

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 4th April 2016 at 7.35 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Gosling, Lain-Rose, Reardon, Riordan, Sharp, Spearink and Silkin who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Butcher, Claridge, Kelly, Manning and Perry whose apologies were accepted.

URGENT ITEM: - None requested.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Lobbying – Councillor Buller declared she had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan and Village Centre Contingency Fund.

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interest in Items on the Agenda – Councillors Ashby, Silkin and Sharp declared their roles as trustees on the Village Centre Management Committee constituted an interest in the Village Centre Contingency Fund item, which fell within the scope of Appendix B of the Staplehurst Parish Council Code of Conduct.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillors Ashby, Silkin and Sharp requested a dispensation to participate in discussion and voting on the agenda item relating to the Village Centre Contingency Fund, which was AGREED by Councillors.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Subject to adding at the end of Section 2 Borough Council Report (Min1517) the words “The Parish Council recognised the very detailed work that analysing the five year housing supply involved and thanked Councillor Brice for taking this on” Minute pages 1516-1520 of 21st March 2016 were proposed for approval by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Ashby, APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Silkin and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Neighbourhood Plan – Verbal Update on Examination Status (Steering Group) (for information). Councillors NOTED that the Examiner’s recommendation as to whether or not the plan should proceed to referendum was still awaited.
2. Borough Council Report – (JP/LB). There being no borough councillor present no discussion was held.
3. Caretaker’s Report – The Clerk advised that the Caretaker had reported that following heavy rain many areas of the playing fields were particularly sodden.
4. Consultation – Report on review of technical consultation on implementation of planning changes (RS & TB) - closing date 15/04/16 (for comment). Councillors AGREED nem con that Councillors Burnham and Silkin should respond to selected items in the consultation and circulate a copy for information.
5. Consultation by KCC (1) – Flood Risk to Communities (Maidstone Document) published at <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/floodriskmaidstone/consultationHome> (closing date 28/04/16) (for response). Councillors NOTED the consultation and AGREED not to submit a formal response. They requested that details be posted in the Latest News section on the village website in view of the interesting information it contained.
6. Consultation by KCC (2) – Review of KCC Funded Bus Services published at <http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/BusReview/consultationHome> (closing date

- 15/05/16) (for response). Councillors NOTED that the proposed service changes affected Staplehurst in that the evening number 5 service to and from Maidstone would be diverted via Coxheath. They observed that the proposal appeared reasonable and AGREED not to comment further.
7. Consultation by Tunbridge Wells BC - Designation of Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Area (closing date 02/05/16) (for comment). Consultation published at <http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning>. Councillors NOTED without further comment the designation of the Cranbrook and Sissinghurst neighbourhood area as an initial technical step in the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan.
 8. Internal Audit – Report of meeting with Internal Auditor (JP). Councillors NOTED Councillor Perry's written report of the meeting held on 11/03/16. In commenting on the reported discussion of practice improvements Councillor Lain-Rose said that he had undertaken a check of the bank account reconciliation as recommended in 'Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England' and would be happy to do so on a regular basis, which was NOTED with thanks by Councillors.
 9. Kent Association of Local Councils – Invitation to renew annual subscription (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Spearink, Councillors AGREED nem con to renew the membership of KALC for 2016-17 at a cost of £1,235 plus VAT.
 10. Land between A229 High Street and Chestnut Avenue – Offer from Croudace Homes to transfer land to Parish Council (for decision). Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors AGREED to thank Croudace Homes for the offer to transfer to the Parish Council without charge a strip of land between A229 High Street and Chestnut Avenue and to advise them that the Parish Council would respond after taking advice about the proposed documentation.
 11. MBC Planning Meeting – Invitation from KALC Maidstone Area Chairman to attend a review meeting with the Head of Planning & Development on 11/04/16 (for decision). Councillors Burnham and Riordan confirmed that they would be available to attend the meeting with the Clerk and/or Assistant Clerk subject to available spaces.
 12. Parish Surgery – (1) Reports on surgeries since 26th March. Councillor Spearink said that he had attended the surgery on 26th March for which Chairman Silkin gave his apologies. Councillor Spearink reported that a visitor had handed him a letter about parking at Jubilee Field. Chairman Silkin and the Clerk advised that it had been forwarded to the Jubilee Field Management Committee for review and recommendation to the Parish Council. Councillor Gosling reported that on 2nd April a resident had raised questions about proposed development at Stanley Farm and land offered by Croudace Homes. (2) Appointment of representatives for future surgeries. Councillors AGREED representatives as follows: 9th April – Councillors Riordan and Spearink; 16th April – Councillor Silkin; 23rd April – Councillor Claridge to be asked; 30th April – Councillor Burnham.
 13. Rail Summit 16th May 2016 – Invitation from KCC to attend (for decision by 8th April). Noting that the date of the summit clashed with a Parish Council meeting Councillors AGREED to ask previous attendee and member of Rural Settlement Group Mr Colin Love if he could attend.
 14. Village Centre Contingency Fund – Request from Staplehurst Village Centre Trust for release of funds. Councillors discussed the Trust's request to release £10,000 from the Village Centre Contingency Fund held by the Parish Council 'to carry out immediate safety, security, health and amenity improvements' as stated in the letter from the Chairman of the Trust dated 29th March. Councillors Silkin, Sharp and Ashby explained that the request had been discussed at the meeting of the Village Centre Management Committee on 29th March (circulated to councillors under 'Reports for Noting' item 19). They explained that the Trustees believed that, whatever the outcome of the Village

Centre Development Group's plans for the longer term, it was essential to undertake the type of work identified for safety reasons and to maintain the building in an appropriate condition to meet users' requirements and sustain income-generating capability. Councillor Lain-Rose queried why the Trustees had paid £10,000 into the Contingency Account as recently as December 2015 only to request its return three months later. Councillors Silkin and Sharp stated that the original transfer had been effected to take advantage of a better interest rate and now new trustees had identified a need for the funds. The Clerk read from the January 2014 Joint Statement of the Chair of Staplehurst Parish Council and the Chair of Trustees: "(the Contingency Fund) is a restricted fund/sum of no less than £12,000 retained by the Council, to be made available on request by the Trustees for substantive necessary works that could not otherwise be undertaken; (it) is not to be used for day to day running costs; (it) would normally be expected to be replenished by the Trustees within an agreed period, to be negotiated, without interest being payable". After some discussion, proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Riordan, Councillors AGREED that the requested amount of £10,000 be released to Staplehurst Village Centre Trust on condition that subsequently the Trust formally advise the Parish Council of its repayment plans. Councillors Ashby, Gosling, Sharp and Silkin abstained.

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting 15/04/16. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx
Councillor Buller asked Councillor Spearink to enquire about rumoured changes to the frequency of the number 5 service and observed that some MBC bus shelters had not yet been replaced.
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, RS, PS) Next meeting 08/06/16. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, CC, TB, AG, PK, RS, PS) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx
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, CC, SL, RS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy_group.aspx
6. Finance Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SL, JR) Next meeting 29/04/16. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx.
7. Economic & Tourism Development (PS) Next meeting?
8. Oliver Road Open Space (PK, SL, AS, PS) Next meetings: 09/04/16 Working Group; 21/04/16 with Taylor Wimpey.
9. Playscheme (TB, JB) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx
10. Publicity & Website Group (TB, PK, MA, JB, CC, SL, JR) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx Councillor Buller said that she needed articles for the Annual Report by 15th April. A quote for distribution of the report is still awaited.
11. Rural Settlement Group (JP, JB, TB, AS) Next meeting 06/04/16. Report of meeting 09/03/16 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx.
12. Staff Group (JB, PK, SL, BM, JP) Next meeting?
13. Staplehurst Village Centre Development Group (TB, AG, SL) Next meeting 14/04/16. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_redevelopment_group.aspx
14. Staplehurst Youth Parish Council (SL-R) Councillor Lain-Rose said he would issue a report for the next meeting of Full Council.
15. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, PK, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx> Councillor Reardon said he had obtained two quotes for drainage work on Surrenden Field but was awaiting clarification about the future lease before proceeding. The condition of some of the surrounding verges will be raised with Kent Highways.
16. Village Enhancement Group (TB, PK, JB, PB, JR, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx Councillor Lain-Rose said that he was working on a document to invite bids for maintenance of the village planters.

17. Youth Club (PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx

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 07/06/16. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB, PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx
5. KALC Area Committee (RS, PK, PB, JP) Next meeting in May (date t.b.c.). Report of meeting 24/02/16 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, PS) Next meeting?
8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting 19/05/16. 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, BM, AS) Next meeting? Report of meeting 24/09/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group (JP, PS) Next meeting 21/04/16. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
12. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting 07/06/16. Report of meeting 01/03/16 awaited. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
13. Speed Watch (JB) <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx> Councillor Buller confirmed that on receipt of the newly ordered equipment a buyer will be sought for the old equipment.
14. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
15. Staplehurst Library Users Group (JB, BM) Next meeting?
16. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, AS, RS). Next meeting? Report of meeting 14/10/15 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx
17. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (AG, SL, BM, JR)
18. Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan Group (PS) Councillors AGREED to accept Mr Andrew Watson's kind offer as Flood Warden to represent the Parish Council in discussions about the Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan. Councillor Spearink will continue to follow issues. Councillor Spearink reported that at the Group's meeting on 1st April the need for more work to clear an inlet at the pond at the end of Bell Lane was raised.
19. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (MA, RS) Next meeting 10/05/16. Report of meeting 29/03/16 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
20. Village Golf & Sports Club (PB) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting Mr Andrew Watson reported that on 1st April, as Staplehurst Flood Warden, he had attended a meeting organised by KCC about its Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan. A report will be issued in one month's time and will include comment on flooding at the northern end of Clapper Lane. Overall the general conclusion is that Staplehurst is not at risk of flooding in the severe sense of the word but a need is recognised for some kind of attenuation measures to protect the River Beult.