

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 11th March 2019 at 7.50 p.m.

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

APOLOGIES: Councillors Reardon, Riordan and Symes whose reasons for apology were accepted. Councillor Pontet was absent.

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 1746-1749 of 18th February 2019 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Burnham and made available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>.

FINANCE REPORTS

1. Accounts for payment – for approval. Proposed by Councillor Silkin, seconded by Councillor Sharp, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 13th February to 5th March totalled £14,001.19; income for the period totalled £5.00. Councillors Kelly and Lain-Rose abstained.
2. Summation of Accounts – for noting. NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.
3. Lease registration – Proposal to approve expenditure on legal fees to register the Parish Council's lease of Bell Lane toilets (for approval). RESOLVED: approve expenditure of up to £380 on Buss Murton Law's fees.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Hen & Duckhurst Farm (i) – Correspondence from David Wilson Homes requesting the Parish Council's view on the future use of the site's proposed allotment space (for decision). Councillors discussed ideas submitted by David Wilson Homes for provision of a community garden or allotments on the allocated allotment space at Hen & Duckhurst Farm. It was RESOLVED to advise David Wilson Homes that the Parish Council favoured eight half-sized allotments to be available for application by all parish residents and not just those living on the new development.
2. Hen & Duckhurst Farm (ii) – Correspondence from Kent Highways requesting the Parish Council's view on relocating the village sign on Marden Road further west near to the Clapper Lane junction (for decision). It was RESOLVED to inform Kent Highways and the developer of Hen & Duckhurst Farm: the Parish Council had concerns about the impact on visibility if the sign were to be relocated near to the Clapper Lane – Marden Road junction; the Parish Council felt the sign could best be left in its current location, but if this were not possible the Parish Council would consider alternative proposals. Councillors NOTED that a proposal for traffic-calming humps on Marden Road had been postponed and would be subject to review following a traffic survey after completion of the roundabout works. Councillors reiterated their opposition to traffic-calming humps.
3. Land North of Headcorn Road (Redrow Homes Development) – Informal Consultation by Redrow Homes on proposed Traffic Regulation Order to extend 30mph limit on Headcorn Road and to reduce limit on Pile Lane to 30mph (for comment). It was RESOLVED to notify Redrow Homes that the Parish Council supported extension of the 30mph limit but would

wish to see it extended further beyond the Headcorn Road bend to the vicinity of Cradducks Lane and Sweetlands Lane, with provision of additional chevron markers at the bend.

4. Parish Council Surgery – (i) Report of surgery 23/02/19 – Councillor Ashby reported that questions had been asked about Christmas lights and the Village Centre and that she had discussed CCTV with the PCSO; (ii) Appointment of representatives for future dates: 30/03/19 - Councillor Sharp and possibly Councillor Forward.
5. Road Safety – Proposal to establish a Task & Finish Group to (i) make recommendations to the Council on road safety matters (working closely with the Community Speedwatch Team) and (ii) develop and implement strategies to help deter speeding in the village. Councillor Lain-Rose commented that the idea for the group had arisen from discussion between himself and Councillor Symes. Councillor Perry requested that Maidstone Borough Council be added to the parties listed in section 3(c). Subject to the addition requested by Councillor Perry, it was RESOLVED to approve the terms of reference (to be published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>). Councillors Buller, Forward and Smith volunteered to join the group; Councillor Symes's interest was noted, as was that of Borough Councillor Brice. *During a brief closure of the meeting, Mr Malcolm Buller, leader of Staplehurst Speedwatch, agreed to join.* Chairman Burnham recorded thanks to Councillor Symes for instigating and organising the Stay Safe Staplehurst event, to the Parish Office for its support and to all participants who had made it a very worthwhile day.
6. Surrenden Playing Field – Request for use for community picnic on afternoon of 09/06/19. Chairman Burnham explained that the Churches Together group and Councillor Symes had separately developed ideas for a community picnic and had decided to join forces. They requested permission to use Surrenden Field for the afternoon of 9th June after the 10K run. It was RESOLVED to agree to the request.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported: a large branch had fallen from a tree in Nicholson Walk, which the caretaker had made safe and which had been reported to MBC; a meeting would be held with Kent Highways to discuss results of the traffic survey on the A229 and what the next steps should be; Local Plan review presentations would be held at Lenham (13 March) and Yalding (21 March); arrangements were in hand for the Village Clean-Up (23rd March) and the Annual Parish Meeting (25th March); the school had been booked for the summer play scheme between 29th July and 16th August; MBC had granted planning consent for a new pond at Wimpey Field; the Parish Council's solicitors were dealing with the draft lease for Surrenden Field; formal transfer to the Parish Council of a section of footpath KM312 was expected very soon; the Deputy Clerk had attended a MBC presentation about the new Community Infrastructure Levy; following consultation on its Libraries, Registration and Archives strategy and library opening hours, KCC's decision was that Staplehurst's weekly opening hours would be 28 (currently 42 but the consultation had originally proposed 23); election nomination forms for Parish Council elections on 2nd May were now available.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - 2.1. Members' Learning and Development Policy & Procedures – New policy for approval (SL-R). Councillor Lain-Rose introduced the draft policy which was based on a KALC model. Councillors thanked Councillor Lain-Rose for his work. Councillor Perry volunteered to edit the draft to produce a shorter document for review at the next Parish Council meeting.
 - 2.2. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – The report of the meeting on 20/02/19 was noted and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/neighbourhood-plan-review-group/>. Councillors thanked the Group for its hard work, notably on proposed revisions to the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan. Councillors

commented on the recommendations: (i) Make proposed minor revisions to the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan – it was recognised that these could be largely undertaken in-house and it was AGREED that the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group should take forward the minor revisions as listed in the meeting report; (ii) Continue work on proposed major revisions to the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan – it was recognised that these would involve a longer process and public engagement; it was AGREED that Finance & Strategy Group should examine the cost implications and how best to take such work forward; (iii) Seek further information to support the submitted application to list the King’s Head as an asset of community value – Councillors requested the Clerk to write to Shepherd Neame; (iv) Proposal for planting at The Parade – Councillor Lain-Rose said that Community Enhancement Group had recently discussed The Parade; he said he was seeking to liaise with the property agent to secure modification and repair of the planter bed walls, which would then permit planting to take place without disruption. He said he had reported to MBC the condition of the area behind the shops.

- 3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
No items.

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

- 1. Borough Councillor’s Report – Councillor Perry reported: MBC had approved its strategic plan; council tax for 2019-20 would increase by 3%; a judicial review hearing involving KCC and MBC was due to take place in the High Court later in March; the Maidstone Local Plan review was under way and a call for sites had been issued; MBC was considering ideas for possible changes to its committee system and its election cycle. Councillors Lain-Rose and Perry discussed the announcement by Countryside Properties about a possible proposal for development of 2,000 homes north of Marden, which Councillors agreed should be monitored.

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

- 1. Transport Accessibility Group – Report of meeting 22/02/19. Councillor Manning’s report was NOTED and posted at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/reports-for-noting/>.

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 a resident commented on the importance of a good water supply for the Hen & Duckhurst Farm allotments and objected to the idea of traffic-calming humps in Marden Road. A resident commented on the results of the Staplehurst traffic survey and on misrepresentations in national press coverage of it. After the meeting a resident said that the newly installed roundabout on Marden Road was not clearly visible to approaching traffic. A resident advocated introducing a 20mph speed limit in the centre of the village in the interests of pedestrian safety.

Proceedings finished at 10.00pm.