

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 18th November 2013 at 7.35 p.m.

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

APOLOGIES: None as all were present.

URGENT ITEMS: - Councillors agreed to take one item of urgent business relating to the local bus service.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

Lobbying – All Councillors declared they had been lobbied about the local bus service. Councillor Spearink declared he had been lobbied about the interactive speed sign and parking. Councillors Buller and Burnham 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 1308-1311 of 4th November 2013 were proposed for approval by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Kemp, approved by councillors nem con, signed by Chairman Perry and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

ACCOUNTS & FINANCES

1. Summation of Accounts to 8TH November was noted and posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.
2. Accounts for payment for approval. Proposed by Councillor Silkin, seconded by Councillor Kemp, the list of accounts for payment was approved nem con.
3. CCTV Cameras Airtime Agreement – Councillor Reardon asked for further information about monitoring and the use made of the airtime. Councillor Silkin requested a copy of Digital Barriers' terms and conditions. Councillors questioned the payment amount and terms of the three-year option.
4. Interactive Speed Sign on High Street – Councillors were supportive of the request to contribute towards funding for a sign but felt that the siting and display needed to be revised. Chairman Perry undertook to advise Councillor Hotson. Councillor Spearink brought forward correspondence from a local resident relating to parking on Church Hill (tabled under agenda item Parking) which was noted by Councillors. They observed that the combination of speed, parked vehicles and limited visibility was hazardous.

CORRESPONDENCE & CURRENT ISSUES for noting or decision:-

1. Urgent Item – Councillor Spearink introduced discussion of the failing No. 5 bus service that had been raised in public forum by parents of pupils travelling to schools in Maidstone. Councillors expressed their considerable concern about the reported experiences of pupils and the health and safety issues involved. They agreed that it was appropriate to escalate action taken to date and to this end they resolved to write to VOSA and to KCC at the highest levels and to seek a meeting with Helen Grant MP.
2. Neighbourhood Plan – Councillors noted the report of the Neighbourhood Plan Project Team meeting of 5th November. Councillor Burnham undertook to write terms of

- reference for the team covering its working relationship with the Rural Settlement Group.
3. Caretaker's Report – The Clerk reported that the temporary caretaker was in place for the coming weeks.
 4. County Councillor Meeting – Chairman Perry reported on the latest update meeting with Councillor Hotson. He said that he was encouraged to continue exploring the possibility of taking on Bell Lane car park from MBC on a long lease. He reported that bollards are to be installed outside the school to help prevent vehicles driving and parking on the pavement.
 5. KALC – Councillors noted the Chairman's report of the KALC Finance Conference on 2nd November.
 6. Library Surgery – Councillor Ashby reported five visitors to the surgery who had raised parking at Bell Lane and the Parade, bollards in Poyntell Road, speeding in Station Road and the cost of the Neighbourhood Plan.
 7. Parking – (1) Councillors noted the report of the meeting held with MBC Parking Services on 4th November. (2) Correspondence re Church Hill: noted under Interactive Speed Sign on High Street.
 8. Street Lights – Councillors approved the report on Parish street lights and the recommendations of Finance Group that the Parish Office seek quotations for the proposed work.
 9. Surrenden Playing Field – Councillor Burnham presented a paper on future ownership options for the playing field and what each one could involve in terms of expenditure and responsibility for the Parish Council. Councillor Kelly said that following a meeting with MBC he was awaiting a proposal on what the borough council was prepared to offer by way of lease. Councillor Silkin advocated pursuing the freehold option and councillors agreed that this merited further exploration.

COMMITTEE & FOCUS GROUPS – Reports and recommendations:-

1. Local Transport (TB, BM, PS) Next meeting 06/12/13. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team (JB, PB, RS, PS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx
3. Planning Committee (PB, MA, JB, TB, AG, SG, PK, NK, JP, PS) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx Councillor Butcher advised that Tesco had appealed against MBC's refusal of application MA/12/0232. Councillors agreed a proposal by Councillor Green to investigate engagement of a consultant on a pro-bono basis to assist the Parish Council in its response.
4. Allotments Project Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, BM) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups_1.aspx
5. Strategy & Policy Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SL, SG, RS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy_group.aspx
6. Finance Group (JP, TB, PK, PB, SG, SL, JR) Next meeting 22/11/13. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/finance_group.aspx
7. Playscheme (TB, JB, NK) http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/youth_activities_1.aspx
8. Publicity & Website Group (JP, TB, PK, MA, JB, NK, SL, JR) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx Councillor Reardon advised that the Neighbourhood Plan information was now being loaded onto the village website. He asked councillors to give thought to the frequency of Village Updates for discussion at the next meeting. The Clerk undertook to provide details of costs for the last year. Councillor Spearink undertook to make enquiries of publishing in the Downs Mail. Councillor Buller advised that Winter Village Updates would be available for distribution on 20th November.
9. Rural Settlement Group including Neighbourhood Plan (JP, MA, JB, AS) Next meeting 13/11/13. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx

10. Surrenden Playing Field Group (TB, BM, JR, AS) Next meeting week commencing 25th November. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
11. Village Enhancement Group (JP, TB, PK, JB, PB, SL, JR, AS) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/sub_groups.aspx. Councillors agreed that the date of the Annual Village Clean-Up next year would be 22nd March 2014. Councillor Lain-Rose reported that Jumeira had made parking arrangements for its customers at the Parade.

REPORTS FOR NOTING from local community groups:-

1. Carnival & Fete (SL, BM) 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 04/03/14. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/headcorn_aerodrome.aspx
4. Jubilee Field Management & Users Group (JP, PB) Next meeting 05/12/13. Minutes of meeting 03/10/13 posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx
5. KALC Area Committee (JP, PB, PK, RS, PS) Next meeting 23/11/13 (AGM). Report of meeting 25/09/13 awaited. Minutes of previous meetings posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx
6. Kent Community Alcohol Partnership (PB) Next meeting? Report of meeting 04/09/13 awaited.
7. Knoxbridge A229 Residents' Group (BM, NK, PS) Next meeting?
8. McCabe Day Centre (JB) Next meeting 21/11/13. 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 21/11/13. Minutes of previous meetings posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx. Councillor Kemp said he would attend the Saving Community Policing Conference on 6th December.
11. Sobell Cheshire Home (JP, PS) Next meeting 03/12/13. <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>
12. Speed Watch (JB) <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx> Report of activity 05/11/13 was noted.
13. Staplehurst Community Hub (JB) Next meeting?
14. Staplehurst Patients' Participation Group (JB, RS, PS) Next meeting? Report of meeting 30/10/13 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx
15. Staplehurst Primary School Liaison (SL, BM, JR)
16. Staplehurst Village Centre Trust (SL & PB) Report of meeting 12/11/13 awaited. http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_trust.aspx
17. Village Sports & Social Club (PB) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/ot_hers.aspx
18. Youth Club (SL, PK) Next meeting? http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/staplehurst_youth_club.aspx

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting several residents spoke about the problems encountered by their children when using the bus service to and from Maidstone schools. Their points included: children had been left at bus stops for long periods and then buses were overloaded; overcrowding was creating a serious health and safety issue; children were arriving late for school and missing lessons; after school children were walking from Cornwallis to Loose to wait at an earlier bus stop in an effort to ensure a place on the bus home; schools were aware of problems and Cornwallis had paid for taxis; many parents were paying large sums for their children's passes and not receiving a service; a dedicated Cornwallis bus service was essential.

POLICE REPORT: The monthly report of PCSO Gardner was read, showing three burglaries, one theft and one criminal damage.

LIBRARY SURGERY: December 14th – Councillor Gosling and Councillor Perry or Silkin.