

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 2nd March 2015 at 7.15 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Kelly, Kemp, Manning, Perry (from the point indicated in the minutes), Reardon, Sharp, Spearink and Silkin who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Butcher, Gosling, Green and Lain-Rose whose apologies were accepted.

URGENT ITEMS: - None requested.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

Lobbying – Councillor Buller declared she had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Manning declared he had been lobbied about traffic on the A229 at Knoxbridge.

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 Pages 1413-1416 of 16th February 2015 were proposed for approval by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Kemp, approved by councillors, signed by the Chairman and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx. Councillors Kelly and Sharp abstained.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Neighbourhood Plan – Chairman Silkin closed the meeting to allow contributions from members of the public. The Chair of RSG said that members of the Steering Group had held a useful conference call with Richard Eastham of Feria Urbanism. Feria is redrafting the Neighbourhood Plan based on guidance from the Steering Group and MBC. Feria gave advice on discussion points for the forthcoming meeting with Redrow Homes about Fishers Farm. Feria recommended that representatives of neighbouring parish councils be invited to a joint meeting to discuss the progress of Staplehurst's draft plan and initiatives in the other parishes. Feria advised that to sustain Neighbourhood Plan policy relating to the Village Centre and the village heart it was important to reach some consensus on the Village Centre and its location. The Chair of RSG confirmed that a windfall sites policy would be included in the redraft of the Neighbourhood Plan. There are two issues to be addressed with MBC: confirmation of no further site allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan area and joint agreement on community infrastructure relating to new development. Chairman Silkin reopened the meeting. Proposed by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Buller, councillors agreed to meet Redrow and send discussion points to the company in advance and to arrange a joint meeting with neighbouring parishes. They also agreed to seek from MBC its confirmation that it will not allocate more sites in the Neighbourhood Plan area and its support for a joint agreement on the type of community infrastructure that could be expected as part of new development.
2. Caretaker's Report – The Clerk reported that the caretaker had commended the hedge work undertaken at Surrenden Field and Jubilee Field. He also advised that the caretaker had cleared litter at the Cross-at-Hand lay-by.
3. A229 Knoxbridge – Councillor Manning spoke to his report about speed control measures discussed with the Knoxbridge residents' group and KCC. Proposed by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Kemp, councillors agreed to express support for KCC

councillors' interest in meeting the group's aspirations embracing: (i) latest wooden gateway with signage and vehicle activated sign; (ii) meeting police about road markings and enforcement on speeding; (iii) KCC member support for reducing speed to 50mph; (iv) taking advantage of KCC member funding. Councillors agreed that this backing did not imply any commitment to financial support by the Parish Council, which could only be considered once firm information is received. Chairman Silkin requested that Councillor Manning also engage directly with Frittenden Parish Council.

4. Oliver Road Green Space – Councillors considered the Clerk's report containing the terms on which Taylor Wimpey would be prepared to hand over to the Parish Council the woodland and open space adjacent to its Oliver Road site: up-front payment of £25,000; boundary fencing; gate at main entrance, wide enough for tractor or similar vehicle; inclusion of disabled-friendly access; removal of newt traps; storage hut and hard-standing for vehicles near the entrance. They noted that the annual running costs had been independently estimated at £3,500-£3,800. Whilst acknowledging the commitment of time and money that would be required to manage the site, councillors concurred that that the offer was an opportunity to secure an asset for the future benefit of the village. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Kelly, councillors voted nem con to accept the offer of the land from Taylor Wimpey. In doing so, they agreed to ask Taylor Wimpey to confirm that it was informing purchasers of properties at the boundaries of the developed site about preservation orders relating to neighbouring trees.
5. Parish Independent Remuneration Panel – Councillors noted correspondence from MBC advising that the Joint Parish Independent Remuneration Panel was reviewing the Members' Allowance Scheme for Parish Councils. The Clerk reminded councillors that questionnaires issued by MBC should be completed and returned by 13th March.
6. Pullen Farm Solar Array – *Councillor Perry joined the meeting during this item.* Councillors noted further information provided on behalf of Novus Solar Development relating to a proposed solar array at Pullen Farm in Frittenden and specifically to development of a community project alongside a commercial one. After some debate about the company's request for feedback on the desirability of a community project councillors agreed to defer further discussion until after 11th March when the company would be holding a public consultation event in Frittenden.
7. Borough Councillor Update – Councillor Perry advised that he had attended a meeting of the MBC Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee which had called in Cabinet decisions relating to site allocations. He said he was grateful to Mr David Staunton-Lambert for questioning the wording of a decision dealing with infrastructure issues, which he was taking up with MBC officers. Councillor Perry also said that experience at MBC Planning Committee suggested that it would be useful in some cases to include specific planning conditions in the recommendations made to MBC. Councillor Burnham recommended that a MBC planning officer be invited to attend a meeting of the parish council's planning committee.
8. Surgery – Councillor Spearink advised that there had been no visitors to the surgery on 28th February. Councillor Sharp volunteered to attend the surgery on 28th March. *Councillor Perry left the meeting.*

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Report of meeting 20/02/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx. Councillor Spearink reported that having dedicated drivers on the no. 5 route appeared to have improved the service. Councillor Manning advised that new timetables would be introduced from 1st April and that anticipated higher student numbers next September will require more buses.

2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, NK, RS, PS) Next meeting AGM 23/03/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, TB, AG, SG, PK, NK, PS) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx . The Chairman advised he had received a letter from DK Holdings confirming the completion of its land sale to Sainsbury's on 26th February and extending thanks for the Parish Council's support. An update is to be sought from Sainsbury's.
4. Allotments Project Group (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.
7. Playscheme (TB, JB, NK) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx The report of the meeting with Play Place on 24th February was noted. Proposed by Councillor Kemp, seconded by Councillor Burnham, councillors agreed to the hire of the Guide Centre as the venue for the scheme at a cost of £675.
8. Publicity & Website Group (TB, PK, MA, JB, NK, SL, JR) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx. Councillor Buller thanked all involved in the production and delivery of the Village Update.
9. Rural Settlement Group including Neighbourhood Plan (JP, JB, AS) Next meeting 04/03/15. Report of meeting 04/02/15 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx.
10. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting 03/03/15. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>.
11. Village Enhancement Group (TB, PK, JB, PB, JR, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx.
12. Youth Club (PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx Councillor Kelly advised that two new workers were helping at the club. An update report is being prepared and will be sent to the Parish Office.

REPORTS FOR NOTING from local community groups:-

1. Carnival & Fete (SL, BM) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_carnival_fete_committee.aspx
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 03/03/15. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB, PK) Next meeting 14/05/15. Report of meeting 12/02/15 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx
5. KALC Area Committee (JP, PB, PK, RS, PS) Next meeting AGM 29/04/15. Report of meeting 18/02/15 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx
6. Kent Community Alcohol Partnership (PB) Next meeting?
7. Knoxbridge A229 Residents' Group (BM, NK, PS) Next meeting?
8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting? Reports of meetings 24/09/14 and 20/11/14 awaited. 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 21/05/15. Minutes of meeting 15/01/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group (JP, NK, PS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
12. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting 03/03/15. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
13. Speed Watch (JB) <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx>
14. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
15. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, RS) Next meeting 15/04/15. Report of meeting 14/01/15 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx. In response to a question from Councillor Sharp Chairman Silkin confirmed that the Health Centre's staffing level was above the required national level.
16. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (AG, SL, BM, JR)

17. Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan Group (NK) Next meeting? Report of meeting 02/10/14 awaited.
18. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (PB) Next meeting? Report of meetings 11/11/14, 03/12/14, 06/01/15 and 24/02/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
19. Village Golf & Sports Club (PB) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/ot_hers.aspx

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting two residents thanked Chairman Silkin and Councillor Perry for speaking at Maidstone Borough Council's Planning Committee meeting against planning application 14/503305 Homeleigh Timber Supplies, Station Road. A resident asked that the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan should include policy on design features covering building height and proximity to boundaries. After the meeting a resident expressed support for the Parish Council taking on the woodland and open space at Oliver Road from Taylor Wimpey and for using white lines as a speed control measure on the A229; the resident also said he felt it was important that arguments about infrastructure should not focus exclusively on sewerage.