

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 16th February 2015 at 7.30 p.m.

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors Butcher, Gosling, Kelly and Sharp whose apologies were accepted. Councillor Lain-Rose was absent.

URGENT ITEMS: - Councillors agreed to take one item of urgent business relating to the electricity supply contract for Bell Lane toilet block.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

Lobbying – Councillor Buller declared she had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan.

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 1410-1412 of 2nd February 2015 were proposed for approval by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Burnham, approved by councillors, signed by the Chairman and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx. Councillor Reardon abstained. Councillor Perry expanded on the report of his Borough Councillor Update (Min 1411) to say that MBC Cabinet's rejection of officers' recommendations, proposing in the draft Local Plan three additional sites in Staplehurst, took into account a recommendation to reject two of those sites by the Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He further advised that since Council's last meeting MBC Cabinet had also reviewed sites already included in the draft Local Plan, reducing the maximum number of homes now allocated to Fishers Farm from 535 to 400 and agreeing a resolution to address concerns about infrastructure in Staplehurst and Headcorn.

ACCOUNTS & FINANCES

1. Accounts for payment for approval. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Perry, the list of accounts for payment was approved.
2. Summation of Accounts to 6th February 2015. Noted by councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx. In response to a question from Councillor Green the Clerk said he would circulate details of 2014-15 expenditure items relating to Surrenden Field.
3. Bell Lane Toilets Cleansing Contract – Tenders for consideration and decision. Proposed by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Spearink, councillors voted to agree with Finance Group's recommendation that the quotation of £120 per week from Paxman Services (UK) Ltd for cleansing, opening and closing of the toilets be accepted. Councillor Buller abstained. Councillors also noted that the company had been asked to quote for an additional deep clean.
4. Quotation for Drainage Work – Surrenden Playing Field. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Kemp, Councillors voted nem con to agree Finance Group's recommendation to accept a quotation of £500 from Capital Drainage for preliminary inspection and cleaning out of the first one hundred metres of the two drainage pipes in Surrenden Field.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Urgent Item – Councillors noted that brokers had provided an amended quotation to the one agreed by Council on 19th January (Min 1407), the original quotation omitting to take account of the smart meter at the site. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Perry, councillors voted nem con to accept a revised quotation increasing the standing charge by £74 per annum.
2. Neighbourhood Plan – Incl. (i) Report on Tunbridge Wells site allocation proposals; (ii) MBC Local Plan; (iii) Developer Meetings. *Chairman Silkin closed the meeting to allow contributions from members of the public.* The Chair of RSG confirmed the RSG's support for the Neighbourhood Plan and discussed the Group's recommendation that a press strategy be formulated. He debated the implications of issuing an interim diagram to illustrate the up to date position on development sites and advocated that a clear stance be taken against meeting developers to discuss proposals inconsistent with the Neighbourhood Plan. After further discussion *Chairman Silkin reopened the meeting.* Proposed by Councillor Green, seconded by Councillor Ashby, councillors resolved (Councillor Spearink abstaining) to: ask FERIA Urbanism to redraft the Neighbourhood Plan as soon as possible; remove from the redraft reference to potential development along George Street; formulate in the redraft a policy expressing opposition to development of sites of two or more homes north of the railway line and outside the village envelope; define the village envelope to include the Hen & Duckhurst Farm and Fishers Farm sites and to form its northern edge south of the railway line. (i) Councillors Kemp and Buller reported on their attendance at a workshop organised by Tunbridge Wells BC to discuss site allocations: the exercise is considering fewer houses than in Maidstone and is not being undertaken in the context of a Local Plan. The overall impression was that local views and dialogue were welcomed. (ii) Councillor Perry confirmed that the maximum number of houses allocated in the draft Local Plan to Fishers Farm was now 400. He suggested engaging FERIA Urbanism to provide an assessment of the site's capacity and constraints. Councillors agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan steering group should seek an initial view from FERIA Urbanism at its next meeting. (iii) Councillor Green advocated the need for a clear policy to cover requests received from developers for meetings with the Parish Council. Proposed by Councillor Kemp, seconded by Councillor Perry, Councillors resolved nem con that meetings on behalf of the Parish Council should only be held with developers where they are in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan or have been specifically authorised by Full Council.
3. Borough Councillor Update – Councillor Perry advised that on 25th February MBC would hold its last full council meeting before the election; Council Tax will be increasing by 1.99%; Mote Park will benefit from further investment; MBC will replace the old litter bins at The Parade, although maintenance responsibility will remain with the landlord.
4. Caretaker's Report – The Clerk reported that hedge-cutting had started at Surrenden and Jubilee Fields.
5. Flooding Conference – Report on CPRE Conference. Councillors Kemp and Spearink reported that the 'Flooding: Fears, Facts and the Future' conference on 6th February had set out some interesting statistics to illustrate the increased risk of flooding, discussed experiences of flooding and heard from developers about building on flood plains. There is no indication at this stage of a preferred solution in terms of a new flood barrier.
6. Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance – Invitation to 25th Anniversary Service. Councillors were asked to advise the Clerk if they wished to represent the Parish Council at the service on 27th May.
7. Mobile Phone Coverage in the Weald – Report of public meeting (SL-R & PS). Councillor Lain-Rose's report had been e-mailed to councillors before the meeting. Councillor

Spearink spoke about how coverage issues impacted on plans to launch a proposed mobile phone app covering bus services.

8. Staplehurst Calendar – Financial Statement. Councillors noted the report by Mr Ken Collins on sales of the 2015 calendar that showed a surplus of £1,521 divided equally between All Saints Church, Staplehurst Free Church and the United Reformed Church.

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting 20/02/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx.
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, NK, RS, PS) Next meeting AGM 23/03/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, TB, AG, SG, PK, NK, PS) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx Councillor Buller asked that in the absence of news from Sainsbury's that another approach be made to seek information about the proposed supermarket.
4. Allotments Project Group (TB, PK, JB, BM) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_1.aspx
5. Strategy & Policy Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SL, RS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy_group.aspx
6. Finance Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SG, SL, JR) Councillors noted the report of Finance Group's meeting of 10th February (posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx). Pensions Policy – Councillors resolved that the pension scheme provider should be NEST, calculation of qualifying earnings should be based on employees' whole salary and contributions should be made by direct debit. Councillors discussed the level of employer contribution and a proposal by Councillors Spearink and Green for 8% of salary was defeated by three votes to five; following this vote, proposed by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Ashby, councillors voted nem con to set the employer contribution at 6%. Donations 2015 – Councillors voted nem con to include an annual subscription of £20 to Kent County Playing Fields Association in the 2015-2016 budget. Street Lights – Councillor Reardon advised that the lights in Crowther Close had been upgraded to LED lights, which was now KCC policy.
7. Playscheme (TB, JB, NK) Next meeting 24/02/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx
8. Publicity & Website Group (TB, PK, MA, JB, NK, SL, JR) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx. Councillor Buller said that the Spring Village Update had been signed off and she would contact Councillors about distribution.
9. Rural Settlement Group including Neighbourhood Plan (JP, JB, AS) Next meeting 04/03/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx.
10. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting? Report of meeting 27/01/15 posted at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>. Councillor Perry commented that MBC was taking strong enforcement action against dog owners who did not clear up their dog's mess.
11. Village Enhancement Group (TB, PK, JB, PB, JR, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx.
12. Youth Club (PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx

REPORTS FOR NOTING from local community groups:-

1. Carnival & Fete (SL, BM) Next meeting? 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
3. Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee (JP, BM) Next meeting? Minutes of meeting 07/10/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB, PK) Next meeting 14/05/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx
5. KALC Area Committee (JP, PB, PK, RS, PS) Next meeting 18/02/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx
6. Kent Community Alcohol Partnership (PB) Next meeting?
7. Knoxbridge A229 Residents' Group (BM, NK, PS) Next meeting?

8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting? Reports of meetings 24/09/14 and 20/11/14 awaited. 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) Next meeting 21/05/15. Minutes of meeting 15/01/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group (JP, NK, PS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
12. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting? Report of meetings 02/09/14 and 09/12/14 awaited. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
13. Speed Watch (JB) <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx>
14. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
15. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, RS) Next meeting 15/04/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx
16. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (AG, SL, BM, JR)
17. Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan Group (NK) Next meeting? Report of meeting 02/10/14 awaited.
18. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (PB) Next meeting – AGM 24/02/15. Report of meetings 11/11/14, 03/12/14 and 06/01/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
19. Village Golf & Sports Club (PB) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: No items were raised.