

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 18th August 2014 at 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Green, Kelly, Kemp, Lain-Rose (until the point indicated in the minutes), Manning, Sharp, Silkin, Spearink and Perry who was in the Chair.

Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Butcher, Gosling and Reardon whose reasons for apology were accepted.

URGENT ITEMS: - None requested.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

Lobbying – Councillors Buller, Burnham and Perry declared they had been lobbied about the Neighbourhood Plan.

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 1365-1367 of 4th August 2014 were proposed for approval by Councillor Silkin, seconded by Councillor Spearink, approved by councillors nem con, signed by the Chairman and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

ACCOUNTS & FINANCES

1. Summation of Accounts to 8th August 2014. Noted and posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.
2. Accounts for payment for approval – proposed by Councillor Burnham, seconded by Councillor Green the list of accounts for payment was approved nem con. Councillor Burnham said he thought it advisable to look into use of a payment card to avoid staff having to use their personal card for council purchases.
3. Camera at Jubilee Field – further correspondence re quotation. Further to discussion on 7th July (Min 1358) councillors noted that investigation of the cause of water damage to the Jubilee Field CCTV camera attributed the water ingress to a small hole and crack consistent with that arising from a physical shock such as an air gun pellet or similar projectile. They agreed that the insurance claim should be pursued, noting the repair quotation from Digital Barriers was £936 and the insurance excess was £250.
4. Nicholson Walk Trees – Report and Quotation (for approval). Councillors agreed to accept the quotation of £285 from Forestry First Ltd to cut back and raise the canopy of one oak tree and one ash tree in Nicholson Walk and to accept with thanks a resident's offer of a contribution towards the cost (amount to be confirmed), subject to completion of prior planning formalities with the MBC Conservation Officer.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Neighbourhood Plan – Update & Next Steps. *Chairman Perry closed the meeting to allow contributions from members of the public.* The Chair of RSG reported that Feria Urbanism were working on recording consultation responses. He advised that on September 17th MBC and consultants Design Southeast would be running a workshop for parish representatives covering the Local and Neighbourhood Plans. He said a productive meeting had been held with representatives of Kent Highways and hoped

that they were now going to provide comments on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Green added that the representatives had welcomed the offer to receive copies of the Parish Council's comments on major planning applications. Councillor Spearink asked about DDA compliance of the Marden/Headcorn Road crossroads: maintenance and upgrade issues are to be taken up with KCC's highways steward and DDA officer respectively. *Chairman Perry reopened the meeting.*

2. Caretaker's Report – The Clerk reported that MBC had agreed to provide training to the caretaker on safe use of strimmer equipment.
3. Chairman of Parish Council – Resignation; Election of New Chairman. Further to the meeting of 7th July (Min 1358) Chairman Perry confirmed that he would be standing down from the position of Chairman although remaining a member of the Parish Council; he read to the meeting and signed his formal written notice of resignation to take effect from 15th September. Councillors Kelly (proposed by Chairman Perry, seconded by Councillor Silkin) and Silkin (proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Spearink) accepted nominations for the position of Chairman and retired from the meeting to allow Councillors to vote on the appointment. The Clerk having informed Chairman Perry of the result of the votes cast, Councillors Kelly and Silkin rejoined the meeting and Chairman Perry declared Councillor Silkin duly elected. Councillors expressed their appreciation of the contribution made by Chairman Perry and thanked him for agreeing to continue leading the Finance Group.
4. Community Trigger Briefing – Information from KCC about how members of the public can request a review of action taken in respect of anti-social behaviour complaints was noted by councillors.
5. DCLG Technical Consultation on Planning – Invitation to Comment. Councillors agreed that Councillors Burnham, Kemp and Green should review the consultation (at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-consultation-on-planning>) and that input from the Rural Settlement Group would be welcome. It was noted that to meet the DCLG deadline of 26th September a proposed response should be agreed by Full Council on 15th September. *Councillor Lain-Rose left the meeting at this point.*
6. KALC Request for Information – Devolution of Services. Councillors agreed that the Parish Council should respond to KALC's request and provide information on the Council's current and possible future services. They agreed that the response should be provided by the Chairman and Clerk on behalf of the Council.
7. Maidstone Borough Council Update – Verbal Report. Chairman Perry commented on the importance of the work under way with parishes and KALC on the Parish Charter, Parish Services Scheme and the relationship between Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plan. He said that MBC had granted a trading licence to Seafood Stop to operate in the grounds of the Village Centre at permitted times.
8. Open and Accountable Local Government – Rules for noting and future action. Councillors noted KALC's advice that guidance on new legislation would shortly be issued, which would necessitate a review of Council's standing orders and related policy.
9. Rural Development Programme for England – Correspondence from KALC (for noting). Councillors noted the information about opportunities to obtain funding for rural projects, including cultural and heritage activity. They asked that the RFO find out more details.
10. Transport Review by MBC – Invitation to Comment. Councillors noted that MBC had taken up the Parish Council's proposal that Overview and Scrutiny Committee review bus service provision. Chairman Perry advised that the next meeting of the committee was scheduled for 16th September and that he would speak to the MBC officer about the Parish Council's engagement with many parties on service issues. Councillor Spearink said he would update his report on the subject.

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting 19/09/14. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx
Councillor Spearink reported on efforts to rearrange a proposed meeting with parties involved in the local bus service, to include attendance by Helen Grant MP. Councillors agreed that it was important to secure her attendance.
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, NK, RS, PS) Next meeting? Minutes of meetings 19/06/14 and 24/04/14 awaited. 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 *Chairman Perry closed the meeting to allow contributions from members of the public.* The Chair of RSG said he felt that agreed recommendations of Planning Committee should be recorded in minutes with references as a matter of course to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and to details of votes cast. The Clerk advised that under standing orders any councillor could, immediately following a vote, request that named voting be recorded. Councillor Silkin commented that an agreed resolution became a resolution of the Council as a body, whatever the distribution of votes. Councillor Burnham felt there was merit in recording close votes to reflect that members held a range of views. There was general consensus amongst speakers that it was good practice to take into account the Neighbourhood Plan when reviewing applications. *Chairman Perry reopened the meeting.* Councillors agreed they should follow the practice of considering planning applications in the context of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
4. Allotments Project Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, BM) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_1.aspx
Councillor Burnham said he had noticed reference to a possible allotment site in the outline planning application documents submitted for Hen & Duckhurst Farm. Councillor Manning will investigate further.
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? Report of meeting 11/08/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx Chairman Perry reported that Councillor Lain-Rose would be documenting proposed amendments to the Parish Council's financial regulations.
7. Playscheme (TB, JB, NK) Next meeting 28/08/14. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx
Councillor Buller advised that attendance numbers had increased during the final week of Play Scheme and that a review meeting would be held with Play Place on 28th August.
8. Publicity & Website Group (JP, TB, PK, MA, JB, NK, SL, JR) Report of meetings 25/03/14 and 15/07/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx Councillor Buller advised that she was awaiting the second draft proof of the Autumn Village Update.
9. Rural Settlement Group including Neighbourhood Plan (JP, JB, NK, AS) Report of meeting 13/08/14 awaited. Report of meeting 16/07/14 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx. Councillor Kemp volunteered to join the group as a Parish Council representative.
10. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
Councillor Burnham advised that he would be seeking from Councillor Reardon a date for the group to meet.
11. Village Enhancement Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, PB, SL, JR, AS) Next meeting?
http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx. Update on actions relating to signage and vegetation (Mins 1363-64) and planters (Min 1367). Councillor Kelly reported that he had been gathering photographic evidence of issues relating to vegetation and would contact the Chair of the Staplehurst Society about planters.
12. Youth Club (SL, PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx Councillor Kelly advised the club would reopen in September.

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? Minutes of meeting 03/06/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB, PK) Next meeting? Minutes of meetings 26/06/14 and 27/03/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx Councillor Kelly volunteered to act as a further Parish Council representative with the group.
5. KALC Area Committee (JP, PB, PK, RS, PS) Next meeting 22/10/14. Report of meeting 07/08/14 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 24/09/14. 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 21/08/14. Minutes of meeting 27/05/14 awaited http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
11. River Beult Catchment Improvement Group (JP, NK, PS) Next meeting 30/09/14? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx> Councillors Kemp and Spearink will attend the next meeting subject to confirmation of the proposed date.
12. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting 02/09/14 – Councillor Spearink to attend. Minutes of meeting 03/06/14 posted at <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) Report of meeting 22/01/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx
16. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (AG, SL, BM, JR)
17. Staplehurst Surface Water Management Plan Group (NK) Next meeting?
18. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (SL & PB) Next meeting? Reports of meetings 15/04/14 and 13/05/14 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
19. Village Sports & Social Club (PB) Next meeting? <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting a resident asked a question about consultation undertaken with residents of Chapel Lane about lights in the lane. It was advised that this followed representations about the proposed decommissioning of the lights. Borough Councillor Paulina Watson introduced herself to the meeting and gave a short speech about her background and new role as ward councillor. After the meeting a resident asked about the refused Tesco application and whether the company's offer of allotments was being pursued. Cllr Manning said he was pursuing the allotments question. A resident asked that councillors try to speak more loudly during meetings to assist members of the public. A resident discussed a longstanding problem with flooding at his property in Offens Drive and his attempts to find a solution with different parties. It was suggested that advice about the legal situation could be sought initially from Citizens Advice Bureau and then, depending on the outcome, from the Local Government Ombudsman and/or professional solicitors.

PARISH COUNCILLOR SURGERY: Councillor Gosling to attend on 30th August at the library.

POLICE REPORT: The Clerk undertook to circulate the PCSO's monthly report: 5 crimes - 1 burglary, 1 theft, 1 vehicle interference, 1 criminal damage, 1 theft from motor vehicle.