought that this had already been agreed by F&GP, but that he would check. In any event, it was agreed that the council would have no objection, so long as it incurred no liability of any sort, (including procurement, running costs or maintenance), and that it could, if necessary, be removed.

8. **Open Spaces Policy:** Cllr Dean had previously circulated a draft Open Spaces Policy, which, it was agreed, seemed to be acceptable. It was agreed to pass it on to Council for discussion.

9. **Teers Meadow:** The Amenity Manager reported that, as RFO, he had been asked to supply financial details for a grant application being submitted Cllr T Sams. If successful, this would then facilitate work starting on the Meadow. Mr Oversby repeated his view that the work required was far-reaching and radical, and that he felt that the Environmental Committee should be more involved in developing the plans for the Meadow.

10. **Items for Discussion:** None.

13. **Date of next meeting** – Thursday 2nd November 2017 in the Parish Office

Meeting closed at 9:30pm.

**Items for Council:**

1. Consideration and approval of each of the Open Spaces work specifications
2. Approval of timescale, advertising process and tender opening/evaluation process as outlined in the Council Briefing notes.
3. Approval of allotment rent increase from £11 to £13 per plot per year.
4. Consideration of Woodlands Walk tree work quote(s), if available.
5. Approval to apply a second treatment to the Woodlands Walk lake.
6. Approval to allow a parishioner to put an aerator in the lake.
7. Consideration and approval of an Open Spaces Policy.