

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 2nd October 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Claridge, Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Reardon, Riordan, Sharp, Silkin, Smith, Spearink, Whittle (until the point indicated in the minutes) and Burnham who was in the Chair.

Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood (until the point indicated in the minutes)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Perry.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillors Lain-Rose and Riordan declared an interest in the Fireworks Event as members of the Jubilee Field Management Committee. Chairman Burnham declared an interest in Chapel Lane parking as a member of the United Reformed Church.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillors Burnham, Lain-Rose and Riordan requested dispensation to participate in discussion and voting on the items of declared interest in accordance with section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011. Dispensation was GRANTED.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Councillor Claridge requested an amendment to page 1645, section 'Parish Council and Planning Committee Meeting Dates 2018', line 2: delete, '(SL-R report 16/08/17 – deferred from 04/09/17)' and insert (SL-R report 11/09/17) - AGREED. Proposed by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, subject to the agreed amendment, minute pages 1645-1649 of 18th September 2017 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Burnham and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx. Councillor Whittle did not vote, not being present at the meeting in question. Councillors asked the Clerk to consult the MBC Monitoring Officer about abstention and non-voting.

ORDER OF BUSINESS RESOLVED – Chairman to reorder business from the listed agenda to prioritise specific items and notably the report from the Employment Group.

FINANCE REPORTS:-

Staplehurst Summer Play Scheme – Financial report and recommendation of payment to Play Place (for decision). Councillors NOTED the financial report on Summer Play Scheme 2017, which indicated that both income and costs had increased due to the extended operating hours. On average 30.25 children attended each session. Although the scheme still ran at a loss the operating deficit was 2% lower than in 2016. Proposed by Chairman Burnham, seconded by Councillor Silkin, Councillors RESOLVED to pay £725.18 to Play Place to fund the part of the deficit it had borne.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (1) (from Committee/Groups/Office on specific issues or as regular update)

Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only

- a) Crime Level in Staplehurst – Report on current initiatives (CC). Councillor Claridge reported he had attended a meeting arranged by Borough Councillor Brice with the Detective Inspector of Kent Police. Key points were: an issue with recording crimes meant that comparative statistics were likely to be unreliable until December; police discouraged the use of Facebook to report crimes; the neighbourhood watch scheme would benefit from fresh impetus; PCSO numbers were currently five short and Staplehurst's PCSO was covering a wider area – volunteer resource would be

welcome. Councillor Burnham said incidents had been reported in the Poyntell Road area; redeployment of a CCTV camera could be considered if suitable power could be funded and installed. Councillor Spearink said police advice was also clear in warning against the posting of social media messages that indicate absence from home on holidays. Councillor Riordan reported that there had been a case of vandalism at Jubilee Field.

- b) Footpath KM312 – Report of meeting with representative of Carillion 24/08/17 (CC). Councillor Claridge reported that he and the Deputy Clerk had met a representative of Carillion (owner of the land on which footpath KM312 was situated). The representative said that he would be recommending tree works following which the land could be offered to the Parish Council. He had proposed writing formally to the Parish Council to set out the proposal but the letter was still awaited. Councillors recognised that the company appeared to be dealing with other priorities and RESOLVED to await the letter.
- c) Wimpey Field – Reports: Bioblitz event 23/08/17; opening of new footpath (PS). Councillor Spearink reported: the Bioblitz event had been a great success with over one hundred people attending; Helen Grant MP had opened the new footpath; the current arrangements for cutting the grass paths were working well and should be continued in 2018 – AGREED by Councillors.

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

1. Maidstone Borough Local Plan – Advice from Solicitors re land north of Henhurst Farm pursuant to Min 1642. Councillors NOTED that legal advice indicated that changes to a Local Plan involved lengthy re-consultation and re-examination procedures; in the case of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan this would prevent adoption before March 2018. They also NOTED a suggestion that Counsel would need to advise on the merits of challenging adoption of the Local Plan compared to relying on a future review. Given initiatives taken by other parties in respect of the plan Councillors RESOLVED not to pursue further legal investigation but to await responses to correspondence to MBC and the Secretary of State.
2. Parking in Staplehurst:
 - a) Parking in Chapel Lane – Correspondence requesting support for extending parking restrictions at the entrance to Chapel Lane.
 - b) Parking in Station Road – Correspondence requesting a review of the 'traffic situation' and support for implementation of extended parking restrictions.
Councillor Riordan stated that he would be meeting Borough Councillor Brice and MBC's Parking Operations Manager to discuss a range of parking issues in the village and would include the two proposals in the discussion. Councillor Claridge highlighted the importance of considering the displacement effect of any measures.
3. Parking on Headcorn Road – KCC Consultation on proposed traffic regulation order to extend parking restrictions on north and south sides of Headcorn Road www.kent.gov.uk/highwaysconsultations (for comment by 13/10/17). Councillors NOTED the consultation related to proposals about which the Parish Council had consulted local residents at the end of 2016 and which had been favoured by a large majority of those responding.
4. A229 High Street – Report on survey of residents' views on suggested mitigation measures on northbound carriageway and western footpath. Councillors NOTED that the great majority of Chestnut Avenue residents responding to the survey had opposed the idea of widening the carriageway and realigning the footpath. RESOLVED: Kent Highways to be informed of the survey results.
5. Fireworks Event 04/11/17 – Request from organisers to use Jubilee Field lighting column to support provision of additional floodlighting for the event (PR) (for decision).

- Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Whittle, Councillors RESOLVED to AGREE to the requested use of the lighting column.
6. Surrenden Playing Field – Request from Staplehurst Carnival & Fete Committee to use field on 10/06/18 (morning – 10K run) and on 30/06/18 (all day – fete) (BM) (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Buller, Councillors RESOLVED to AGREE to the requested use of the field. Councillor Whittle abstained.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (2) (from Committee/Groups/Office on specific issues or as regular update)

1. Clerk's Report – the Clerk reported: vacancies for the Parish Support Officer and Caretaker roles were being advertised; the office team had been working on planned reconfiguration of the office space; the Clerk had written to the MBC Chief Executive and the Secretary of State about the Local Plan; the CCTV servicing programme had been completed; Growing Concern were replanting the village planters for the new season; skate park repainting had been completed; resurfacing of Five Oak Lane and Five Ash Lane was scheduled for later in October; the formal premises licence for Jubilee Field had been received; NatWest had advised that its mobile branch should start service on Saturday mornings in Staplehurst later in October.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
- a) Parish Council Website – Report from the Communications Group recommending the setting up of a new website (for decision). Councillors Lain-Rose and Reardon discussed the Group's report. Councillor Reardon highlighted the functionality of the new planning section. It was suggested that the meeting attendance record functionality did not give a true picture or real value. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Gosling, Councillors RESOLVED to AGREE the recommendations of Communications Group: (i) APPROVE the new website of Staplehurst Parish Council and to redirect the existing website address (domain) to the new website at www.staplehurst-pc.uk; (ii) give notice to the existing supplier of the current website for the contract to end in March 2018.
- b) Communications Group – Note of meeting 12/09/17. Councillors NOTED the report which was published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx. Councillor Reardon reported that the Village Update was on schedule for delivery later in October.
- c) Village Clean-Up 16th September - Report and request to agree donation to Youth Club and Men's Shed. Councillor Buller reported that the clean-up had been successful even with slightly fewer participants compared to last time. Her report was published at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED to make budgeted donations of £50 each to Staplehurst Youth Club and Staplehurst Men's Shed for their assistance at the event. Councillor Riordan said that he would promote a 'keep Staplehurst tidy' message through social media to maintain awareness of the litter issue. Councillor Buller said that the Station Redevelopment Group would look at what initiatives could be taken around that area.

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

1. Community Transport Awayday – Invitation from KCC to attend an awayday (02/11/17) covering the setting up of a community transport scheme (for decision). Councillor Manning volunteered to attend the awayday.
2. Parish Council Surgeries – Reports on key issues raised (CC/RS). No issues to report.

SPECIAL MOTION & REPORT - EMPLOYMENT GROUP:-

1. To move that the public be excluded from item 2 due to its confidential nature. Proposed by Councillor Burnham, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors

- RESOLVED to agree the motion (Councillors Claridge, Spearink and Whittle against).
Members of the public and the Clerk left the meeting.
2. To consider the recommendations of Employment Group regarding staff remuneration. Councillors considered the Employment Group's report titled '2018-19 Pay Review' and dated 22/09/17. After much debate and discussion the report's recommendations, proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose and seconded by Councillor Silkin, were APPROVED (for 11, against 2, abstention 1).

Councillor Whittle gave apologies and left the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting (3):

1. 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' – Department for Communities and Local Government consultation on planning future housing growth (for response by 09/11/17) <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>. Chairman Burnham volunteered to review the consultation questions and to report back to Full Council.
2. Action with Communities in Rural Kent – Invitation to AGM 26/10/17 (for decision). Councillors Buller and Silkin volunteered to attend the meeting.

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.....