

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 7.35 p.m.

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

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Gosling and Riordan.

**COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interest in Items on the Agenda – none declared.

Requests for Dispensation – none requested.

**APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES** Minute pages 1599-1602 of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were proposed for approval by Councillor Sharp, 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](http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx). Councillor Claridge abstained.

**FINANCE REPORTS:-**

1. Accounts for payment - for approval. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Buller, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Payments for the period 11th February to 8th March totalled £24,153.34; receipts for the period were £306.23 (Parish Council) and £0.11 (Village Centre Contingency).
2. Summation of Accounts – as at 08 March 2017 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes\\_of\\_the\\_last\\_meetings.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx).
3. Summer Play Scheme – Quotation for Venue Hire (for approval). Councillors RESOLVED to accept the quotation of £850 for use of the Staplehurst School premises for Summer Play Scheme 2017.
4. Distribution of Annual Report and Carnival & Fete Brochure – Quotations (Min 1600) (for decision). The Clerk reported that the Parish Office had approached seven companies and obtained three replies of which two provided quotations but only for part of the requirement. None of the companies to date had indicated a willingness to distribute outside the central part of the parish. Councillors NOTED the information and that an update would be brought to the next meeting.
5. Facebook Training – Update on responses to requests for quotations (Min 1596). Councillors RESOLVED to accept a quotation of £600 from We Do Social Media for a three hour training course for 15 members to be held in Staplehurst and asked the Clerk to find a venue offering internet access and availability at suitable times.

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

1. Annual Parish Meeting 2017 – Allocation of responsibilities for the event on 20<sup>th</sup> May (LW) (Min 1601 - for decision). *Councillor Perry arrived during this item.* Councillors AGREED the following responsibilities: Project Lead – Chairman Silkin; Room Booking – Councillor Sharp; Room set-up – Councillors Ashby and Sharp; Note-taker – Councillor Lain-Rose; Guest speaker invitations – Councillors Perry and Silkin; Advertising – Councillors Whittle, Riordan and Reardon; Stallholder invitations – Parish Office; Chair of Q&A session – *meeting briefly closed and Mr Andrew Watson kindly agreed;* post-meeting reception – Councillor Claridge. Councillors AGREED that village groups should be invited to submit reports as in previous years. Councillor Buller volunteered to assist with posters and

approaches to village groups. Councillors AGREED the subject should be retained on Full Council's agenda until the event.

2. Objectives 2017-18 – Agreement of responsibilities for objectives under key activity areas (Mins 1596 and 1601) (CC/RS) (for decision). Councillors AGREED responsibilities for formulating objectives in the following activity areas: Communications – Councillor Whittle; Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring – Neighbourhood Plan Review Group; Parking – Councillor Riordan; Supermarket (already formulated) – Councillor Claridge; Station Regeneration – Councillors Buller, Burnham and Smith; Surrenden Playing Field Maintenance – Surrenden Group under chairmanship of Councillor Reardon; Surrenden Playing Field Freehold – Councillors Perry and Silkin. Councillors recognised that some activity areas would overlap.
3. Working Practice – Observations on working practices and proposals for consideration and decision (LW). Councillor Whittle discussed his suggestion for a collaborative approach to the production of Group work and documents as set out in the paper on working practices circulated to councillors before the meeting. There followed some discussion on the merits of 'blue sky thinking' against more focused approaches. Some councillors stated that the best approach often depended on the circumstances and flexibility was important. Chairman Silkin concluded the discussion by observing that the varied approaches were different ways of reaching an end that all councillors shared, namely the good of Staplehurst. No vote was taken.
4. Communications Group – Proposed Terms of Reference (for approval) (*moved to earlier position in the agenda with agreement of all councillors*). Councillor Reardon introduced the proposed new terms of reference by stating that the Communications Group was the recommended new name for the Publicity and Website Group. He said the terms of reference had deliberately been kept simple and concise. Councillor Claridge said he felt the metrics part of the terms were very important; Councillor Reardon confirmed that the use of Google Analytics would be pursued. Councillors Lain-Rose and Perry voiced concerns about the omission of reference to what the powers of the Group were, about the proposed delegation of the appointment of the Group Chairman to the Parish Council Chairman and asked how the terms covered engagement with stakeholders other than residents. Councillors asked the Clerk to circulate his comments and for the proposed terms of reference to be brought back to the next meeting of Full Council. *Councillor Reardon left the meeting at this point.*

#### **CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:-**

1. Consultation – DCLG Consultation on New Planning Proposals (closing date 02/05/17) (for decision). Councillor Burnham volunteered to review the proposals.
2. Fishers Farm – Correspondence from Bovis Homes and Redrow Homes re future meeting. Councillors NOTED the correspondence which was in response to the Parish Council's second request for a meeting in recent months (Mins 1595-1596). They also NOTED that the companies had expressed a willingness to meet but not until after they had finalised their S106 agreements with MBC and received formal planning consent. Councillors asked that arrangements for a meeting be followed up at that time.
3. Licensing Application – Application 17/00624/LAPRE to vary premises licence covering Iden Park Service Station: (i) extension of the hours for the sale of alcohol to 24 hours daily; (ii) provision of late night refreshment between the hours of 2300 and 0500 daily. Full information at <http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-licensing> (for comment). Councillors RESOLVED by majority to comment that they supported the application but sought assurance that there would be safeguards for local residents if the extended trading arrangements were to cause any issues (Councillor Manning against, Councillors Burnham and Lain-Rose abstaining).

4. MBC Planning Service Review – Correspondence from iESE Consultants (for decision). The Clerk recommended: the Parish Office be nominated as the contact point for the consultants; the Parish Office would advise Councillors of any interviews to be arranged with the consultants conducting the review for MBC; Councillors should advise the Parish Office if they wished to join the interview. Councillors RESOLVED to agree the recommendation.
5. Parish Surgery – (i) Report on parish surgeries held 11 and 18 March (JB/AS). Subjects raised were: Staplehurst Fete; the condition of the main entrance to Surrenden Playing Field (Councillor Reardon now attending to this); a litter bin missing from Offens Drive; abandoned cars; trading in cars; the proposed pedestrian crossing in Marden Road (Taylor Wimpey is to submit an application to vary the relevant planning condition to facilitate a zebra crossing). (ii) Appointment of representatives for future surgeries: 8<sup>th</sup> April – Chairman Silkin; 15<sup>th</sup> April – Councillor Burnham.
6. Public Toilet Business Rate Relief – Correspondence from KALC (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Buller, Councillors RESOLVED to write to Helen Grant MP seek her support for an amendment to the Local Government Finance Bill to provide 100% mandatory rate relief for public conveniences. Councillor Perry abstained.
7. Rail Summit – Invitation from KCC to attend 9<sup>th</sup> Rail Summit at County Hall Maidstone on 15/05/17 (for decision – note: annual meeting of the parish council is on the same date). Councillor Smith confirmed that Mr David Smith would be available to attend the summit and report back. Councillors accepted the kind offer with thanks.

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

1. Clerk's Report – the Clerk reported: he and the Chairman had completed the KALC Membership and Training Survey; the Village Clean-Up preparation and follow-up had gone smoothly and MBC had collected all equipment and bags of rubbish; handover of most Finance duties, particularly payroll and accounting, was largely complete and the focus of the remaining handover time would be mainly on year-end tasks; the Deputy Caretaker was making good progress with dismantling the old Christmas lights ready for disposal; the Clerk had approached a number of organisations about having a stall at the Annual Parish Meeting and was following up the approaches; he had received two phone calls from parishes in other parts of the country seeking information about Staplehurst's Neighbourhood Plan experience; he had received notification that MBC's Enforcement Team was operating at reduced capacity due to staff sickness.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
  - a) Rural Settlement Group – Minutes of meeting 08/02/17 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and posted at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural\\_settlement\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx).
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only
  - a) Community Payback - Councillor Spearink reported that the Community Payback visits were continuing to produce good results.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Oral Report – Councillor Perry commented: MBC's medium-term plan had been approved; the Railway Tavern planning application had been deferred from the last Planning Committee meeting and would probably be resubmitted for discussion at the meeting at the end of April.
2. KALC Rural Affairs Conference 09/03/17 – Written report by Councillor Perry. NOTED by Councillors and published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent\\_association\\_of\\_local\\_councils.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx).
3. PCSO's Report – PCSO Gardner's report showed seven crimes: four criminal damage; one theft; one theft from motor vehicle; one taking vehicle without consent. NOTED by Councillors.

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

1. Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee – Minutes of meeting 25/10/16. NOTED by Councillors and posted at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn\\_aerodrome.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx).
2. Neighbourhood Watch – Minutes of Maidstone & District Neighbourhood Watch Association AGM 23/11/16. NOTED by Councillors and posted at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>.
3. Staplehurst Village Centre – Notice of Extraordinary General Meeting 04/04/17 <http://freepdfhosting.com/153fd5f17e.pdf>. NOTED by Councillors.

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

No items were raised.

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Before the meeting the Chair of the Staplehurst Emergency Help Team stated that the team’s AGM would be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. The Secretary of the Friends of Staplehurst Health Centre said that the Friends’ AGM would be on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. He also reported that a consultation on the future of Southeastern rail services had been launched. Councillor Burnham advised that this would be discussed at a parish council meeting in April. Councillor Burnham announced that the United Reformed Church would be holding a coffee morning on 25<sup>th</sup> March in aid of the Community Centre for Debt Advice.