

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 21st November 2016 at 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Claridge, Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Reardon, Riordan, Spearink and Silkin who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Perry and Sharp.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interest in Items on the Agenda – none declared.

Requests for Dispensation – none requested.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Minute pages 1572-1576 of 7th November 2016 were proposed for approval by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Riordan, APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Silkin and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

FINANCE REPORTS:-

1. Accounts for payment for approval. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Gosling, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Payments for the period 8th October to 11th November totalled £12,494.99; receipts for the period were £7,644.05 (Parish Council) and £0.50 (Village Centre Contingency).
2. Summation of Accounts to 11 November 2016 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.
3. Draft Budget for 2017-18 – for information and comment (final approval will be in January 2017). Councillors NOTED the status of the draft budget (version 2) and the following points: the draft reflected the previously agreed staff budget (Min1575); the draft currently showed an increase in the precept; however, the draft did not reflect figures for receipt of grants via LCTS Government Support or MBC Parish Services Scheme (including public toilets grant) as this information was unlikely to be available until nearer final approval of the budget; Finance Group would consider a further iteration of the budget at its next meeting and then Full Council would be asked to approve the final budget in January.
4. Bell Lane Pond – Quotation for excavation and further clearance work (for decision). Councillors NOTED the Clerk's report dated 15/11/16. Proposed by Councillor Gosling, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors AGREED to accept the quotation from Twig Group of £785.16 plus VAT to undertake additional clearance and excavation works to restore the pond's connection to its natural inlet and to facilitate KCC's examination of the inlet pipe and water flow. It was NOTED that the work to date had much improved the pond area. As a point of information Councillor Spearink advised that Carillion had been identified as owner of land adjacent to footpath KM312 to the north of the pond and would be contacted about the condition of the path.
5. Youth Club – Proposal and quotation to replace inner hedge (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Spearink, Councillors AGREED the quotation from Forestry First of £1,220 plus VAT to cut the internal hedge to ground level and replace with privet as set out in the Assistant Clerk's report dated 09/11/16.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:-

1. Action with Communities in Rural Kent – Invitation to Annual Meeting 14/12/16 (for response by 7/12/16). Councillors were asked to notify the Parish Office if they wished to attend the AGM.
2. KCC Highways and Transportation Survey – For response by 25/11/16 (draft response circulated separately). Councillors NOTED with thanks the draft response prepared by the Assistant Clerk and AGREED that it should be sent to KCC.
3. Kent County Council Budget Consultation – Invitation to comment (by 27/11/16). Chairman Silkin encouraged Councillors to respond individually to the consultation; details of the consultation had been published for public information on the village website at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/latest_news.
4. MBC Budget Consultation – Response to public consultation (PR: Min 1572-3). No further comment.
5. Parish Surgery – (i) Reports on parish surgeries held 12/19 November (TB/PS/MA); subjects raised were: the use of Bell Lane car park (to be discussed at the next meeting of Full Council), Stanley Farm planning appeal, Sainsbury's sites; (ii) Appointment of representatives for future dates – 3rd December Chairman Silkin, 10th December Councillor Buller. No surgeries would be held on 17th or 24th December.
6. Policing in Kent 2017-2021 – Invitation from Police and Crime Commissioner to participate in a public consultation about a new plan (for response by 02/12/16) (PS: Min 1573). Councillor Spearink said he had completed the survey and encouraged others to do likewise; information about the survey had been published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/latest_news.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (from Committee/Groups/Office on specific issues or as regular update)

1. Clerk's Report – the Clerk reported: (i) the closing date for survey responses about parking in Headcorn Road had passed and a report would be submitted for the next meeting of council; (ii) the Parish Office was preparing arrangements for the Christmas social evening; (iii) the formal notice of vacancy had been issued for former Councillor Kelly's position and if no call for election were made within the allotted time there would be two posts available for filling by co-option; (iv) Sainsbury's had advised that before Christmas it planned to take down the petrol station canopy and renew the hoardings; (v) the Chairman's letter to the NatWest Chief Executive about the bank's Staplehurst branch had been acknowledged and a full response was now awaited.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - a) Neighbourhood Plan – Post-referendum update (for noting). Councillors NOTED the Clerk's report dated 15/11/16 and specifically that MBC Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee had issued a recommendation to Maidstone Borough Council that the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan be made; this step would complete the formal process and would be scheduled for the Maidstone Borough Council meeting on 07/12/16.
 - b) Rural Settlement Group – Minutes of meeting 05/10/16 (for noting). NOTED by councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx.
 - c) Rural Settlement Group – Recommendations of the RSG relating to the Neighbourhood Plan and role of the RSG (for decision). Councillors NOTED the recommendations that: the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan is to be the front and centre of all business conducted by Staplehurst Parish Council, not only planning matters; questions should be asked on all matters about conformity/compliance with the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan, the emerging Local Plan and the existing Local Plan. They AGREED that all councillors and members of the Rural Settlement Group should be issued with a copy of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk stated that FERIA Urbanism intended to issue a final copy after the formal making of

the plan and copies would be produced thereafter. Councillors AGREED that it was an appropriate time to review the terms of reference of the Rural Settlement Group.

3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only
 - a) Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) AGM – Oral report on AGM proceedings 19/11/16 (RS/AS). Chairman Silkin reported that a representative of the Department of Communities and Local Government had given an interesting presentation, the content of which KALC would make available on its website. He reported that the formal business of the AGM included a supported motion from the Maidstone Area Committee advocating the preservation of the sub-Post Office network.
 - b) Wimpey Field – Update on transfer and proposed works. The Clerk advised that he was still seeking draft transfer documentation but the latest delay appeared to be due to the absence of Taylor Wimpey’s solicitor. Councillor Spearink stated that he had been seeking to clarify what was the prescribed depth of the pond, although this would not be within the Parish Council’s area of responsibility.
 - c) Village Centre Development Group – Councillor Lain-Rose reported that the Group had received submissions from architects and was planning to hold a public consultation event in January.
 - d) Staplehurst Merit Award – Further to previous discussion (Mins 1566 and 1574) Councillor Riordan stated that it was planned to present the award at December’s Christmas social event and that he would provide the Parish Office with a letter of invitation to send to the chosen recipient.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COUNCILS, AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS for noting:-

1. Borough Councillor’s Oral Report – no report, neither borough councillor being present.
2. PCSO Report – monthly crime statistics. PCSO Gardner’s report dated 17th November showed seven crimes: two burglary other than dwelling; two criminal damage; one theft from motor vehicle; one theft; one theft of pedal cycle. NOTED by councillors.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting):-

No reports received.

URGENT MATTERS (at Chairman’s discretion, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting)

No items were raised.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting four speakers discussed the support and advice (including from the Carnival & Fete Committee and parish councillors) that was being extended to residents interested in staging a fireworks display in Staplehurst. It was noted that the cost of fireworks was significant. After the meeting a resident stated that the condition of footpath KM308 was poor and he had reported it to Kent County Council.