

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Tuesday 3rd April 2018 at 7.50 p.m.

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

Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Claridge and Reardon.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

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 Minute pages 1685-1687 of 19th March 2018 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Burnham and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Annual Parish Meeting – Meeting arrangements (for decision). Meeting date and time being already fixed for 23/04/18 at 8.00pm, Councillors RESOLVED to serve refreshments from 7.30pm to facilitate informal discussions for attendees prior to the meeting. Councillor Silkin confirmed trustees of the Village Centre would talk about their activities; Councillor Riordan said he would invite the Staplehurst Fireworks Group to do likewise. Posters are to be displayed around the village. Councillor Perry said that the electoral purdah period would restrict what borough/county councillors could say at the meeting.
2. Hen & Duckhurst Farm Proposed Development – Report of meeting with David Wilson Homes 20/03/18 – Chairman Burnham's report was NOTED by Councillors. Councillors Burnham, Buller and Perry had met a representative of David Wilson Homes who gave an update on the company's plans for Hen & Duckhurst Farm: a proposed footpath connection to Greenhill (apparently across private land) had been dropped; the landscape buffer behind Marlfield would be wider than originally proposed; surface water drainage was acknowledged as needing attention; 40% of housing would be affordable in line with Maidstone Local Plan requirements; allotments at the northern end of the site would be offered to the Parish Council.
3. Land North of Headcorn Road – Report of meeting with Redrow Homes 22/03/18 – Chairman Burnham's report was NOTED by Councillors. Councillors Burnham, Riordan and Buller had met representatives of Redrow Homes who gave an update on site activity: sales due to begin 10/04/18; scheme scheduled for completion in 3-4 years; first affordable housing units due for completion in June 2019; KCC was not prepared to adopt street lights at this stage so they will be funded via residents' management company; a high capacity high-voltage cable was to be laid between Chestnut Avenue substation and a new substation on the Redrow site; closure of Headcorn Road was being managed by subcontractor TriConnex; access would be maintained for residents, local businesses and to local amenities.
4. Parish Council Vacancy – Update following expiry of formal notice period. The Clerk reported that MBC had confirmed that the Parish Council could commence the co-option process to fill the current vacant councillor position. The Parish Office would take forward the appropriate publicity.

5. Staplehurst Fete 30th June 2018 – Invitation to book a stall (cost £10) (for decision).
RESOLVED: book two stalls at a cost of £20.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported: the Council's new bank account was fully operational; the Parish Office was occupied in year-end financial reporting and work on General Data Protection Regulation tasks and was preparing for work arising from the new parish council website and a transition to new e-mail addresses; following a meeting with representatives of neighbouring parishes about planning issues relating to gypsy and traveller sites, a meeting with MBC had been requested; information about planned closures of Headcorn Road, Marden Road, Five Oak Lane and Goudhurst Road was on the village website Latest News page.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - a) Play Scheme – report of meeting with Play Place 21/03/18. Councillors NOTED that the arrangements for the 2018 summer play scheme largely replicated those for 2017. The scheme is scheduled to run from 30/07/18 to 17/08/18 at Staplehurst School. Councillor Spearink commented that a Bio-blitz event at Wimpey Field was being planned and it was likely to be on 15/08/18; the Clerk will notify Play Place.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only
 - a) Wimpey Field – Path extension. Councillor Spearink reported that work on the path extension had commenced but had been hampered by the wet weather; bee hives were now in place; flower seeding was planned for later in the week.
 - b) Jubilee Field – Councillor Riordan said he had sought quotations for work on the pumps at Jubilee Field and would bring them forward at the next meeting for approval.
 - c) Parish Council Meeting Arrangements – Councillor Lain-Rose said that members of Finance and Strategy Group and Employment Group would be jointly reviewing parish council meeting arrangements, as the subject affected both councillors and staff. The aim was to put forward proposals for consideration by Full Council which was the parish council's formal decision-making body. He asked that any comments or concerns be channelled through the Chairman. In response to discussion about attendance at meetings the Clerk reminded Councillors that, as stated on each Full Council agenda, the document was a formal summons requiring notification of any apologies and reason for non-attendance.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Oral Report – Councillor Perry reported that the Kent Messenger (Weald edition 29/03/18) had carried a front-page article on Sainsbury's and Staplehurst in which he had been pictured and quoted; the report had carried information previously reported by the Parish Council about an indicative opening in 2020. Councillor Perry reported that MBC had approved a Council Tax increase of 3%, which he had opposed. He said MBC was putting resource into a temporary strengthening of environmental and planning enforcement. Councillor Lain-Rose asked about the status of discussion with MBC about Surrenden Field's freehold: Councillor Perry said that he and Borough Councillor Brice were seeking a meeting with MBC directors.

Councillor Sharp left the meeting to deal with Village Centre business.

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

No reports.

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

1. Annual Report: Councillor Buller asked councillors to write their profile pieces of 70-100 words for inclusion in the council's annual report. Target distribution date is around mid-May.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: After the meeting a resident commented on the importance of impressing on MBC the costs involved in maintaining Surrenden Field.

Meeting closed 8.50pm.