

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 15th May 2017 at 7.15 p.m.

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors Claridge and Gosling.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN: Nominated by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillor Silkin accepted the nomination and, there being no other candidates, was elected unopposed and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMEN:

Nominated by Councillor Silkin, seconded by Councillor Buller, Councillors Burnham and Riordan were elected unopposed.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interest in Items on the Agenda – Councillor Lain-Rose declared an interest in Finance Reports items 4(c) Jubilee Field and 4(d) Youth Club and in Parish Council Reports item 2(d) Jubilee Field Car Park due to his membership of the Jubilee Field and Youth Club Management Committees.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillor Lain-Rose requested dispensation to participate in the discussion and voting on the items for which he had declared an interest, in accordance with section 33(2)(b) of the Localism Act 2011. The dispensation was GRANTED.

ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS OF COMMITTEE & GROUP MEMBERS

Councillor Perry arrived at the meeting. Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Ashby, the following appointments were AGREED:

1. Planning Committee – Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Riordan, Silkin, Sharp and Smith
2. Allotments Project Group – Councillors Burnham, Buller and Manning
3. Communications Group – Councillors Ashby, Burnham, Claridge, Lain-Rose, Reardon and Riordan
4. Economic & Tourism Development – no appointment was made as Councillors felt that the subject was covered by the new Business Forum.
5. Finance Group – Councillors Burnham, Lain-Rose, Perry, Riordan and Silkin
6. Local Transport – Councillors Burnham, Manning and Smith
7. Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Group – Councillors Buller, Burnham, Perry, Sharp and Smith
8. Oliver Road Open Space – Councillors Claridge, Lain-Rose, Manning, Riordan, Sharp and Spearink. Councillor Spearink said that the Group would be renamed in due course.
9. Playscheme – Councillors Buller, Burnham and Smith
10. Staff Group – Councillors Buller, Lain-Rose, Manning, Perry and Silkin
11. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – Councillors Lain-Rose and Silkin
12. Staplehurst Merit Award – Councillors Lain-Rose, Riordan, Sharp and Spearink
13. Staplehurst Village Centre Development Group – Councillors Burnham, Gosling, Lain-Rose and Riordan
14. Staplehurst Youth Parish Council – Councillor Lain-Rose

15. Strategy & Policy Group – Councillors Burnham, Lain-Rose, Perry, Riordan and Silkin
16. Surrenden Playing Field Group – Councillors Burnham, Manning, Reardon and Sharp
17. Village Enhancement Group – no appointments were made as the area of activity was considered to be covered by other Groups.

ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Burnham, the following appointments were AGREED:

1. Carnival & Fete – Councillors Lain-Rose, Manning and Sharp
2. Churchyard Liaison – Councillors Burnham and Spearink
3. Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee – Councillors Manning and Perry
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group – Councillors Lain-Rose, Perry and Riordan
5. KALC Area Committee – Councillors Lain-Rose, Perry and Silkin
6. Kent Community Alcohol Partnership – no appointment was required.
7. Knoxbridge A229 Residents' Group – Councillors Manning and Spearink
8. McCabe Day Centre – Councillor Buller
9. Neighbourhood Watch – Councillor Buller
10. Police/Parish Liaison – Councillors Manning and Sharp
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group – Councillors Ashby, Burnham, Perry and Spearink
12. Sobell Cheshire Home - Councillors Perry, Smith and Spearink
13. Speed Watch – Councillor Buller
14. Staplehurst Community Hub – no appointment was required.
15. Staplehurst Fireworks Group – Councillor Riordan
16. Staplehurst Library Users Group – Councillors Buller, Burnham and Manning
17. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group – Councillors Buller, Perry, Riordan, Sharp, Silkin and Whittle
18. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison – Councillors Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Reardon and Riordan
19. Staplehurst Remembrance Day Group – Councillors Manning and Reardon
20. Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan Group – Councillor Silkin
21. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust – Councillors Ashby and Silkin
22. Village Sports & Social Club – Councillor Whittle
23. Youth Club – Councillors Lain-Rose and Perry

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Minute pages 1611-1613 of 18th April 2017 were proposed for approval by Councillor Smith, 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. Councillors Reardon and Whittle abstained.

FINANCE REPORTS:-

1. Approval of Annual Return (recommended by Finance Group – Item 8 of meeting 27/04/17)
 - a) Section 1: Annual Governance Statement 2016/17. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Buller, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the affirmative responses to questions 1-8 of the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 (question 9 being not applicable).
 - b) Section 2: Accounting Statements 2016/17. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Burnham, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the Accounting Statements 2016/17 as prepared and circulated by the Finance Officer.

2. Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2017 (recommended by Finance Group – Item 8 meeting 27/04/17). Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Perry, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2017 as previously circulated. Councillor Whittle abstained.
3. Period for Exercise of Electors' Rights - In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015: proposed dates are from 5th June to 14th July. Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the period for the exercise of electors' rights as 5th June to 14th July inclusive.
4. Finance Group Meeting 27th April 2017 – Report (for noting) and recommendations (for decision): The report of Finance Group's meeting was NOTED and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx. Recommendations:
 - a) Item 4 – approve the setting up of access to electronic banking to cover the Parish Council's current and deposit accounts. Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the setting up of electronic banking arrangements with NatWest for the current and deposit accounts.
 - b) Item 7 – reappoint Iden Business Services as internal auditor for the coming year. Proposed by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Smith, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the reappointment of Iden Business Services as internal auditor for the coming year.
 - c) Item 9a – approve acceptance of a quote for grass cutting at Jubilee Field. Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Whittle, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1a Councillors RESOLVED nem con to ACCEPT the quote of £1,100 from the Jubilee Field Management Committee for cutting of grass at Jubilee Field in 2017.
 - d) Item 9b – approve acceptance of a quote for grass and hedge cutting at Youth Club. Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Perry, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1a Councillors RESOLVED nem con to ACCEPT the quote of £595 from Forestry First Ltd to cut the grass and hedge at Staplehurst Youth Club in 2017.
 - e) Item 10 (i) – approve listed proposals for contract renewals in next quarter. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Perry, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the renewal arrangements proposed for the next quarter as set out in Appendix A to the Finance Group report dated 27th April 2017.
 - f) Item 10 (ii) – approve payment of budgeted donations as listed. Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Whittle, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the payment of the budgeted donations for 2017-18 as set out in item 10(ii) and Appendix B of the Finance Group report dated 27th April 2017.
 - g) Item 10a – approve expenditure and additional budget for CCTV servicing. Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the increase of the CCTV budget by £2,000 to cover servicing of the three mobile cameras plus contingency. They authorised the Clerk to make suitable arrangements in consultation with the Community Safety Unit PCSO and Digital Barriers/Crossfire.
 - h) Item 10b – approve new budget line and allocation for Wimpey Field. Councillor Spearink stated that the Wimpey Field Group had revisited its plans for 2017-18 and believed that a 2017-18 budget allocation of £10,000 would be appropriate, rather than the £8,000 previously advised to Finance Group. Proposed by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the allocation from the Wimpey Field Reserve of £10,000 for the 2017-18 budget.
 - i) Item 10c – approve new budget line for LGPS exit costs. Chairman Silkin explained: the Parish Council no longer had any staff in the Local Government Pension

Scheme; exiting the LGPS incurred a cost; definitive information was awaited from KCC. Proposed by Councillor Whittle, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the recommendation of Finance Group to create a budget line for LGPS exit costs but not to populate the line until such time as information about the amount and settlement options was received from KCC. Councillor Buller abstained.

5. Review of Audit and Internal Controls – note of meeting with Internal Auditor 03/05/17 published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx. Councillor Perry commented that a positive meeting had been held with the Internal Auditor who would be providing a short written statement on a regular basis. Councillors NOTED the report.
6. Kent County Playing Fields Association – Annual membership subscription renewal (budgeted item – for approval). Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Buller, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE payment of the membership subscription of £20.
7. Accounts for payment for approval. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Smith, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Payments for the period 1st April to 9th May totalled £14,003.16; receipts for the period were £144,236.45.
8. Summation of Accounts to 9th May 2017 (for noting). Noted by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Consultation – Maidstone Borough Local Plan: comments by Neighbourhood Plan Review Group (Min 1608). Deadline for submission of comments 31/05/17. *During this item Chairman Silkin temporarily closed the meeting to receive comments by the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group and from Borough Councillor Brice.* Councillors NOTED with thanks comments provided by Mr Robin Oakley and Councillors Buller and Burnham. Councillors expressed particular concern about: the proposed modification that would reduce the amount of green space attached to land north of Henhurst Farm (Policy H1(51)); the fact that the site remained in the draft Local Plan when it was not in the made Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan; the scant acknowledgement of neighbourhood plans; the dilution of protection for community shops and facilities (Policy SP17). Councillor Perry commented on Policy SP10's redesignation of the Parade area as a district retail centre rather than a local one and said he felt that Staplehurst did not easily fit into either category. With the agreement of Councillor Burnham, proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Sharp, Councillors RESOLVED that Councillor Burnham should draw the comments into a Parish Council response to the consultation.
2. Consultation – South Eastern Rail Franchise – Proposed SPC Response (TB). Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors thanked Councillor Burnham for preparing the draft response to the South Eastern Rail Franchise Public Consultation and RESOLVED that it be sent to the Department for Transport and posted on the village website. Councillor Smith advised that the KCC Rail Summit was taking place at the same time as the Parish Council's meeting and an apology had been made for the Department for Transport's 'passing reference' to the possible cutting of rail services and a speaker had said there would be no such cuts.
3. Consultation – Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan: Issues and Options; Draft Landscape Character Assessment SPD; Second Call for Sites. Invitation to comment (for response by 12/06/17). Councillors Buller and Burnham agreed to review the document and report back to the next Full Council meeting.
4. Litter Bin – Proposal to fund MBC for installation of new litter bin at The Bartons (PS). *During this item Chairman Silkin temporarily closed the meeting to receive comments from Borough Councillor Brice.* Councillors AGREED to defer consideration of the

- proposal to fund installation of a litter bin by MBC in The Bartons at a cost of £150 until such time as adoption of the roads was complete.
5. NatWest Community Banker – Correspondence from the NatWest Community Banker about the new role. Councillors NOTED that NatWest's newly appointed community banker had provided details of her proposed role and that the information would be published on the village website.
 6. Parish Surgery – (i) Report on parish surgeries held 22/29 April (CC/JB), 6/13 May (MA/JB/GS). Councillors reported that questions asked and subjects discussed covered Staplehurst Youth Club, Wimpey Field, the former golf driving range, land adjacent to South Cottage in High Street, Sainsbury's, volunteer litter-picking, road-sweeping, delay in MBC's processing of a planning application, land north of the railway line, the Post Office. (ii) Appointment of representatives for future surgeries: 27th May Councillor Buller; 3rd June Councillor Burnham; 10th June Chairman Silkin; 17th June Councillor Riordan.

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

1. Clerk's Report – the Clerk reported that he had been heavily involved in financial year-end matters and in arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - a) Annual Parish Meeting 2017 – Update on arrangements for meeting on 20/05/17 (Min 1601, 1603-4, 1609, 1612). Councillors NOTED the status of the arrangements for the meeting and the agenda. The Clerk confirmed: posters were displayed around the village in bus shelters, at the Parade, in the Health Centre, the Library and Post Office and at the Village Centre; the event was covered in the parish magazine and the school newsletter and listed in the Wealden Ad; details were also on the village website; refreshments had been purchased and ordered as appropriate; there would be potentially eight stalls for the pre-meeting session.
 - b) Bus Stop Signage – Proposal to investigate installation of real-time signage. *Deferred Min 1612.* Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Manning, Councillors APPROVED Councillor Perry's report and RESOLVED that the Clerk should investigate the possible options for signage at bus stops including the cost of installing on a trial basis a real time signage system at one of the key bus shelters owned by the Parish Council.
 - c) Communications Group – Proposed Terms of Reference (Mins 1604 & 1609). *Deferred Min 1612.* Chairman Silkin commented that he had reviewed previous drafts of the terms of reference and produced a version that he hoped achieved a balance between them all. Proposed by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Whittle, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the terms of reference (Councillor Lain-Rose against, Councillors Buller and Riordan abstaining). Councillor Reardon said the next meeting of the Group would be on 30th May and it would discuss a nomination for the Group's Chairman for approval by Full Council in accordance with the new terms of reference. *Councillor Whittle left the meeting.*
 - d) Jubilee Field Car Park – Proposal to seek quotations for improvements to car park. Councillor Riordan discussed the Jubilee Field Management Committee's proposal to alter the Field car park to create a small and separate area providing 24-hour parking for casual users of the field. He said the Committee felt this would bring safety benefits. The Clerk said he had asked MBC whether the project met the criteria for funding from developers' S106 contributions. Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Ashby, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE in principle expenditure of up to £8,000 on the project subject to obtaining three quotations and receiving suitable plans and drawings for consideration.

- e) Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Draft minutes of meeting 03/05/17. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx.
 - f) Speedwatch – Report on annual Speedwatch conference 22/04/17 (JB). NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx>.
 - g) Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – Minutes of meeting 07/12/16 and draft minutes of AGM 23/03/17. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx.
 - h) Wimpey Field – Proposal to commission Medway Valley Countryside Partnership to run a one day survey and information day. Councillor Spearink reported that Medway Valley Countryside Partnership had offered to run a mini 'bio-blitz' at Wimpey Field. He said this would be a community event in which participants could help survey and record wildlife, join craft events and enjoy guided walks. He said the cost would be £250 for the day and he had selected 9th August. Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £250 on the event; they asked, if possible, that the date be changed to 23rd August to avoid clashing with the summer play scheme. Councillor Lain-Rose reminded the meeting of the importance of observing Financial Regulations Section 10 when planning to order goods and services.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only
- a) Facebook Training – Report on training session held for parish councillors 24/04/17. Item deferred.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Oral Report – Councillor Perry said that he and Councillor Buller had attended the Pullen Farm appeal hearing, which had been a very long session. He thanked Councillor Buller and praised her spoken contribution to the session. He said that he expected land south of Marden Road to be discussed by MBC Planning Committee on 25th May. *At this point, the meeting having lasted three hours and in accordance with standing order 3v, Chairman Silkin halted proceedings and asked Councillors to decide whether to continue. Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Buller, Councillors RESOLVED to continue until 10.25pm. The meeting was then closed to allow Borough Councillor Brice to report:* she had been heavily involved in trying to resolve major problems with the Arriva No.5 bus service; she had demanded more action by MBC Environmental Enforcement on dog-fouling; she had submitted comments on the South Eastern Rail Franchise consultation; she was concerned that the town centre was being favoured at the expense of the rural service centres; she was aware that MBC was considering the Parish Council's nomination of the Railway Tavern as an asset of community value. Councillor Perry reported that he was meeting the Leader of the Council to discuss investment in rural service centres.

The meeting closed at 10.25pm. The following items were deferred:

2. PCSO's Report – PCSO Gardner's report for the period 19/03/17 – 13/04/17 had been circulated before the meeting and showed fourteen crimes: four criminal damage; four burglaries; two thefts from motor vehicle; three thefts; one vehicle interference. Discussion was deferred.

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

- a) McCabe Day Centre – Minutes of meeting held 27/04/17. Item deferred.
- b) Patient Participation Group – Minutes of meeting held 19/04/17. Item deferred.

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

No items.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: No items were raised.