Minutes of the 1st meeting of 2013 of Otford Parish Council held in the Club Room, Otford Village Memorial Hall on Monday 14th January 2013 at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Clerk and 5 members of the public three of whom were present for the Public Forum only.

PUBLIC FORUM – Three representatives of Otford United Football Club (OUFC) had been invited by Cllr. Knight to explain the position of the club in respect of the running costs of the Eric Dilley Pavilion. They detailed the background to the agreement with Otford Parish Council on construction of the pavilion, the payment of utility bills, the ways in which the club raises funds and the contributions from other clubs. It was requested that the Council clarify the position re utilities with the tennis club. Other local football clubs had folded due to the additional costs which they now have to incur and OUFC can not afford to pay the health and safety costs of running the pavilion. The recreation committee will consider the above at their next meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
1.1 Cllr. Mrs Evans and Cllr. Whitehead

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (not already declared) – None

3. MINUTES
3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 10th December 2013 were approved and signed subject to an amendment at 8.F.2.

4. MATTERS ARISING
4.1 Actions from previous meetings:

5.6 – Continuing - A member of the public suggested that the Otford Society be approached for donations towards planters. Cllr. Mrs Ward suggested that she will instead contact the fete committee. 5.6 EW

8.4 - Continuing - It was noted that Standing Orders and Financial Regulations would now need to be reviewed to ascertain the extent of updating required. The Clerk reported that revised standard regulations were shortly to be produced and these were awaited. 8.4 Clerk

8.7 - Continuing - The Chairman of the environment committee reported that The Woodland Trust had offered free trees and this would be investigated. Conditions at the moment were too wet to plant trees. 8.7 EW

8.8 - Continuing - A meeting of the Darent Valley consortium would be organised. 8.8 EW

8.9 - Continuing - Kent Wildlife had carried out a moth survey in the garden of the Chairman of the Environment Committee and collected 729 moths.
overnight, with 94 species being present and 4 of those being nationally scarce. The Chairman of the Environment Committee was awaiting the results of a second survey and will write an article for the newsletter on this.

9.8 – Completed - Cllr. Verrall will be sending fire safety instructions to all users of Council property. These had been completed and sent out.

9.11 – Continuing - The Kent Men of Trees had made some recommendations. These will be copied to Mr Thomas.

10.5 – Completed - A complaint had been received from a resident re train noise and bonfire nuisance. The Clerk had contacted the station re trains whistling in the night.

12.1 - Completed - The footpath past the Scout hut was covered in mud from turning cars and in leaves. Cllr. Mrs Lawrey had contacted the scout leader and the Clerk had contacted KCC. Mr Thomas had cleared the mud from the area that belonged to OPC.

12.2 - Completed - The earth on the side of the footway between Pilgrims Way East and Gullivers is higher than the footway and the rain is driving the earth onto the footway. The Clerk had contacted Kent Highways.

12.3 - Completed - All gullies in Rye Lane require unblocking and the bank by the stream had eroded. The Clerk had contacted Kent Highways.

12.4 - Completed - Orders for payment were approved. Cllr. Mrs Marsh queried why the water bill for the Hale Lane Pavilion was so large. The Clerk had ascertained that a large standing charge was due to the width of the pipes.

12.5 - Completed - The Chairman of the committee gave a resume of planning applications and results since the last meeting and of the results of the SDC Community Governance Review. Cllr. Edwards-Winser had ascertained from SDC that the proposed changes to permitted development were still in point.

12.6 - Completed - A member of the working group requested that a questionnaire be included in the January newsletter so that Parishioners were all aware of the working group and so that it could be ascertained whether all stakeholder groups were being represented. The Clerk had implemented this.

12.7 - Completed - A resident requested that an item be put in the newsletter reminding Parishioners to respond to the KCC consultation re the school. This had been included in the January newsletter.

12.8 - Completed - Cllr. Knight had written to OLTC concerning the findings of the District Valuer.

12.9 - Continuing - The committee recommended that OUFC be billed directly for their water and electricity and it was resolved that this should be the case.

12.10 - Continuing - Cllr. Verrall had obtained £200 of funding from the Big Community Fund for a hearing loop and will order this. Cllr. Verrall reported that he was obtaining a further quote.

12.11 - Continuing - The community calendar should show the deadlines for input into the newsletter.

12.12 - Completed - Cllr. Cracknell noted that the village clock had broken. Cllr. Verrall will locate a repairer. Cllr. Mrs Marsh reported that a resident had offered to fund a new clock.

5. CLERK’S REPORT

5.1 There was nothing to report.
6. OVERSEERS’ REPORTS

6.1 Cllr. Leicester reported that there was no barrier on the road works in front of the Oast House in Shoreham Road. The Clerk will investigate.

6.2 Cllr. Ward reported that the verges in Shoreham Road were being destroyed by contractors vehicles. The Clerk will contact Kent Highways.

6.3 A member of the public reported that the hedge along Sevenoaks Road required cutting. Mr Thomas explained that this would be tractor cut once it had dried out.

6.4 A member of the public reported that footpath 32 was dangerous on the slope down to Otford as the surface had been worn away leaving only mud. The Clerk had already reported this.

6.5 Cllr. Lawrey reported that there was obscene graffiti on the scot hut. The Clerk will contact the scout leader.

6.6 Cllr. Lawrey reported that the fence along Pilgrims Way East was causing a danger to pedestrians. The Clerk will report this to Kent Highways.

7. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

8.A. Services

8.A.1 The Chairman reported that the next meeting would be on 28th January. The AGM of the Twinning Association would be at 7.45pm on 21st January 2013. On 20th April 2013 there would be a coach trip to Hardelot and on the weekend of 22nd/23 June there would be a trip by car.

Cllr. Leicester reported that he had made contact with the Project manager of Quality Bus Partnerships re the issue of bus timetables preventing children in Otford getting to school in Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells by bus.

8.A.2 There were no recommendations

8.A.3 A letter had been received from SDC offering part funding of the proposed hearing loops from the Big Community Fund.

8.A.4 A December 2012 newsletter had been received from Sevenoaks District Senior Action Forum.

8.A.5 A copy of Community Safety News had been received from SDC Community Safety Partnership.

8.B. Finance and General Purposes

8.B.1 The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 7th January 2013 were received.

8.B.2 The Chairman explained the background to the Council tax changes and how this would impact on the percentage increase in the precept shown on Council Tax bills.

8.B.3 It was recommended and resolved, after discussion, that the level of the precept for 2013/2014 be increased by 1.9% to £137,585. Due to changes in Council Tax benefits imposed by central government the calculation of Council Tax Band levels had changed so that the 1.9% rise in the actual precept would give rise to an increase in the band D tax of 7.5%.

8.B.4 It was recommended and resolved that £550 would be paid to the Heritage Centre to reimburse them for part of the costs of upgrading the garden at school house and for new handrails at the back of the Heritage Centre.

8.B.5 It was recommended and resolved that £300 be granted towards the costs of a Barn Dance evening on evening of 14th September to which visitors from Hardelot would be invited and which residents could attend.

8.B.6 Orders for payment were approved.
8.B.7 There was no report from the Otford Heritage Centre Committee as it had not met.

8.B.8 A copy of the Unity Trust Bank December 2012 newsletter had been received.

8.C Planning
8.C.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee on 12th and 19th December 2012 and on 4th January 2013 were received.
8.C.2 In the absence of the Chairman Cll. Edwards-Winser gave a brief overview of applications and results since the last meeting. The Chairman of the Otford Village Design Statement (VDS) explained that he had met with the architect dealing with the planning application re The Grange. He was satisfied that subject to certain amendments that the design would satisfy the criteria laid down by the VDS.
8.C.3 There were no recommendations.
8.C.4 An email had been received from The Opens Spaces Society re Growth & Infrastructure Bill.
8.C.5 An email had been received from the Town Team Initiative re a workshop to be held on 7th February 2013.
8.C.6 Correspondence had been received from a resident re Land North of Gullivers and Chalkpit.

8.D. Environment
8.D.1 The Chairman reported that the next meeting of the committee was on 15th January 2013. A silver birch tree, donated by Kent Men of the Trees, is to be planted at Telston Park on 4th March 2013 at 11.00am in honour of the Diamond Jubilee f the Queen. The Clerk will send the contact details for the Sevenoaks Chronicle to Cllr. Mrs Ward. The Clerk had contacted KCC re footpath 32 to Shoreham.

8.D.2 An email had been received from North West Kent Countryside Partnership re a workshop to be held on 19th January 2013 entitled ‘Migrating towards better rivers’.
8.D.3 A notice had been received from KCC re tree works in Well Road
8.D.4 An email had been received from a resident re the state of footpath 32 to Shoreham.
8.D.5 A report had been received from FCS re the Chalk-Pit.

8.E. Highways
8.E.1 The minutes of the Committee meeting on 18th December 2012 were received.
8.E.2 The Chairman had nothing further to report.
8.E.3 It was recommended and resolved that the terms of reference for the working party group which had been drawn up at the committee meeting be accepted. Cllr. Mrs Howe will forward these to the group.
8.E.4 A copy of the Parish Tracker Survey 2012 was received.
8.E.5 An email had been received from a resident re Car Parking Proposals.
8.E.6 An email had been received from KCC re Plane Trees in Sevenoaks Road.

8.F. Recreation
8.F.1 The Committee had not met since the last meeting. Its next meeting would be on 21st January 2013. The Chairman confirmed that the input from the representatives of OUFC would be considered at that meeting.
8.F.2 There were no recommendations.
8.F.3 A copy of the Wicksteed playground safety inspection in November 2012 had been received.
8.F.4 Notes from FCS re mowing quotes had been received.
8.F.5 A quotation from FCS re Hale Lane Recreation Ground posts had been received.
8.F.6 A report from FCS re a meeting with Nottsports had been received.
8.F.7 Notes from FCS re children’s play area safety inspection had been received.
8.F.8 An email from a resident re Otford recreation ground pitch use and responses from OUFC and OUJFC had been received.

KALC/ACRK
An agenda for KALC Sevenoaks Area meeting on 11th January 2013 had been received.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING
The date of the next meeting was noted as 11th February 2013 at 7.30pm
There being no other business the meeting was closed at 10.00 pm

Signed…………………………………………Chairman

Dated……………………………………..