

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 7th January 2019 at 7.50 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Forward, Kelly, Lain-Rose, Manning, Perry, Pontet, Riordan, Sharp, Silkin, Smith, Symes and Burnham who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr MJ Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillor Reardon whose reason for apology was accepted.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – none declared.

Requests for Dispensation – none requested.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Minute pages 1736-1738 of 17th December 2018 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Burnham and made available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting (1):

Councillors agreed to discuss the following two items at an earlier point than scheduled in the agenda to accommodate public interest.

1. Street Naming Request – Correspondence from Maidstone Borough Council requesting proposals for names to be allocated to roads on Hen & Duckhurst Farm (for decision). *Chairman Burnham closed the meeting to allow contributions from members of the public.* Mr Peter Spearink discussed a previously circulated list of proposed names. He said he had sought public nominations and wished to recommend to the Parish Council ten of the names submitted. To make up the requested fifteen names, Mr Spearink proposed a further five names of men who had lost their lives in World War One, which he asked members of the public to draw at random. He said that he had discussed with MBC management its criteria for selecting names, which it had indicated would now include a 'fifty-year deceased' rule. He said this rule had not been confirmed and MBC had agreed that his proposed list could be submitted. *Chairman Burnham reopened the meeting.* Appreciation of Mr Spearink's work was expressed. Councillors voiced a range of views about the selection of names presented, some in favour and some looking for a wider choice with more suggestions to reflect the natural area or ideas submitted from other parties such as schoolchildren (to be noted for future reference). It was RESOLVED by majority: (a) substitute Lade for Cocklefield in the originally proposed list: (b) recommend to MBC the following names for use on Hen & Duckhurst Farm: Braganza, Vickery, Liddicoat, Hegarty, Penfold, Jenkins, Allstrum, Dawkins, Ulricson, Lade, Gurr, Crouch, Pearson, Pennefather, Maybourne. It was NOTED that MBC would check the names and make the ultimate decision including the application of suffixes to the names.
2. Pavement Issues in Staplehurst – Correspondence from Kent Highways about investigations into possible improvements (for noting). Councillors NOTED that Councillor Forward and Mr Robin Kenworthy had held a very productive meeting with Kent Highways to discuss issues affecting pavement access around the village and that investigations into installing more dropped kerbs will be made. *Chairman Burnham briefly closed the meeting to allow a contribution from Mr Kenworthy and to express the Council's thanks for his efforts.* Councillor Forward said she would continue to work with Mr Kenworthy on the project. The Parish Office will convey the Council's appreciation to Kent Highways.

FINANCE REPORTS

1. Draft Budget & Precept Requirement 2019-20 – Latest draft (for comment). The latest draft budget had been adjusted to include additional possible expenditure on Surrenden Field grass, Parish Council streetlights, war memorial work and new Parish Council e-mail arrangements. It also reflected the confirmed tax base figure supplied by MBC. Notwithstanding the amendments, the draft budget retained the proposed increase in the precept at a level of 3% (Min1733). Councillor Perry commented that result of withdrawing Parish Council street sweeping and relying on MBC would be noticed. Councillors NOTED that the finalised budget would be proposed for approval at the next meeting on 28/01/19.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting (2):

1. Elections 2019 – Plans for initiatives to raise awareness of Parish Council elections to be held on 02/05/19 (for decision). Councillors NOTED the Clerk's proposals to promote awareness of the elections, what Parish Councils do and what it means to be a parish councillor. The Parish Office will take forward arrangements for appropriate events and publicity.
2. Parish Council Surgery – (i) Report of surgery 29/12/18 – Councillors NOTED Chairman Burnham's report. Issues raised were: the condition of The Parade (for review by Community Enhancement Group); Sainsbury's sites; planting at the station area; litter on main roads; Surrenden Field lease; need for proper wheel-washing facilities on construction sites; the railings outside Vine House which are yet to be replaced (KCC has ordered them and the Parish Council continues to press for completion); (ii) Appointment of representatives for future surgeries: 26th January – Councillors Smith and Pontet; 23rd February – Councillor Ashby.
3. War Memorial – Request to fund a new memorial plaque in All Saints Church to commemorate American air force members who fell during World War Two (for initial discussion – full proposal to be provided). Councillors noted that the request had been prompted by a reference to the servicemen in the church's service of remembrance roll of honour. Councillor Manning commented that the servicemen were already commemorated at the dedicated memorial at the site of the former Advanced Landing Ground. Councillors AGREED to ask All Saints Church if it would agree to display a suitable notice providing information about the location and content of all the memorials in the parish. Chairman Burnham said he would take this forward.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported: the caretaker had installed a replacement noticeboard at the Parade; further supplies of salt for Parish Council bins had been ordered; solicitors had sent draft transfer documentation for footpath KM312; a meeting with David Wilson Homes was scheduled for 9th January - the company had notified an overrun of works into the evening of 7th January; Pinnock Lane would be closed for a day at Henhurst Farm on 10th January; he and the Chairman had written to KCC's Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services about the draft Libraries, Registration and Archives strategy and received a response that recognised the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan and the importance of all libraries.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - a. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Proposals for revisions of and further work on Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan (for decision). RESOLVED: the proposals should be discussed with MBC to obtain guidance on the materiality of the proposed changes and what they will mean for the revision process.
 - b. Surrenden Playing Field – Proposal to conclude a new lease agreement (for decision). Councillors NOTED that MBC had offered to the Parish Council a leasehold interest in Surrenden Field for 125 years at a peppercorn rent. Councillor Riordan said he thought

the Parish Council’s goal should still be the freehold; Councillors expressed appreciation for Councillor Perry’s previous efforts to seek it. Councillor Lain-Rose said that he would like to see the Parish Council have first refusal if MBC were minded to sell the field; Councillor Silkin commented that he felt this fell outside the scope of the lease. RESOLVED: agree to accept the offer of a 125-year lease at a peppercorn rent, subject to satisfaction with the arrangements for permitted use and with the documentation generally.

- 3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
 - a. Planning Committee – Chairman Burnham reported that Planning Committee had agreed to a request made in public forum by the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group to ask Helen Grant MP to support The Planning (Appeals) Bill, introduced by John Howell MP, which would limit the grounds of appeal against decisions on planning applications consistent with a neighbourhood development plan or local plan.
 - b. Safety & Security Event – Councillor Symes reported that she was inviting stakeholders to attend the event on 23rd February. She said she had been quoted a price of £175 for hire of the Village Centre halls. It was AGREED that the Parish Council should be the designated organiser of the event. The Parish Office will conclude booking arrangements for the venue. It was AGREED that the publication of the Spring Village Update should be brought forward by two weeks to accommodate publicity for the event.

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

- 1. Borough Councillor’s Report – Councillor Perry reported: MBC was pursuing its attempt to secure a judicial review of KCC’s use of developer money to fund viability studies of a Leeds-Langley relief road; MBC would soon be setting 2019-20 Council Tax; the Local Plan review was continuing; he had met the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and found him very supportive of neighbourhood plans.

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

No items.

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

No items.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting the Chair of NPRG commented that she had recommended to Planning Committee that the Parish Council should seek the support of Staplehurst’s MP for a Private Members Bill introduced to the House of Commons. The Planning (Appeals) Bill, introduced by John Howell MP, would limit the grounds of appeal against decisions on planning applications consistent with a neighbourhood development plan or local plan. After the meeting the following comments were made: there was a large amount of litter on the A229 verges south of the village; an incorrect telephone contact number had been published in a leaflet that David Wilson Homes had issued to residents near Hen & Duckhurst Farm.

The meeting finished at 9.50pm.