Report of the Recreation Committee held on Monday 25th March 2013, 8.00pm School House

‘Civitas Vegeta et Strenua’

Present:
Cllrs. Richard Knight (Chairman); Doug Cracknell; Mary Evans; Jackie Howe; Charmian Marsh.

In Attendance:
Brenda Hambrook (Parish Clerk & RFO); Mike Richards (OAA); Roger Beasley (Allotment Agent).

1. Apologies received for absence: Brian Thomas (GMS)

2. The Minutes of the previous meeting 21.01.13 were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting not on the agenda (See Item 7)

4. Allotments:
   4.1 The Committee are happy to receive the new draft Tenancy Agreement presented by OAA. It is a refinement of the previous agreement. Cllr. Cracknell, Messrs Richards & Beasley will review the draft. The Committee would accept the inclusion of a clause making OAA Membership compulsory for the purpose of 3rd party liability insurance, if the OAA Committee wished it. DC MR
   4.2 RB reported all plots have been let. There are 2 people on the waiting list. RB
   4.3 The ownership of the trees on land alongside the river Darent and the footpath bordering Mill Meadow is still being pursued. Some trees have had branches trimmed and the ivy cut. DC
   4.4 The boundary fence and gate to Mill Meadow allotments from the Darent footpath needs securing. BT

5. High Street Recreation Ground
   5.1 BT reports that all pitches are looking very good, considering how bad the weather has been. The Six Monthly Inspection of the Recreation ground was received and all actions are in hand. Nothing unexpected reported in Wicksteed’s quarterly Safety Inspection and all necessary work has been planned for.
   5.2 Grass Mowing: The Committee recommends that “Kent Landscape Services” be given the contract to cut the public areas OPC is responsible for. We suggest 7 such cuts at approx. £67.50 each, then another 3 over-all cuts to whole recreation ground at £151.00 approx, on the week before the Fete, the week before the School summer holidays and the other when deemed necessary.
   5.3 OUFC have requested “fencing off the floodlit pitch [by] post and rail to 3 sides of the playing surface [to] attract sponsorship [by] advertising hoardings.” The Committee felt the request lacked details and were uncertain as to the position of the fence, its style, whether it could be easily dismantled at any time and removed at the end of the season. Semi-permanent hoardings may not be acceptable in an AONB in the Green Belt. The Committee appreciates that OUFC could gain valuable income from sponsorship this way, but believes that banners displayed on the pavilion balcony as well as on removal stands around the ground would achieve the same effect. The Committee will contact the Kent County League to find out its requirements.
   5.4 OUFC (Junior Football) BT reports its grass area is being managed very well. A Ladies’ football team is being created. They have applied to the OSA for membership and are seeking grant funding. The 5-a-side metal goal posts near the Solar System are to be removed. They are banned because they are now considered a hazard.
   5.5 Play Area: In good condition.
   5.6 Cricket Club is not keeping the area below their garage tidy and grass mowings are spreading out onto the recreation ground.
   5.7 Tennis club has made the following offer in response the rent valuation by the DVA on a new
50-year lease. They are willing to pay a starting rental of £250 per annum with £50 increments every second year for the next 13 years, representing the term outstanding on the current lease. At end of that period OPC will have received £5,050, equalling a pending LTA grant application. OLTC point out that they currently have 148 members, but only 31 are adults. As the land is in Public Ownership through OPC, the Committee would like to investigate whether grants would be available on the current lease, if the Tennis Club is willing to pay the offered rent. (Example; OUFC/FA grant for the Pavilion, when no lease such existed.)

5.8 Petanque Club has a paid-up membership of 18, playing twice a week and is considering joining a socially friendly League.

5.9 Dogs & Dog Fouling: No report

5.10 Other concerns: Sewage is still leaking into the recreation ground, close to Park Lane, from the manhole cover. This is a recurring incident, apparently caused by residents putting inappropriate items like j-cloths and disposable nappies, into the drains. Thames Water has fenced off the area and has been asked to write to the concerned residents.

6. OSA: AGM - Wednesday 24th April 2013

7. Chalk Pit:
Garden waste and other rubbish is being dumped by residents in Tudor Drive from their back gardens into the chalk pit. Two of the garden fences close to the edge of the pit are collapsing and could be dangerous. Cllr Mary Evans, Cllr Jane Lawrey and Brian Thomas have agreed to meet, to identify the offending houses and consider the condition of the pit face.

 Residents in the Oast House flats next to the station are also dumping rubbish into the chalk pit. These incidents of fly tipping and their potential hazards will be reported to SDC.

8. Hale Lane Recreation Ground and Pavilion:
8.1 Saturday 6th April “The Official Opening Day” of the new Play Area. All preparations are in hand.

8.2 Risk Assessment to be conducted on the Pavilion

8.3 A verbal request has been received from OUJFC asking if they could have a formal lease for the Pavilion, which would then allow them the opportunity to apply for grants.

Issuing a sub-lease may contravene the terms of the lease OPC has with SDC. However, the situation is very similar to the OUFC/FA grant for the Football Pavilion in the High Street Recreation Ground where no lease existed. (See also 5.7 above re: Tennis Club)

8.4 Hedge replanting took place successfully on Tuesday 5th March, when 5 councillors plus 1 spouse planted 100 hawthorn saplings, filling gaps in the western boundary.

8.5 3 quotations ranging from £1,100 to £1,900 have been received for replacing and fitting new external fire doors and further quotes are awaited. Cllr Jon Verrall is to be asked to appraise the quotations and to make his recommendations to the F & GP Committee.

8.5 Grass Cutting quotations were considered, the more reasonable being “Kent Landscape Services”, who quoted £27.00 per cut for the perimeter, excluding the football pitch. The combined cost is £52.00. OUJFC is to be contacted to find out if they wanted to use the same contractor.

8.6 QEI Playing Field is still on going, but can be taken forward now that the 99-year SDC lease has been formalised.

9. Youth Activities
9.1 SDC is providing a fully funded “Family Fun Day” on Monday 8th April 1.00pm – 4.30pm, High Street Recreation ground, or in the OVMH if it is wet.

9.2 CKX – CAT’s (Community Activity Teams, funded by KCC) are making arrangements to visit Otford to provide positive activities and intervention work for young people, but unfortunately at a time when students are likely be travelling home from school. BH will contact them.

10. Other Matters. None

Next scheduled meeting, Tuesday 21st May 2013, 8.00pm at School House/Parish Office.

Dates of remaining Committee Meetings this year: Mondays 22nd July, 23rd Sept, & 25th November