REPORT OF THE OTFORD PARISH COUNCIL’S HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

22ND APRIL 2013

Present Councillors, Howe (Chair), Cracknell, Edwards-Winser, Leicester, Whitehead. In attendance Councillor Verrall and Brenda Hambrook, Parish Clerk

1. Apologies for absence
Councillor Knight

2. Declarations of Interest
There were none

3. The Minutes of the meeting of the 18th February
These were approved with minor amendments.

5.8 resurfacing of the Car Park
This item was taken at this stage of the meeting since Councillor Verrall was attending the meeting by special request.

The quote by Marchants, a well-respected company at £55,000 was seen to be too high and Councillor Verrall recommended acceptance of the Sturgeons’ quote of £31,217 (+ VAT). He sought approval (given) to negotiate terms with the company.

He is willing to provide some supervision but not continuously from start to finish.

He has produced a project planning schedule (attached) which will need managing by the Highways Committee once the dates for resurfacing are confirmed. Matters to be addressed include publicising the need to move vehicles to users of the car park and liaising with the Manager of the Memorial Hall. Concern was raised about how to deal with any abandoned cars.

It is important that some members of the committee are on hand during the resurfacing period to be able to authorise any requests by the contractor.

The Risk Assessment on the Car Park had been completed. All members of the committee are required to comment.

Action - all committee members

Councillor Verrall was thanked for both his expert advice and hard work regarding a matter of such major importance.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting not covered elsewhere in the agenda
5.7 Headteacher of Russell House to be contacted re Speedwatch
5.4 Jeff Lee to be contacted re distribution of safety stickers through the Otford Society
5.5 The clerk confirmed that the roundabout sign is to be removed. There was a query as to whether a sign to Sevenoaks is to be installed.

Action – clerk

5.7 Assistant clerk to progress organisation of Speedwatch volunteers into 4 groups

Action – assistant clerk

5.8 Matters concerning accessibility for those with disability transferred to Services committee
5.9 The Parish Clerk for Ightham has confirmed that their parish council was satisfied with the work done by Sturgeons re their new car parking area. There will be further feedback from the meeting of District parish clerks.

5.10 The clerk had registered OPC’s interest in the Lorrywatch scheme

5.11 The clerk had reported a broken water metercover in Station Road

5.3 The response from KCC re car park and school was not encouraging. A lot of work has to be done as part of the school expansion decision which will involve OPC and the school. Councillor Cracknell had been investigating the possible use of the allotments car park. He had learned that Mr Sparrow, owner of OBM, was happy for allotment owners to have access but not for residents.

AGENDA ITEMS

5.1 Information on crashes and observed potentially dangerous incidents
A car parked on the pavement outside the Antiques Centre nearly ran over a pedestrian when in motion – 17th April
SATNAVS information causes cars to stop inappropriately at the Pond
17th April 8.00pm a car travelling down Station Road took the pond on the right hand side.

5.2 Bus Shelters
Arriva have been emailed fortnightly since 18th January re the hard standing on the Rye lane bus shelter. No-one has been to assess the situation. Kent Highways have to do the work as it is on their land while Arriva are paying for it.

5.4 Village Gateways
The Gateways have cost £6,800 - £7000 of which the village has to pay £4,800.
The gate at Row Dow is to be removed as it is incorrectly sited and no permission was sought by Kent Highways from the owner of the land.
At the AGM of the Otford Society there was only one dissenting voice in support of what had been effected.

5.5 Road signs
The large sign at the entrance to the car park is to be removed.
Councillor Edwards-Winser was to investigate the feasibility of having finger posts erected. This matter to be transferred to the Environment Committee

   Action - Councillor Edwards-Winser

Concern was again expressed re signs covered in mould/stain Nothing could be actioned by OPC as it is part of Kent Highways planned maintenance programme

5.6 Road Safety
The step outside Pickmoss was again discussed. Councillor Cracknell reported that progress was slow and the most likely solution was to have a plan to raise the pavement around the step with a barrier on kerb. There is a need to demonstrate precise appearance and dimensions. This opinion was disputed on the grounds that the existing gap would be narrowed but Councillor Cracknell believed that there would be a net gain.
Stephen Noad (Kent)to be approached to look at this to see if there is a technical solution.

   Action - Clerk
5.7 Speedwatch
It is hoped to use it again soon. Permission needed by Jeff Lee for use outside his house. OPC have to provide standard letter of permission which has to be signed by property owner where their land is needed to implement the scheme.
Councillor Edwards-Winser would like information as to why data from VASs are not downloaded.
Councillor Marsh had requested a SID in the Shoreham Road

5.8 Car Park Resurfacing
Two questions had to be addressed prior to finalising the plans for resurfacing a) extension of the north east corner b) removal of the tree in the centre of the car park.

Advice had been sought from the SDC legal team Charity Commission as part of the process of any intention by the council to extend the car park. This, it appears, is related to the recreation ground being an ‘open space’. After discussion the following was recommended:

That the car park be extended subject to clarification as to the impact of open space provisions and Otford Parish Council agreeing that it will be beneficial to users of the recreation ground and inhabitants of the village.

It is understood that the tree in the middle of the car park does not have a TPO. The committee made the following recommendation:

That the tree in the car park be removed and 2-3 trees of a semi-mature nature be planted on the periphery of the car park.

5.9 Lorry Watch
No developments.

5.10 Other Matters
None.

5.11 Correspondence
Taken with Car Park matters.

5.3 Car Parking- to receive an update and to further determine actions regarding the Car Park and other areas and make any necessary recommendations. Report to be received from the meeting with the advisory group, 14th March; to progress safety in the car park.

The minutes of the advisory group meeting were considered in depth and thanks is to be conveyed to Sarah Yates for the thoroughness with which they were prepared. Correspondence received since the meeting was also part of the discussion.

Relevant to alternative areas of parking was a letter from the Rev Worssnam explaining that the Parish Church Car Park could not be made available as the planning permission granted for that car park restricted it to use by the church only. Also it should be possible to restrict parking at the Parade to two hours by application to Kent. Rent-a-Drive would be endorsed by the Highways Committee but no particular company could be recommended. Altering the times on the signs in the roads with yellow line restrictions would probably be impossible to achieve, as these times relate to the work timetable of the enforcement team that works across the whole district.

There was concern expressed that parking on a Sunday may not be charged when the car park could be very congested then. It was agreed that the proposal for free parking on a Sunday should go forward but that if congestion on Sundays did prove to be a problem then charging should be reviewed.

Planning permission given to expand the school is in part dependent the school having to speak with OPC re. a travel plan (this to be achieved within the next 6 months).
Permits for High Street residents was discussed in terms of the representation made by David Barley. The Highways Committee was prepared to consider a lesser fee but this had to be considered in terms of the need to reduce congestion and also maintain a balance of interests. Information and advice would be sought from the preferred contractor. It was agreed that any granting of a permit would not be automatically transferable with the sale/purchase of a property. It was important to know exactly how many houses in the High Street and its immediate vicinity were without any off road parking and how many of these had arrangements to park elsewhere other than the car park. David Barley to be asked to supply a list of qualifying addresses.

**Action – Councillor Howe**

Suggestions re setting up of a trust to administer the car park was unanimously refuted on numerous grounds including: - democratic accountability; financial accountability; unreliability of volunteer workforce; safety of workforce.

It was noted that there was a need for making a final decision as soon as possible. Should Pay and Display go ahead it will need input into the planning of resurfacing by the operator. Resurfacing is planned for some time in August. It was thought that a month should be given for any new signing for traffic travel to become sufficiently familiar and that early October would be the preferred time for introducing a Pay and Display scheme.

The Committee need to be satisfied that any scheme undertaken by the preferred provider is sufficiently financially viable so as not to compromise OPC’s financial liability in any way.

**Action- Councillor Howe**

The final meeting with the advisory group will take place on 7th May

**Date of next meeting 17th June**