Minutes of the 1st meeting of 2012 of Otford Parish Council held in the Club Room, Otford Village Memorial Hall on Monday 9th January 2012 at 7.30pm

Present:  Cllrs J. Edwards-Winser (Chairman)
          D.G Cracknell
          Mrs. M Evans
          Mrs. J Howe
          R. Knight
          Mrs. J. Lawrey
          H. Leicester
          Mrs C. Marsh
          Mrs. E. Ward

In attendance: Clerk and two members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Cllrs. Verrall and Whitehead

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 None

3. MINUTES

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2011 were approved subject to amendments at 7.A.8 and 7.A.10 and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Actions from previous meetings:

9.1 – Continuing - The Chairman of the Parish Plan Highways Group gave further information on the proposed gateways. In addition to the funding detailed in the above minutes an approach had been made to DEFRA. At the last OPC meeting with Kent Highways the highways officer had indicated that they had to install all gateways and that the cost was £4,500 per gateway. Cllr Edwards-Winser had queried this with Kent Highways. Cllr. Cracknell requested that the position re the approval of Kent Highways and planning permission be clarified. Kent Highways had been contacted but no response had been received. Cllr. Edwards-Winser reported that responses had now been received but they had not clarified the position. He will seek clarification at the next JTB meeting. On 9th January 2012 Cllr. Edwards-Winser reported that the matter could not be clarified at the JTB but that he and Cllr. Knight were meeting representatives of Kent Highways about this and other highways matters.

9.2 – Completed - A letter from Mr & Mrs Pitcairn – Knowles re road hazard at Otford Kennels caused by vegetation. The Clerk had contacted the land owner.

12.1 - Continuing - The committee recommended and it was resolved that an
account be opened with Unity Bank ready to spread the risk when the precept is received in April 2012. The Clerk will arrange this.

12.2 - Continuing - The committee recommended, and it was resolved that, subject to checking the original planning permission, the rules for part of the cemetery be changed so that graves could be embellished. Detailed rules should be drawn up and the fees for this section will be higher to reflect the fact that the mowing will be more time consuming. The Clerk will liaise with Mr Thomas re the rules. The Clerk has checked the planning permission.

12.3 - Completed - The committee recommended, and it was resolved that, the SDC offer of a 99 year lease on the Hale Lane recreation ground be accepted subject to clarifying that the amount of rent to be paid will be nominal. The clerk has contacted Mr Latheron at SDC.

12.4 - Completed - A request for a grant had been received from the Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group. It was resolved that a grant of £100 would be made. The Clerk has organised this.

12.5 - Continuing - The Chairman and Cllr. Leicester reported on the proposed events for the Diamond Jubilee. The maze will only be feasible for a limited time due to the practicalities of mowing the whole field. It was agreed that, subject to arrangement with Mr Clucas, the maze be put in place in May, ready for June. Mr Thomas will speak to Mr Clucas. A location has not yet been agreed upon for the beacon although a portable beacon which could be reused would be preferable.

5. CLERK'S REPORT

5.1 Issue No 774 of Direct Information Service received from NALC

5.2 Various agendas, reports and press releases had been received from SDC and KCC. Details are with the Clerk.

5.3 Various advertising brochures had been received. Available from the Clerk.

6. OVERSEERS' REPORTS

6.1 Cllr. Mrs Lawrey reported that there were numerous black plastic sacks outside the scout hut and guttering hanging off. The Clerk will contact the scouts.

6.2 Cllr. Mrs Evans reported that the footpath outside 11 Tudor Crescent had collapsed and the residents were using planks to access their drive. The Clerk will contact Kent Highways.

6.3 Mr Thomas reported that there had been two fires along the footpath to Kemsing over the Christmas period.

7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

7.A. Services

7.A.1 There had been no committee meeting since the last council meeting.

7.A.2 Cllr. Mrs Lawrey reported that she and Cllr. Leicester had met re proposed jubilee events which currently included a walk round the planets, a concert by the Sackville singers, a civic service, a community picnic, a production of the Canterbury Tales, music by Rattlemac, the lighting of the beacon and a community choir event. Street parties are to be encouraged on the Tuesday as there are no events planned for that day. Village pubs were to be consulted to
ascertain whether they could provide food for Monday evening events. The events are to be publicised in the Newsletters together with the link for street parties.

7.A.3 There were no recommendations.

7.A.4 The initial meeting of the Otford Twinning Association will take place on 9th March 2011 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

7.A.5 A copy of The Bulletin Winter 2011 had been received from English Rural Housing Association.

7.A.6 A copy of the Newsletter of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for December 2011 had been received.

7.A.7 A copy had been received of Kent Cultural Strategy Action Summary from KCC.

7.B. Finance and General Purposes

7.B.1 The report of the Committee Meeting held on 4th January 2012 was received.

7.B.2 The Chairman reported that the new bus shelter had been erected at the end of Hale Lane and the bus stop near Telston Lane had been repaired. Cllr. Cracknell queried the position re the possibility of the Hale Lane recreation ground becoming a QE11 field. The clerk will obtain further information from other clerks.

7.B.3 It was recommended and resolved that the precept for the year be increased by 8% to £135,000. This will result in an increase of approximately 50p per month for a band D property.

7.B.4 It was resolved to approve orders for payment.

7.B.5 Cllr. Mrs Howe reported that there had been a burglary in Rye Lane where a window had been left open. It was agreed that the issue of security would be highlighted in the Newsletter.

7.B.5 A letter of thanks had been received from Sevenoaks Volunteer Transport Group re the donation made last month.

7.B.6 An e-mail had been received from the Charity Commission re an update on public benefit guidance.

7.C Planning

7.C.1 The report of the Committee meeting on 21st December 2011 was received.

7.C.2 In the absence of the Chairman Cllr. Edwards-Winser reported that the removal of the portakabin on land at Station Road had gone to appeal. Cllr. Edwards-Winser had ascertained that fences within two metres of a road could only be 1 meter high, including any bank.

7.C.3 There were no recommendations.

7.D. Environment

7.D.1 The committee had not met since the last meeting of the Council.

7.D.2 Cllr. Mrs Ward reported that the next meeting was on the following day. Cllr. Cracknell had received a request that the Christmas lights in the High Street remain on during January. The Clerk will ascertain if the shop owners would be willing to finance the extra costs involved. Cllr. Mrs Ward is researching the planters available for the Diamond Jubilee. There is to be a meeting of the AONB unit of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme.

7.D.3 It was recommended that a replacement tree be planted on the pond as soon as possible as the tree officer from SDC had approved the location of the planting. It was resolved that a willow tree be purchased to be planted in February and the planting be notified in the February newsletter.

1.3 Clerk

1.4 Clerk

1.5 Clerk
7.D.4 A copy of Fieldwork Winter 2011 had been received from CPRE.

7.E. Highways
7.E.1 The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the council.
7.E.2 Cllr Knight reported that he and Cllr. Edwards-Winser were meeting with Kent Highways soon. The vehicles of builders working in Station Road had been causing congestion. The position will be reviewed once the building work is completed. It was noted that KCC had confirmed that the footpath outside Pickmoss could not be widened. Cllr Knight explained that a KCC survey last year showed that there were 66,000 vehicle movements per week in the High Street and that 40% of them exceeded the 30mph speed limit. The first part of the car park survey was underway and the results were to be analysed.

7.E.3 It was recommended and resolved that parking spaces be marked along Sevenoaks Road, that the centre line be moved so that it was in the centre of the remaining carriageway, that the double yellow line be extended so that the one parking space along the Sevenoaks Road near the pond was no longer available, that the 30mph speed limit be moved to the other side of the VW garage, that the right hand turn into Warham Road be marked on the carriageway, that there be a dropped kerb to provide access to the parade of shops and that parking be limited in the spaces to two hours between 7am and 7pm. These proposals would be passed to SDC.

7.E.4 A letter had been received from SDC re School Keep Clear Markings.
7.E.5 A letter had been received from OVMH concerning U3A booking cancellation re parking problems in the car park

7.F. Recreation
7.F.1 The committee had not met since the last meeting of the Council.
7.F.2 Cllr. Knight reported that he and Cllr. Mrs Marsh were seeking grants for the children's playground at the Hale Lane Recreation Ground and that the designs obtained for the playground were on display in the Library.
7.F.3 There were no recommendations.
7.F.4 A copy of the KCPFA winter 2011 newsletter had been received.

KALC/ACRK
A copy of the agenda for the KALC Sevenoaks Area meeting on 13th January had been received.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING
The date of the next meeting was noted as 13th February 2012 at 7.30pm

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 9.35pm

Signed…………………………………………Chairman

Dated……………………………………