

## Meeting Notes

### Community Enhancement Group

Notes of the Meeting held on 11 June 2018 from 20:00 to 22:15

Present: **Parish Councillors Joan Buller, Tom Burnham, Sue Forward, Sam Lain-Rose (Chair), Paul Kelly, Barrett Manning, Paddy Riordan, Adele Sharp, Gill Smith and Elaine Symes.**

**Resident Louise Brice.**

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#### 1. Apologies for Absence

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Parish Councillor John Reardon.

#### 2. Councillor Declarations

There were no Councillor declarations.

#### 3. Agreement of the Previous Group Meeting Notes

Meeting notes of 30 April 2018 were AGREED by Members, with the amendment to clearly express 'wildlife' cameras as requested by Parish Councillor Sharp.

#### 4. Appointment of Group Chair 2018/19

Following the appointment of Councillors on 21 May 2018, the Membership of the Group must agree who will be the Chair of the Group, as set out in the Group's Terms of Reference Section 5. Resident Louise Brice proposed Parish Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Parish Councillor Joan Buller. Those present unanimously **AGREED**. Therefore, Councillor Lain-Rose will be the Chair of the Group until the first Group meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May 2019.

#### 5. The Parade, Staplehurst

Parish Councillor Lain-Rose introduced the item, which Councillors would have seen the quote. In addition, there were some artist impression visuals for members to view. The purpose of this was to agree what the Council wished to do to improve The Parade area.

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It was noted that the Parish Council, with the agent's permission cut the growth back at the Parade in Autumn 2017, to enable an assessment of the damage and repair that needed to be conducted. This was completed by Community Payback, organised by Parish Councillor Riordan.

The quote that had been provided to the Council was expensive and the Council does not have a designated budget for this. Parish Councillor Lain-Rose raised that the Council has no statutory power to spend on improving others' property; this means that the Council would look to S137 of the Local Government Act to legitimise the expenditure.

Louise Brice viewed that the quotation was, in light of the outcomes, value for money and could be justified.

After much discussion and considering Parish Councillor Sharp's previous comments circulated to members via email. It was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that the initial removal of the roots inside the planters, costing approximately £600 (based on quotations given to Parish Councillor Riordan). This would be financed through £200 from Blakemore Retail (Community Project Grant) and £400 from the Parish Council.

Members were in agreement that any work that was undertaken at the site, would need to be maintained by the landlord on a long-term basis. However, was open to exploring the possibility of making an improvement initially, that would enable the landlord to take on the responsibility.

Parish Councillor Symes enquired whether local organisations could get involved in maintaining it. This could be a possibility and would need the landlord's approval.

Parish Councillor Kelly raised the concern of insurance and liability of any work being undertaken.

## **6. Surrenden Field – Request to Erect Football Goals**

The Group discussed the request by the Community Warden to fundraise and erect football goals at the Surrenden Field. However, the Group was unable to make a recommendation to Council, due to:

- the Council not owning the freehold of the field and the leasehold expires in 2019;
- the Group is unsure whether the request is to erect football goals that are permanent or not; and
- the Group is unsure where they would be sited, without causing interference with event(s) that may be held at the field.

## **7.1 Wimpey Field – Vehicular Access Gate**

The Group discussed the vehicular access gate proposals by Parish Councillor Riordan, to make improvements to the access gate that would minimise disruption to residents and enable the Council to fully utilise the gate as it was intended. It was **AGREED** to

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**RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that once the legal standing of the access is determined, that the Council should liaises with the Management Company and the Developer to make the improvements, as the gate is not part of Council ownership.

## **7.2 Wimpey Field – Maintenance Contracts**

Parish Councillor Lain-Rose explained that the Maintenance Contracts for the Wimpey Field would need to be formalised with the current contractor and that management of the maintenance contracts should be through the Parish Office, overseen by Community Enhancement Group and decisions made by the Council. Members **AGREED** and Parish Councillor Lain-Rose would liaise with the Parish Office to create an action plan on how this transition would be implemented.

## **7.3 Wimpey Field – Water Supply**

Parish Councillor Riordan explained that the water tank had been sited at the Wimpey Fields and thanks to Parish Councillor Symes connections it was now filled with water. Parish Councillor Forward and others are managing the watering of plants.

## **7.4 Wimpey Field – CCTV Cameras**

Parish Councillor Lain-Rose included this on the agenda, based on the previous meetings comments regarding the wildlife cameras at the Wimpey Fields. Parish Councillor Burnham explained that Chris Claridge (former Parish Councillor) had purchased trail cameras and these were delivered to the Parish Council on 16 May with an invoice from Chris Claridge company for payment.

On receiving this, the Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer investigated whether an agreement to purchase this equipment had been made and on unsuccessfully locating an agreement by Council sent an email to Parish Councillors Burnham, Riordan and Lain-Rose.

In investigating the circumstances, it appears that on 28 March 2018, David George (who was the Chair of the Wimpey Field Sub-Group) emailed Sue Forward the following: “In view of the recent vandalism, Chris, with my approval, has purchased two trail cameras for the Reserve. I have agreed to this as he said that he would be able to get the money refunded by the PC. Chris will fit these himself by the end of the week.”

As expressed strongly by Parish Councillor Lain-Rose to those involved initially, the former Wimpey Field Sub-Group had no powers to commit the Parish Council, and Chris Claridge should certainly know this as he played a great part in setting its terms of reference. Equally, individual Councillors cannot commit the Council.

The Parish Office attempted to return the equipment back to Chris Claridge, to which this was refused and explained that if the invoice was not paid that legal action could follow, as he believed he purchased the equipment in good faith. Following this, Parish Councillor Burnham sent a letter, requesting the original documentation be sent to the Council in order for the Council to consider reimbursement.

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This documentation has been received, however this is not a VAT invoice, just an order confirmation.

Parish Councillor Lain-Rose requested the Group recommended whether to pay the amount or decline. The Group by majority **AGREED to RECOMMEND to COUNCIL** to pay the £107.47 to Chris Claridge's company to settle the purchase. Parish Councillors Buller, Lain-Rose and Manning were AGAINST.

## **7.5 Wimpey Field – Liability**

Parish Councillor Forward wanted to clarify about the status of liability of volunteers working on the Wimpey Field. It was confirmed that any volunteers working on the Wimpey Field were covered by the Council, as long as, they were aware of the work being carried out and the general timings of the work. Individuals undertaking work on the Wimpey Field that the Council was not aware of, would be doing so at their own risk.

## **7.6 Wimpey Field – Social Media**

Parish Councillor Forward wanted to enquire whether this Group would be managing the social media site for the Wimpey Field. Parish Councillor Lain-Rose explained that this would need to be discussed by the Communications Group, as this was within their remit.

## **7.7 Wimpey Field - Future Arrangements of the Wimpey Field Sub-Group**

There was discussed by Members on the revitalisation of the Wimpey Field Sub-Group, as work on the Wimpey Field needed continuing. Parish Councillor Riordan reminded the Group, that the Group had be dissolved in April 2018 and there had not been a Group looking after this important asset for some months.

The Group **AGREED** that for the interim that Parish Councillor Forward and Robert Roberts would be appointed as the key individuals to oversee the management of the Wimpey Field with the volunteers and would be responsible for directly reporting to the Community Enhancement Group. It was made clear that they had no delegated power or authority.

The Group **AGREED** that Parish Councillor Lain-Rose would work with Parish Councillor Forward on a Terms of Reference, which would nominate one individual to oversee the Wimpey Field volunteers on a day-to-day basis reporting directly to the Community Enhancement Group. This would be added to the Community Enhancement Group agenda at the next meeting.

## **7.8 Wimpey Field – Pedestrian Access Gate**

The Group discussed the pedestrian access gate and Parish Councillor Forward's proposals to make the gate accessible. After much discussion, the Group **AGREED to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that improvements to the pedestrian access gate should be discussed with the Management Company and Taylor Wimpey.

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## 8. Any Other Business

Parish Councillor Riordan raised a request from Jubilee Field Management Committee, which was for the Council to assist with purchasing a mower which could cost up to £6,000. The Jubilee Field Management Committee were open to repaying the investment back over 5 years.

Louise Brice enquired whether the Council could gift them the mower. Parish Councillor Lain-Rose explained that based on the historic and current situation between the Parish Council and Jubilee Field Management Committee there should be a repayment plan where possible. This would be in line with historic situations, such as the Village Centre.

After discussion, the Group **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND to COUNCIL** that a mower for Jubilee Fields was purchased on the basis that repayment of such mower is acceptable.

## 9. Confirmation of the Date of Next Meeting

Members CONFIRMED the next meeting of the Group would be Monday 9th July 2018 at 19:00. The meeting will be held at Village Centre, High Street, Staplehurst. Meeting agenda and papers aim to be circulated week commencing 2nd July 2018.

In addition, Members AGREED that the Group provisionally meets on Monday 23rd July 2018 at 19:00. The meeting (if held) will be at the Village Centre, High Street, Staplehurst.