

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 7th July 2014 at 7.40 p.m.

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors Butcher, Reardon and Sharp whose reasons for apology were accepted.

URGENT ITEMS: - Councillors took one item of urgent business relating to the Chairman's position.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

Lobbying – Councillors Buller, Burnham, Lain-Rose, Perry, Silkin and Spearink declared they had been lobbied about street lights. Councillors Buller and Lain-Rose declared they had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan. Councillors Lain-Rose, Perry and Spearink declared they had been lobbied about Lime Trees parking. Councillor Perry declared he had been lobbied about street cleaning. Councillor Lain-Rose declared he had been lobbied about the Youth Club.

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in items on the agenda – Councillor Kelly declared an interest in Lime Trees parking.

Requests for dispensation – none requested.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Pages 1354-1357 of 16th June 2014 were proposed for approval by Councillor Kemp, seconded by Councillor Burnham, approved by councillors nem con, signed by the Chairman and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Urgent Items – Chairman Perry advised that due to his MBC responsibilities, including as a Cabinet member, he felt it would be prudent to stand down from the position of chairman and from planning committee membership after the end of August.
2. Neighbourhood Plan – Review of Reg. 14 Consultation to date. The Clerk asked councillors to support the drop-in event at the library on 12th July. He said at the half-way point in the consultation process 14 on-line questionnaires had been completed and that he awaited updated figures.
3. Caretaker's Report – no items to report.
4. Honours List 2015 – NALC correspondence about how to make nominations was noted by councillors.
5. Jubilee Field – Repair of equipment (for decision). Councillors asked for further information about the cause of the damage to the CCTV camera and for a temporary replacement to be expedited before committing to expenditure.
6. KALC Clerks' Conference – Councillors noted the Clerk's report (posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx).
7. Kent County Councillor Meeting – Verbal Report. Chairman Perry reported that subjects discussed with Cllr Hotson included highways issues, KCC library service and ownership of Surrenden Playing Field.
8. Kent Highways – Councillors noted the report of the meeting with Kent Highways representatives that covered planned works, the Neighbourhood Plan, planning issues

- and vegetation enquiries. Councillor Green said that although grass verges along Maidstone Road had been trimmed hedges also needed attention.
9. Street Lights – Request to halt decommissioning in Chapel Lane (for decision). *Chairman Perry closed the meeting to allow contributions from members of the public.* Several residents spoke about the importance of the two lights to users of Chapel Lane and lack of consultation by the Parish Council when it decided to decommission them. *Chairman Perry reopened the meeting.* Some members of the council expressed views about the lights and regrets for failings in consultation. Proposed by Councillor Burnham, seconded by Chairman Perry, councillors agreed to place a halt on decommissioning the two lights in Chapel Lane while other options could be investigated, specifically subsidising private provision of light, for example by the chapel should it wish to do so, or replacing the two lights with a new single public one, such investigation to involve local residents. *Chairman Perry closed the meeting to allow further contributions from members of the public.* A resident spoke about the importance of both lights. *Chairman Perry reopened the meeting.*
 10. Library Surgery – Report (JP & SL-R). Chairman Perry said two visitors had discussed solar farms.
 11. Maidstone Borough Council Update – Chairman Perry said that the new MBC Cabinet wanted to review past events and was determined to adopt a fresh approach, including making the Neighbourhood Plan experience better.
 12. Parish Council Elections 2015 – Proposal for Action. Councillor Green proposed a course of action ahead of the 2015 elections to encourage interest in serving as a member of the Parish Council. Councillors agreed that it was important to start this process now and to prepare the ground for publication of candidate details (both existing and potential new councillors) on the village website and posters next year. Councillors also agreed that an information evening would be a good idea.
 13. Parking on Lime Trees – Proposal to support extended restrictions. Councillor Spearink said he had been in contact with the Head of MBC Parking Operations who had explained the department's approach following introduction of new measures. Councillors agreed that it would be appropriate to allow the new measures time to take effect and thereby assess the true impact.
 14. Rural Housing Policy Review – Questionnaire (for decision re response). Councillors agreed to Chairman Perry's proposal that he liaise with Councillors Burnham and Kelly and the Clerk to respond to the questionnaire received via KALC about the Council's views on rural affordable housing.
 15. Street Cleaning – Proposal to extend parish cleaning. Chairman Perry said he had received a number of comments about rubbish on rural roads. Councillor Kelly discussed the practical difficulties of cleaning verges and ditches. Councillor Green asked that other parishes be approached to ascertain what, if anything, they did.
 16. Surrenden Playing Field – Extension of Lease (JP) & Drainage (TB). Councillors agreed to defer discussion about drainage work pending an updated view on the freehold or leasehold of the field that Chairman Perry would seek from MBC representatives.

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting 19/09/14. Report of meeting 20/06/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx *Councillor Lain-Rose left the meeting at this point.* Proposal to lobby for change of timetable – Councillor Spearink advised that Arriva had agreed a timetable amendment to accommodate 9.30 travellers to Maidstone from the village and asked that an expression of gratitude be sent. Councillor Burnham said that he had posted on the village forum information about the Southeastern Trains draft timetables for 2015.

2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, NK, RS, PS) Next meeting? Minutes of meetings 19/06/14 and 24/04/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, TB, AG, SG, PK, NK, JP, PS) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx Councillor Burnham reported that he and others had attended a solar farm information evening organised by Ulcombe Parish Council, which had proved to be interesting and featured good representation from MBC.
4. Allotments Project Group (JP, 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) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx Chairman Perry said that a review of the Council's financial regulations would be undertaken.
7. Playscheme (TB, JB, NK) Next meeting 28/08/14. Report of meeting 25/06/14 was noted by councillors. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx
8. Publicity & Website Group (JP, TB, PK, MA, JB, NK, SL, JR) Next meeting? Report of meeting 25/03/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx Councillor Burnham reported that Councillor Reardon was seeking to arrange a meeting of the group on 15th July.
9. Rural Settlement Group including Neighbourhood Plan (JP, JB, AS) Next meeting 16/07/14. Report of meeting 18/06/14 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx. Councillor Green spoke of meetings held about the Neighbourhood Plan between members of the Steering Group and representatives of Network Rail and landowners, in which ideas about the station and commercial areas had been discussed and visitors were encouraged to respond to the current consultation.
10. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx> Councillor Burnham said that the Group still had to discuss quotations for work on the play area surface.
11. Village Enhancement Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, PB, SL, JR, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx. Councillor Kelly reported that posts had been installed on Bell Lane verges; the Clerk advised that this had been done by MBC Parking Operations.
12. Youth Club (SL, PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx Councillor Kelly reported that a satisfactory meeting had been held with Young Kent.

REPORTS FOR NOTING from local community groups:-

1. Carnival & Fete (SL, BM) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_carnival_fete_committee.aspx Councillor Burnham thanked the Carnival & Fete Committee for the splendid event on 28th June. Councillor Kelly offered a suggestion about receipts that Councillor Manning undertook to pass on to the Committee.
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 03/06/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB) Next meeting? Minutes of meetings 26/06/14 and 27/03/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx
5. KALC Area Committee (JP, PB, PK, RS, PS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx
6. Kent Community Alcohol Partnership (PB) Next meeting? Councillor Buller said she had attended the latest meeting on 02/07/14.
7. Knoxbridge A229 Residents' Group (BM, NK, PS) Next meeting?
8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting 17/07/14. 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 21/08/14. Minutes of meeting 27/05/14 awaited http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group (JP, NK, PS) Next meeting 08/07/14. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>

12. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx> Councillor Spearink advised that Sobell Lodge would be hosting a beer tasting event on the afternoon of 2nd August.
13. Speed Watch (JB) <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx> Report of activity 01/07/14 was noted.
14. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
15. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, RS) Report of meeting 22/01/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx
16. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (AG, SL, BM, JR)
17. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (SL & PB) Next meeting? Reports of meetings 15/04/14 and 13/05/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
18. Village Sports & Social Club (PB) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: No further items were raised.

LIBRARY SURGERY: 26th July - Councillor Green to represent SPC at a joint surgery with Borough Councillor Perry.