

MEETING OF HARTING PARISH COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of Harting Parish Council to be held
by video link on
Thursday 18 June 2020 at 6.30pm

The Press and Public are welcome to attend.

This meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Coronavirus Act 2020, any members of public wishing to join the meeting should contact the clerk, prior to the meeting at clerk@harting-pc.gov.uk

Trish Walker
Clerk to Harting Parish Council

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Minutes** - to approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14 May 2020.
- 4. Questions from the Public**
- 5. Matters of Urgent Public Importance** – raised with consent of the Chairman.
- 6. Reports from the County and District Councillor**
- 7. Request for an entrance to be placed in a section of fence along the footpath to the School.***(see supporting documents for briefing note)*
The following recommendation is made:
That the Council consider whether to agree, subject to the necessary permissions being in place, to the owner of 2 Jenny Lake Cottage, South Harting removing a section of the Council owned fence along the footpath running from the Street to the School and replacing this with a bridge crossing the stream.
- 8. Tree Update** *(report to follow)*
The following recommendations are made:
 - i. To note the report*
 - ii. To agree which contractor to appoint to erect the deer fencing in the Warren or, if the quote information is not available at the time of the meeting, agree to hold a special meeting to agree the contractor.*
 - iii. To agree that the Council's Woodland & Tree Sub-Committee can utilise the ring-fenced revenue from the timber sales to purchase necessary services and supplies to enable the erection of the fence, protection of regeneration and new planting*
 - iv. To note that the estimated cost of the fencing in the first draft of the Woodland Restoration Budget did not take account of the difficult terrain in the Warren and that there may be a need for the Council to supplement the Tree Council grant by in the region of £5,000*
- 9. Highways and Byways Advisory Committee (HABAC) Update**
To note the minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2020 (attached) and to consider the following recommendations:

- i. that the Council agree that due to the perceived lack of demand for the replacement lighting on the village footpath, and the potential cost in the region of £10k, that the project may not be justified and that a carefully worded article will be placed in the Parish Magazine stating the situation and asking for views.*
- ii. that the Council agree that J K Engineering should be accepted as the contractor to carry out the restoration of the Nyewood fingerpost at a cost of £2035 + vat.*
- iii. that the Council agree the wording on the finial of the new Nyewood fingerpost should be "WSCC" and "Nyewood".*
- iv. that the Council agree an article will be placed in the Parish Magazine to remind parishioners of their responsibility to cut their hedges near footpaths and highways.*
- v. that the Council note the HABAC Terms of Reference have been reviewed and to agree that points 4 and 5 should be combined to read 'HABAC will liaise with the Aims and Objectives Committee to provide input for the Emergency Plan as necessary for flood prevention and the management of extreme winter weather conditions'*

10. Review of the Code of Conduct of the Council (see attached)

11. Review of Council Policies & Procedures

- 11.1. Review of Data Protection Policy** (attached)
- 11.2. Review of IT Security policy for councillors** (attached)
- 11.3. Review of IT Security policy for staff** (attached)
- 11.4. Review of Media and Press** (attached)

12. Local Government Association consultation on a new model Code of Conduct (see supporting documents for briefing note)

The following recommendation is made:

That the members of the Council consider the new model Code of Conduct proposed by the Local Government and pass any comments to the clerk by 9 July to enable a response to be agreed at the July Council meeting.

13. War Memorial Playing Field Insurance Claim (see supporting documents for briefing note)

The following recommendation is made:

To note the report

14. Finance

14.1. To approve expenditure for June 2020

Undisclosed	Clerk & RFO Salary - June	920.26
HMRC	Tax and NI contributions	90.12
Trish Walker	Clerks expenses	234.55
WSALC Limited	WSALC and NALC annual subscriptions	415.51
M H Kennedy & Son Ltd	Grass Cutting	338.40
Petra Billings	Consultant fees for Warren restoration	775.00
WMPF	Lengthsman	250.00
A P Hoare	Clearance and chipping of trees over pathways	720.00
WMPF	Insurance claim for pavilion break in	1,460.00

14.2. To note income for May 2020 - £84.00 refund from SSALC
£959.05 vat refund

- 14.3. To note that the bank reconciliations for June 2020 have been scrutinised and signed by the Chairman of the Finance Committee and will be signed by the Chairman of the Council in accordance with the Financial Regulations**
- 14.4. To note the bank balance as of 31 May 2020 - £67,977.99**
- 14.5. To note the budget statement for May 2020**
- 15. Planning** - To note the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 13 May 2020 and 4 June 2020 (attached).
- 16. Aims and Objectives Advisory Committee (AOAC)** To note the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2020 (to follow).
- 17. Correspondence** – Warren restoration and bonfires.
- 18. Clerks report** – *(attached)*
- 19. Items for future meetings**
Annual Governance Statement
Internal Audit report
Personnel Committee vacancy
Complaints Committee vacancy
Review of policies
- 20. Date of next meeting** - Council Annual Meeting 16 July 2020 at 6.30pm

Supporting document – Harting Parish Council Meeting 18 June 2020

Agenda Item 1 – Request for an entrance to be placed in a section of fence along the footpath to the School.

Briefing Note

A resident has made a request (see copy of letter in blue italics below) to form an entrance in a section of the post and rail fence running alongside the pathway to the School. The fence is owned by the Parish Council but the land it stands on and the stream running adjacent to the footpath is not owned by the Council.

The proposal is that a bridge (see picture below) would be installed across the stream, at the resident's expense, joining to the fence to close any gaps and prevent direct access to the stream.

The following recommendations is made:

That the Council consider whether to agree, subject to the necessary permissions being in place, to the owner of 2 Jenny Lake Cottage, South Harting removing a section of the Council owned fence along the footpath running from the Street to the School and replacing this with a bridge crossing the stream.

Dear Councillors

I own number 2 Jenny Lake Cottage, the boundary of which backs onto the stream running from the Village Hall to the High Street.

Many years ago when John Dodd owned it, there was a small footbridge crossing the stream which gave access to the property. The steps in my bank, the original iron gate in the fence and the foundation slab for the bridge are still clearly visible. At the moment, our access is through the rear of the adjoining properties and when the Virus came along, I put a temporary plank across the stream so my wife and I didn't have to come in contact with others.

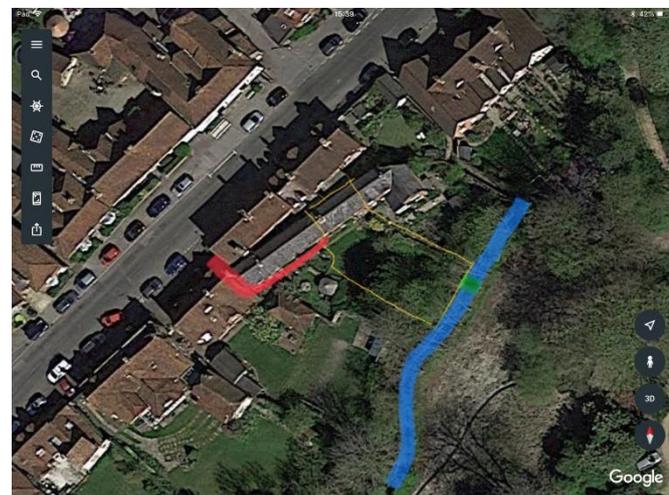
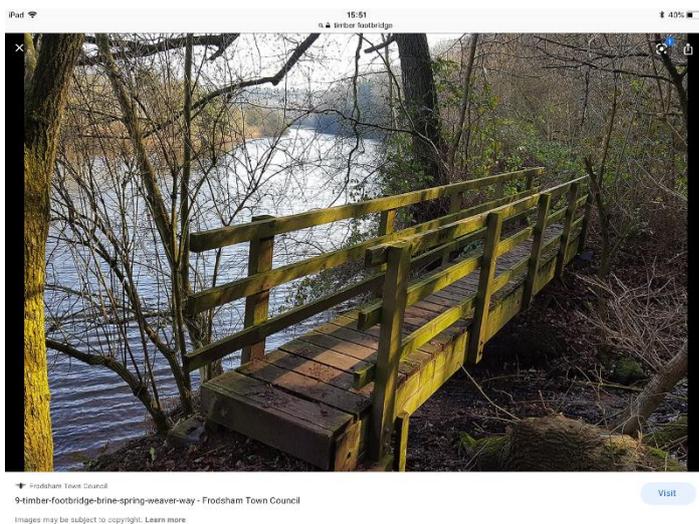
As Jenny Lake Cottage next door has got access onto the path as well as through our property, I would like to ask if the Parish Council had any objection to me reinstating a simple timber bridge with a proper timber one with handrail. This would also mean forming an entrance in the post and rail fence which I would be willing to do at my expense. This will benefit, not only ourselves but also the other property owners by restricting human traffic. In essence, we are only reinstating something that has previously been there and re-opening the access to our property which Jenny Lake Cottage also benefits from.

I attach a photo of the style of bridge I would like to install which will be made from Oak also a photo marked in yellow showing our property, red is the current access and blue being the stream.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards.

Bruce Harris



Agenda Item 8 – Tree Update

Deer Fencing

At the meeting on 19 March 2020 the Council agreed to take forward 'Option E' from the Woodland Restoration Planting Scheme & Budget for The Warren, this option was based on some volunteer planting and using deer fencing with an anticipated life-time of about 15 years.

Five contractors have been approached, but three have been too busy to visit the site, although one did give a rough verbal quote in the region of £20 per metre.

It is hoped that quotes will be received from the other two contractors prior to the Council meeting on 18 June so that details can be forwarded prior to the meeting.

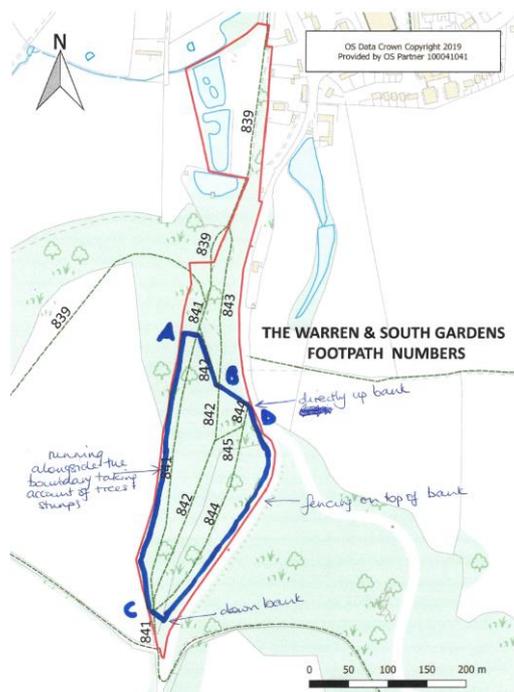
It is necessary to make a decision as soon as possible to ensure the chosen contractor is able to schedule the work in time for a November/December planting: both contractors are currently booked until at least mid-September.

If the quotes are not received in sufficient time for the June meeting it will be necessary to hold a special Council meeting to make the decision as speedily as possible.

The Chairman and the Clerk met with two Forestry Commission officers, one of whom specialises in deer management. They were able to give the following advice:

- Possible placing of the fencing in terms of cost considerations and limiting breach points
- Deer fencing will protect the saplings as well as the ground flora and fauna: there is evidence in the area of quite substantial deer browsing at the moment
- Potential use of 'exclosures' (small three-metre square wired enclosures, one metre high) for planting and regeneration outside of the deer fencing which might be a cheaper option than using tree guards: deer do not jump into such small fenced areas
- Consideration of areas that need replanting

The area to be enclosed by the deer fence is shown on the map below. This allows the majority of the Warren to be enclosed, but limits the amount of fencing alongside footpaths.



To prevent fallow deer jumping it, the fencing will have to be at least 1.8 metres in height and with smaller gauge wire at the bottom to deter muntjac deer.

There are four points (two to the north, one to the south and one to the east) where the fence will cross the pathways. Gates will be erected at these points. They will be 'kissing gate' style to ensure they cannot be left open, they will also have frames to prevent them from being propped open. The gates will conform to the criteria for disabled access. The positioning and type of gates will need to be agreed by WSCC.

There will be some planting required outside of the deer fencing and this will need protection.

The Tree Council grant allows for deer fencing, however, the cost per metre is proving to be greater than anticipated due to the difficult terrain. The estimate sent to the Tree Council in March was based on the standard cost per metre used by the Forestry Commission. Although the length of the fence has been reduced relative to that in the estimate, this may not offset the increased cost per metre and need for additional tree guards/exclosures to the north of the site which will not be fenced. Hence, there may be a shortfall in the allocated grant.

Tree protection

The donated Ezee Tree guards used to protect the saplings planted during the Tree Council Planting Day in February 2020 have not adequately withstood the wind nor the attentions of deer browsing in the Warren. Although, the guards are impregnated with chilli to deter deer, it appears they may have taken a liking to the taste.

This is disappointing as these cardboard guards were seen to be an eco-friendly alternative to plastic guards for which there are currently no obvious other alternatives. Both the Tree Council and the Forestry Commission are aware of the failure of these guards.

There will be a need to protect saplings planted outside of the proposed deer fencing area with either guards or exclosures (see above). More urgently there is the need to protect regenerated saplings of beech, hazel, field maple and hawthorn which are becoming evident across the entire Warren. Any saplings that later fall inside the fenced area can be uncovered.

Mr Shaxson has approximately 300 guards he is willing to lend to the Council to protect the regeneration. Stakes will need to be purchased to secure the guards and these will cost in the region of £3.50 each. There will be a need for additional guards, but the number will be dependent on the usage of exclosures. In some areas, exclosures might be appropriate to protect more of the regeneration. If agreed, these costs can be met from the monies raised from timber sales.

Footpaths

Euroforest have returned to improve the surface of the footpaths along with other areas damaged by the tree works in 2019. There are still some loose stones, but these will work to the sides in due course. A number of grips have also been dug to channel water off the main footpaths when there is heavy rain.

The section of footpath 839 leading westwards has been reinstated and WSCC should be reopening this soon.

Brash clearance

There is a large amount of brash across the woodland which may need to be cleared in order to erect the deer fencing as well as to prepare the area for planting.

It is anticipated that much of this work might be undertaken by volunteers if sufficient numbers come forward. The option to use volunteers organised into small groups for outdoor work is permitted in the current lockdown situation and the Clerk is researching this further. However, in preparation for installation of the fence, where the terrain is difficult or a lot of large-sized timbers need removing, it may be necessary to use a digger. One of the contractors who visited the site has been asked to quote separately for this work. If necessary and agreed, this cost could be offset against the ring-fenced timber sale fund.

Planting

The Tree Council grant is dependent on some planting taking place in November/December. Petra Billings has confirmed that saplings can still be ordered as late in the season as August, the last ordering date was previously thought to be in June.

Petra will be key in setting the planting scheme for the area and will be available to assist on planting days. Ideally, the majority of the planting would take place once the deer fencing has been erected to avoid the need for, and expense of, additional tree guards beyond those required for the areas not being fenced. Low-level shelters will still be required within the fence to protect against vole and rabbit predation: the cost of plastic shelters was included in the budget sent to the Tree Council, but a revised costing for non-plastic versions is being sought at the Tree Council's request.

Bund

The planning permission application for the bund is underway; there has been a slight delay as the planners requested further information.

The following recommendations are made:

- i. To note the report*
- ii. To agree which contractor to appoint to erect the deer fencing in the Warren or, if the quote information is not available at the time of the meeting, agree to hold a special meeting to agree the contractor.*
- iii. To agree that the Council's Woodland & Tree Sub-Committee can utilise the ring-fenced revenue from the timber sales to purchase necessary services and supplies to enable the erection of the fence, protection of regeneration and new planting*
- iv. To note that the estimated cost of the fencing in the first draft of the Woodland Restoration Budget did not take account of the difficult terrain in the Warren and that there may be a need for the Council to supplement the Tree Council grant by in the region of £5,000*

Agenda Item 12 Local Government Association consultation on a new model Code of Conduct

Briefing report

It is mandatory for all councils to have a Code of Conduct and for this to be reviewed annually by the Council. The Council will have reviewed the current Code of Conduct under item 8 of this agenda. However, the Local Government Association is consulting on a new Code of Conduct and is asking all parish councils to comment (see details and link to proposed Code of Conduct in blue italics below). The members are asked to review the proposals and pass any comments to the clerk by 9 July to ensure a response can be discussed and agreed at the July Council meeting.

The following recommendation is made:

That the members of the Council consider the new model Code of Conduct proposed by the Local Government and pass any comments to the clerk by 9 July to enable a response to be agreed at the July Council meeting.

The Local Government Association (LGA) has launched a consultation on a new model member code of conduct.

High standards of conduct and behaviour are of huge importance to the local (parish and town) council sector as they are needed to protect the integrity of decision making, maintain public confidence, and safeguard local democracy.

NALC therefore strongly encourages local councils and county associations of local councils to consider the proposed new model member code of conduct and respond to the LGA consultation before the deadline of 17 August 2020.

We all know the impact that poor behaviour, bullying and harassment can have on individuals and on local councils as organisations, so it is vital we continue to work as a sector to improve standards and push for further reform, at both local and national level.

Agenda Item 13 - War Memorial Playing Field (WMPF) Insurance Claim

It was reported at the Council May Council meeting, under Matters of Urgent Importance, that there had been a break in at the WMPF pavilion on 12 May 2020.

The main store door and the back door to the pavilion were both doors were badly damaged with the back door being broken down completely. The only item stolen was the large electric tea urn from the kitchen.

The insurance for WMPF is arranged and paid by the Council so the clerk in conjunction with the WMPF treasurer submitted a claim to the insurers,

A settlement has been agreed for the sum of £1460, this represents the cost of replacing the doors less the £250 excess.

This sum has been credited to the Council bank account (although will not be reported as income on the agenda until July) and will now be passed to WMPF to enable them to repair the damaged areas of the pavilion. The excess of £250 will be covered by WMPF.

*The following recommendation is made:
To note the report*

