

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 16th December 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Butcher, Green, Kelly, Kemp, Lain-Rose, Manning, Reardon, Silkin, Spearink and Perry who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gosling & Sharp whose reasons for apology were accepted.

URGENT ITEMS: - Councillors agreed to take two items of urgent business relating to MBC's Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy and to local bus issues.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

Lobbying – All councillors declared they had been lobbied about the local bus service. Councillor Buller declared she had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Ashby declared she had been lobbied about Christmas lights.

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in items on the agenda – none declared.

Requests for dispensation – none requested.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Pages 1315-1317 of 2nd December 2013 were proposed for approval by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Spearink, approved by councillors nem con, signed by Chairman Perry and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

ACCOUNTS & FINANCES

1. Summation of Accounts to 6th December was noted and posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.
2. Accounts for payment for approval. Proposed by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Kemp, the list of accounts for payment was approved nem con. Councillors recorded their thanks to the Staplehurst Society for its generous donation towards the cost of maintaining the village planters.
3. Subscription Renewal – Transport Accessibility Group (for approval). Councillors voted nem con to pay £25 to the Transport Accessibility Group by way of annual subscription and donation.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Urgent Items Councillor Spearink reported that he had attended a meeting organised by MBC to launch consultation on its draft 'Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy' covering the green space and water environment in the borough (available at <http://maidstone-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal>). Consultation lasts until 24th January 2014. Councillor Spearink also reported that the introduction of a dedicated Cornwallis bus had only partially soothed the bus problems and there were still service issues, plus the KCC announcement about proposed changes to the Freedom Pass had caused great concern. Councillor Reardon observed that this announcement came after parents had selected preferred schools for September 2014. Chairman Perry reported that he had received a response from the Leader of KCC to his letter about the school bus problems and that he proposed to follow up the Leader's comments. Chairman Perry also advised that Helen Grant MP had indicated she would be happy to meet to discuss the situation.
2. Neighbourhood Plan – Report of Steering Group meeting 04/12/13. Chairman Perry said that he would be distributing to councillors a copy of a work proposal and quotation

received from Feria Urbanism. He said that he, the Chair of RSG and the Clerk had discussed with Feria questions arising from the proposal and he would also distribute a note covering these points. He advised that the proposal would be tabled for discussion at Full Council on 6th January. The Clerk confirmed that an application for DCLG funding would be submitted.

3. Caretaker's Report – The Clerk advised that KCC had confirmed the top of the hedge between Weavers Close and Slaney Road would be cut in January.
4. Electronic Billing for Council Tax & Business Rates – Correspondence from MBC promoting use of e-billing was noted by councillors.
5. Library Surgery – Chairman Perry advised he had received one visitor who discussed parking at the school.
6. Saving Visible Policing Conference – Councillor Kemp reported on the Saving Visible Community Policing Conference run by the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner. He said that Kent Police had completed its programme of cuts a year early and the consequences are being felt; there had been discussion about the impact of further cuts which would translate into fewer officers. The Kent Police precept is likely to increase by 2%; there is a survey about spending on the Commissioner's website at <https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/annbarneskpccpoll.html>. It was reported that cuts in other services affect the police because, as a service of last resort, they receive more calls; they may have to be selective in responding to cases. The workload of PCSOs is likely to increase. Councillor Green proposed that a letter about the strategic issues be sent to Helen Grant MP: it was agreed that Councillor Kemp would follow developments over the coming weeks and liaise with Chairman Perry to take this action forward.

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx Councillor Manning remarked that it was clear from comments made by Arriva's representative at the last Transport Forum meeting that its focus was commercial.
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, RS, PS) Next meeting 19/12/13. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx Councillor Silkin said that the next meeting would be at the Free Church at 7.30 pm on 19th December.
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, TB, AG, SG, PK, NK, JP, PS) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx Councillor Butcher advised that a letter had been received from MBC about the appeal lodged by Tesco against the decision on MA/12/0232. The letter states that the informal hearing procedure will be used and invites written representations. Councillor Green requested a copy of the letter to pursue pro bono professional advice. Chairman Perry advised that he had received a response from Kent Highways to the concerns he had raised about the potential impact of two supermarkets; he said that the Parish Office was seeking clarification about some information in the letter.
4. Allotments Project Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, BM) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_1.aspx
5. Strategy & Policy Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SL, SG, RS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy_group.aspx
6. Finance Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SG, SL, JR) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx
7. Playscheme (TB, JB, NK) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx
8. Publicity & Website Group (JP, TB, PK, MA, JB, NK, SL, JR) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx
9. Rural Settlement Group including Neighbourhood Plan (JP, MA, JB, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx
10. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
11. Village Enhancement Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, PB, SL, JR, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx. Councillors noted that the need and potential sites for additional salt bins had yet to be assessed. Councillor Ashby reported she had

received comments both for and against the new Christmas lights and asked that consideration be given to extending the coverage southwards next year.

REPORTS FOR NOTING from local community groups:-

1. Carnival & Fete (SL, BM) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_carnival_fete_committee.aspx
2. Churchyard Liaison (PB, PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_2.aspx Councillor Kelly advised that a meeting was due to be held with the Rector on 18th December.
3. Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee (JP, BM) Next meeting 04/03/14. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx
5. KALC Area Committee (JP, PB, PK, RS, PS) Minutes of meeting 18/11/13 and report of AGM 23/11/13 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx
6. Kent Community Alcohol Partnership (PB) Next meeting? Report of meeting 04/09/13 awaited.
7. Knoxbridge A229 Residents' Group (BM, NK, PS) Next meeting?
8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting 16/01/14. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/mccabe_day_centre.aspx
9. Neighbourhood Watch (JB) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
10. Police/Parish Liaison (PB, PS) Minutes of meeting 21/11/13 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
11. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting 04/03/14. Report of meeting 03/12/13 posted at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
12. Speed Watch (JB) Report of activity 10/12/13 noted. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx>
13. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
14. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, RS, PS) Next meeting? Report of meeting 30/10/13 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx
15. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (SL, BM, JR)
16. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (SL & PB) Next meeting? Minutes of meeting 12/11/13 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
17. Village Sports & Social Club (PB) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/ot_hers.aspx
18. Youth Club (SL, PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: No comments were made.

POLICE REPORT: PCSO Gardner had reported four crimes: one burglary (other than dwelling); one theft; one theft of motor vehicle; one criminal damage.