

## STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

### Minutes of meeting held on 5th February, 2020 at Staplehurst Youth Centre

- 1. Present:** Robin Oakley ,Secretary(RO), Tom Burnham (TB) Margaret Arger Chairman (MA), Cllr. John Perry (JP), Cllr. Paddy Riordan (PR), Cllr. Sue Forward (SF), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB),Cllr. Adele Sharp (AS), Gill Smith (GS), John Kelly (JK),Cllr. Louise Brice (LB)
- 2. Apologies:** Cllr.Colin Bowden(CB) Robin Kenworthy(RK),
- 3. Membership of the Group.** Cllr. Sue Forward asked if she could be included as a permanent member of the Group and this was agreed.
- 4. Minutes of Meeting on 8th January, 2020:** Agreed
- 5. Matters Arising.** PR raised the matter of the state of verges the lanes and minor roads in the parish. The verges are being badly damaged by lorries and other large vehicles and he noted that whilst MBC and KCC are promoting action against climate change they are not taking sufficient care to protect verges on rural roads and lanes. It was noted that many of the sites offered for housing would need to be served via these minor roads which have no pedestrian footways.
- 6. Amendments to the existing Neighbourhood Plan.** MA reported that at the Parish Council meeting on 3rd February, 2020 the Parish Clerk reported that he had a quotation from FERIA for making the amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan and the Parish Council had agreed to accept their quotation. It is hoped that this work will now be carried out as a matter of urgency, including altering the date of the Neighbourhood Plan to February 2020. JP stressed the need for Policy PW2 to be updated and it was agreed that work on this and any other necessary additions or updates be discussed at the next meeting of the Group as a main item on the agenda. It is accepted that this will result in the need to go out to public consultation again.
- 7. Maidstone Borough Local Plan. Call for Sites.** RO reported that the Group's document commenting on the call for sites was submitted to MBC on 21 January 2020 and the Parish Council's comments have also been submitted. It was noted that MBC have issued a press release on 4 February 2020 which says that it will be necessary for MBC to seek additional time to fully consider all the submissions made. The Parish Council is to hold a public meeting for residents to be informed and to discuss the call for sites. PR asked MA if she would be prepared to speak about the work of the Group in respect of the call for sites and she agreed to do this. It was stressed that residents should be urged to write individually to MBC with their comments on the call for sites. PR said that it is important to keep our MP, Helen Grant (HG) informed on this matter. HG has indicated that she will support the Parish Council and will try to attend the public meeting. It was agreed that the residents need to be urged to take action and should be given facts, such as that if all the sites were accepted this would result in 4000+ houses being built in Staplehurst and on land bordering the A229 between Cross-at-Hand and Stile Bridge. RO was asked to send MBC details of the bus service survey and the result of the meeting which he and LB had with Arriva's local manager, pointing out that Staplehurst has a very poor and unreliable hourly bus service which is not appropriate for what MBC regard as a Rural Service Centre.
- 8. David Wilson Homes Dickens Gate site – foul and surface water drainage.** PR reported that a resident in Lindridge Lane had spoken at the start of the Parish Council meeting on 3 February, 2020 expressing his concern at flooding which seems to be caused by the flow of surface water from the Dickens Gate site. The resident is a civil engineer with extensive knowledge of drainage design and he

said that the developers designs for foul and surface water had not been approved and signed off by KCC and Southern Water respectively. The resident has subsequently offered to liaise with the Parish Council to put pressure on the parties involved to get the designs approved and signed off. LB said that Kent County Councillor Eric Hotson should be included in all discussions and correspondence relating to the surface water drainage system. LB briefed the meeting on her involvement with the foul and surface water drainage problems over the Christmas and New Year holidays on the Dickens Gate site and in Marden Road.

- 9. Reported Decisions.** JB reported that the planning application 19/504275/OUT for 4 new houses on land to the north of West View, Maidstone Road, has been refused by MBC, as recommended by SPC and that a technical document prepared by MBC gave the grounds for refusal, many of which can be used in future by SPC when recommending refusal on planning applications made for sites north of the railway, as they include subjects such as sustainability, visual amenity and the impact on the character of the rural landscape.
- 10. Asset of Community Value:** PR said he has spoken with the manager of the King's Head public house and will be having a further meeting with her shortly.
- 11. Sainsbury's:** PR reported that he has been in contact with Sainsburys to see what progress has been made on their new supermarket. Sainsburys are having to undertake an asbestos survey of the existing building before it can be demolished and this has caused some delay.
- 12. Any other business.** RO raised the matter of rainwater harvesting and suggested that this should be considered for inclusion in any future revision of the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Meeting closed at 9.25pm.**

**Meetings in 2020 are scheduled as follows: March 4, April 8, May 6, June 3, July 1, August 5, September 2, October 7, November 11, December 9.**

Robin Oakley

6 February, 2020