

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016 at 7.45 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Claridge (until the point indicated in the minutes), Gosling (until the point indicated in the minutes), Kelly, Lain-Rose, Perry (from the point indicated in the minutes due to attending borough council business), Reardon, Riordan (from the point indicated in the minutes), Sharp, Spearink and Silkin who was in the Chair.  
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Butcher and Manning whose apologies were accepted.

**CO-OPTION TO FILL COUNCILLOR VACANCY** followed by the signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Buller, councillors RESOLVED by majority, in accordance with standing order 3q, to vote by signed ballot on this agenda item. *Chairman Silkin closed the meeting to receive presentations from Mr Patrick Riordan and Mrs Gillian Smith who had confirmed they wished to be considered for co-option and had submitted personal statements which had been circulated to councillors. After the presentations Chairman Silkin thanked both candidates and reopened the meeting.* After a signed ballot of councillors present MR PATRICK RIORDAN was co-opted to the Parish Council by a majority vote. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and Councillor Riordan took his place at the Council meeting.

**URGENT ITEM:** - None requested.

**COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the Agenda:-

Lobbying – Councillors Buller, Burnham, Lain-Rose and Spearink declared they had been lobbied about the A229 crossroads. Councillor Buller declared she had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan and Village Clean-Up.

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 1511-1515 of 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were proposed for approval by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Silkin and made available at [http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes\\_of\\_the\\_last\\_meetings.aspx](http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx).

### **ACCOUNTS & FINANCES**

1. Accounts for payment for approval. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Buller, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Payments for the period 6 February to 11 March totalled £9,912.79; receipts for the period were £1,893.11 (Parish Council) and £0.88 (Village Centre Contingency Account).
2. Summation of Accounts to 11 March 2016. NOTED by councillors and published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes\\_of\\_the\\_last\\_meetings.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx).
3. Action with Communities in Rural Kent – 2016/17 Membership Renewal (for decision). Councillors NOTED that ACRK had worked with SPC to deliver the Staplehurst Housing Survey in 2010 and that a renewal of the survey would be discussed as a later item. Noting that ACRK was no longer offering joint memberships (previously taken up by the Parish Council with the Village Centre Management Committee), Councillors RESOLVED to renew membership for 2016-17 in the Parish Council's name at a cost of £50.
4. Jubilee Field Drainage – Request from JFMC for financial support (for decision). *Councillor Perry joined the meeting.* Councillor Perry commented that he felt the Jubilee

Field was a very important village facility and that as freeholder the Parish Council had responsibilities. Councillor Lain-Rose advised that the Maidstone Leisure Trust was inviting applications for grants but the deadline for applications was the end of March; Councillors AGREED that Councillor Lain-Rose should research further details. Noting that the required drainage work would need to be undertaken after the end of the football season in May, Councillors AGREED IN PRINCIPLE to support the Jubilee Field Management Committee's funding requirements up to £2,000 and REQUESTED that further quotations be obtained, including from the installer of the original drainage, and that investigation of grant funding be pursued.

**CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-**

1. Neighbourhood Plan – Verbal Update on Examination Status (Steering Group) (for information). Councillor Buller and the Clerk confirmed that further information had been submitted to the Examiner and the Group was hoping to receive confirmation that her questions had been fully addressed.
2. Borough Council Report – *Chairman Silkin closed the meeting to hear contributions from Borough Councillors Brice and Perry.* Councillor Perry commended Councillor Burnham's work on the Parish Council's response to the Maidstone Local Plan consultation and Councillor Buller's presentation to MBC Planning Committee objecting to the Pullen Farm solar farm application. He reported that he and Councillor Brice were in discussions with MBC and KCC representatives about proposals for redesign of the A229 crossroads. He commented that a letter from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning was encouraging about the effectiveness of neighbourhood plans and about the management of gypsy and traveller sites. He welcomed the dismissal of an appeal against refusal to grant permission for 220 homes in Boughton Lane in south Maidstone, noting that the highways factors cited in the dismissal were relevant for other development proposals in the south of the borough. Councillor Brice reported that she had been engaged in discussions about the Parade, school parking, Bell Lane, bus services, dog-fouling, leisure provision, water supply and various residents' issues and was working on analysis of the borough council's targeted five year housing supply. *Councillor Silkin reopened the meeting.* The Parish Council recognised the very detailed work that analysing the five year housing supply involved and thanked Councillor Brice for taking this on.
3. Caretaker's Report – The Clerk reported that the caretaker was currently working two mornings a week. He would be attending to a repair of the memorial bench by Crown Cottages in High Street.
4. Consultation - Technical consultation on implementation of planning changes - closing date 15/04/16 (deferred from 7<sup>th</sup> March). Chairman Silkin and Councillor Burnham undertook to review the proposals and report back on any identified issues.
5. A229 Crossroads – Update on proposals (previously discussed Min 1511). Councillors NOTED that the Clerk had written to the MBC Chief Executive to express the Parish Council's concerns and that a response was awaited.
6. Parish Surgery – (1) Reports on surgeries since 12<sup>th</sup> March (PS/MA). Councillor Spearink reported that residents had discussed concerns about the crossroads and about development at Hen & Duckhurst Farm. Councillor Ashby reported that residents had discussed advertising boards on roadsides, Headcorn Road speed limit, crossroads, dog-fouling, litter at the Parade, the gas leak roadworks and Neighbourhood Watch activity. (2) Allocation of representatives for April Surgeries: Councillor Gosling volunteered to attend the surgery on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.
7. Speedwatch – Purchase of replacement Speed Indicating Device (for noting). Councillors NOTED that the new device was being purchased and that on its receipt the

- old device would be offered for sale. Councillor Buller will update councillors. *Councillor Claridge left the meeting.*
8. Staplehurst Carnival & Fete – Invitation to book a stall (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Silkin, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, councillors AGREED to book a stall at a cost of £10.
  9. Staplehurst Housing Survey 2016 – Proposal by Rural Settlement Group to initiate work to update the 2010 survey (for decision). Councillors Burnham and Buller discussed the proposal submitted by the Chairman of RSG, highlighting that the 2010 survey was out of date and that an updated version would complement the Neighbourhood Plan and prove to be a useful point of reference in assessment of planning applications. Councillors NOTED that Tessa O’Sullivan of Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) who had worked on the 2010 survey was available to take on the task of updating the survey and that the Chairman of RSG would be happy to work with her. Councillors AGREED in principle that the Staplehurst Housing Survey should be updated and asked the Chairman of RSG to take matters forward with ACRK to determine the extent of the survey and the related costs.
  10. Staplehurst Parish Council Annual Report – Verbal proposal about format (JB) (for decision). Councillors AGREED to retain the current format of the Annual Report.
  11. Village Clean-Up – Report on 12<sup>th</sup> March (for information) and proposals for donations and acquisition of equipment (for decision) (JB). Councillors NOTED Councillor Buller’s report of the successful clean-up day. They AGREED to purchase additional equipment: 10 bag-openers at a total cost of £80 and 10 litter-pickers at £11.99 each. Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Gosling councillors AGREED to donate £50 to the WI in recognition of its contribution to the clean-up day. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Sharp councillors AGREED to donate £50 to the Youth Club to thank it for use of its building on the clean-up day. *During a brief closure of the meeting Borough Councillor Brice reported that she was talking to MBC about it undertaking a deep clean of the Bell Lane car-park.*
  12. Village Planters – Proposal to seek bids for maintenance (PK). Councillor Kelly reported that he had visited the current maintenance contractor and discussed the quality of planting. Councillors NOTED the maintenance contract was due for best value review and that three months’ notice of termination applied. They AGREED that Councillor Lain-Rose’s offer to write a specification for consideration at the next council meeting should be accepted. Councillor Kelly declared that his business would be interested in responding to an invitation to bid.

#### **COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS** – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting 15/04/16. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst\\_transport.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx)  
Councillor Spearink reported that KCC was proposing to withdraw subsidies from evening bus services and that MBC’s replacement bus shelters were due to be installed shortly. *During a brief closure of the meeting Borough Councillor Brice said she would find out more information about the replacement shelters. Councillor Gosling left the meeting.*
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, RS, PS) Next meeting 23/03/16. Report of meeting 20/01/16 posted at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc\\_emergency\\_planning\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx)
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, CC, TB, AG, PK, RS, PS)  
[http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes\\_of\\_the\\_last\\_meetings.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx)
4. Allotments Project Group (TB, PK, JB, BM) Next meeting? [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub\\_groups\\_1.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_1.aspx)
5. Strategy & Policy Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, CC, SL, RS) Next meeting?  
[http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy_group.aspx)
6. Finance Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SL, JR) Next meeting 29/04/16. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx).
7. Economic & Tourism Development (PS) Next meeting?

8. Oliver Road Open Space (PK, SL, AS, PS) Next meeting 21 April 2016 (with Taylor Wimpey). Noting that a meeting is to be held with Taylor Wimpey to discuss progress towards handover, the Group AGREED to hold a separate meeting about maintenance arrangements.
9. Playscheme (TB, JB) Next meeting? [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth\\_activities\\_1.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx)
10. Publicity & Website Group (TB, PK, MA, JB, CC, SL, JR) Next meeting 22/03/16. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity\\_website.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx) Councillor Sharp agreed to write a profile for the Parish Magazine.
11. Rural Settlement Group (JP, JB, TB, AS) Next meeting 06/04/16. Report of meeting 09/03/16 awaited. Reports of meetings 04/11/15 and 03/02/16 posted at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural\\_settlement\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx).
12. Staff Group (JB, PK, SL, BM, JP) Next meeting?
13. Staplehurst Village Centre Development Group (TB, AG, SL) Next meeting 14/04/16. Report of meeting 10/03/16 posted at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village\\_centre\\_redevelopment\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_redevelopment_group.aspx)
14. Staplehurst Youth Parish Council (SL-R) Councillor Lain-Rose said that he would be meeting interested young people for an exploratory meeting on 28/03/16.
15. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, PK, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
16. Village Enhancement Group (TB, PK, JB, PB, JR, AS) Next meeting? [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub\\_groups.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx)
17. Youth Club (PK) Next meeting? [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst\\_youth\\_club.aspx](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](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](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_2.aspx)
3. Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee (JP, BM) Next meeting 07/06/16. Report of meeting 08/03/16 posted at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn\\_aerodrome.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx)
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB, PK) Next meeting? [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee\\_fields\\_users\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx)
5. KALC Area Committee (RS, PK, PB, JP) Next meeting? Report of meeting 24/02/16 awaited. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent\\_association\\_of\\_local\\_councils.aspx](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, PS) Next meeting?
8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting? Reports of meetings 23/09/15 and 22/10/15 awaited. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/mccabe\\_day\\_centre.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/mccabe_day_centre.aspx)
9. Neighbourhood Watch (JB) [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police\\_liaison.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx)
10. Police/Parish Liaison (PB, BM, AS) Next meeting? Report of meeting 24/09/15 awaited. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police\\_liaison.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx)
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group (JP, PS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
12. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting 07/06/16. Report of meeting 01/03/16 awaited. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>. Councillor Spearink reported that staffing levels had improved. He said there were still concerns about the crossroads and parking on the pavement near the garage in High Street (to be discussed at meeting with Kent Highways on 27<sup>th</sup> April).
13. Speed Watch (JB) <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx>
14. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
15. Staplehurst Library Users Group (JB, BM) Next meeting?
16. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, AS, RS). Next meeting? Report of meeting 14/10/15 awaited. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient\\_participation\\_group\\_at\\_health\\_centre.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx).
17. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (AG, SL, BM, JR)
18. Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan Group (PS) Next meeting 01/04/16. Report of meeting 27/07/15 awaited.
19. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (MA, RS) Next meeting? Reports of meetings 10/02/16 and 01/03/16 awaited. [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village\\_centre\\_trust.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx)
20. Village Golf & Sports Club (PB) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Before the meeting a representative of the Jubilee Field Management Committee reported that the Jubilee Field football pitches were at times unusable during the season due to some areas which failed to drain. He said that up to four months use was being lost, which meant Staplehurst teams had to play more away games and pitch hire revenues were being lost. A potential solution had been identified involving the installation of up to fifteen new drainage runs at an estimated cost of between £1,500 and £2,000. On behalf of the committee he asked the Parish Council to consider granting financial support when discussing Accounts & Finances item 4. On a separate maintenance issue the representative confirmed that the changing room boiler was operating satisfactorily for the users' purposes. The Chair of Staplehurst Emergency Help Team stated that the team's AGM would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. He also advised that he had contacted KCC about the Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan and had been advised that a meeting of representatives would be held on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

**POLICE REPORT:** PCSO Gardner's report stated there had been ten crimes: one burglary other than dwelling (two arrests made); one vehicle interference; one theft from motor vehicle; two thefts; four criminal damage; one burglary.