

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 19th February 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Claridge (until the point indicated in the minutes), Gosling (until the point indicated in the minutes), Lain-Rose, Manning, Perry, Reardon, Riordan, Sharp, Silkin, Smith, Spearink, Symes (from the point indicated in the minutes) and Burnham who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

CO-OPTION TO FILL COUNCILLOR VACANCY followed by the signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Gosling, councillors RESOLVED, in accordance with standing order 3q, to vote by signed ballot on this agenda item. *Chairman Burnham closed the meeting to invite Mr Paul Kelly and Ms Elaine Symes, who had confirmed they wished to be considered for co-option, to add to their personal statements which had been circulated to councillors. Following comments from the candidates, Chairman Burnham thanked them both and reopened the meeting.* After a signed ballot of all councillors present Ms Elaine Symes was co-opted to the Parish Council by a majority vote. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed and Councillor Symes took her place at the Council meeting.

APOLOGIES: none as all members were present.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillors Lain-Rose, Perry and Riordan declared an interest in items relating to Jubilee Field Management Committee (Finance Report 5 and minutes of the Committee's meeting) as they held positions on the Committee.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillors Perry and Riordan were granted a dispensation to speak and vote on the items of declared interest in accordance with section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011. Councillor Lain-Rose exercised the dispensation granted in accordance with section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011 on 04/12/17 (Min 1665).

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Minute pages 1674-1677 of 5th February 2018 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Burnham and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.

FINANCE REPORTS:-

1. Accounts for payment - for approval. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Smith, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the list of accounts for payment. Expenditure for the period 09/01/18 to 12/02/18 was £12,151.44 and income for the same period was £5,690.57.
2. Summation of Accounts – as at 12th February 2018 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx.
3. Action with Communities in Rural Kent – Annual Membership £50 Subscription (for approval). Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Spearink, renewal of membership for the year commencing 01/04/18 was APPROVED.
4. Youth Club Hedge and Grass Cutting – Quotation for Approval (deferred from 05/02/18 Min 1674). Councillors RESOLVED to ACCEPT Forestry First's quotations of £320 for regular grass cutting and £300 for hedge cutting at Staplehurst Youth Club site, prices being fixed for three years.
5. Jubilee Field Management Committee – Request for funding to cover various maintenance items (PR) (for approval). Councillor Riordan discussed his report covering

expenditure that needed to be undertaken by the Jubilee Field Management Committee. From the report and discussion of it Councillors NOTED: in 2010 the Parish Council as freeholder had leased Jubilee Field to the Trustees of the Jubilee Field Management Committee; in 2016 a major change of personnel on the management committee was faced with a shortage of funds and the situation was now acute; some essential maintenance work was required and the Management Committee was seeking financial support from the Parish Council; for regular and future maintenance requirements Councillor Lain-Rose had consulted interested parties to draft a maintenance agreement which Councillors AGREED should be proposed for decision at the next Parish Council meeting; the Management Committee was also drawing up a business plan to support its future operation. Councillors commented that the Jubilee Field was a very important facility for the community and they considered that as ultimate freeholder the Parish Council had a responsibility to protect it as village asset. Noting the estimated gross expenditure requirements were: (i) external lights £90; (ii) internal lights £150; (iii) boiler work £525; (iv) door and glass repairs £127.80; (v) shutter door service £1,000 and new controllers £216, Councillors RESOLVED to allocate £4,000 to cover these items, make allowance for contingency and await further information on a possible requirement for work on the sewage pump on the field (potential cost £1,340), noting that the latter item had traditionally been maintained by the Parish Council rather than the Jubilee Field Management Committee.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. A229 Linton Crossroads to Staplehurst – Information from Kent Highways relating to issues discussed with county and borough councillors. Councillors NOTED that: Kent Highways would be seeking funding for some measures to improve the A229; Cllr Hotson had offered to contribute from his budget; Kent Highways would also look to implement some 'quick win' measures in the next three months, including new signage, cleaning and maintenance of signs and verge marker posts, refreshing road lining, investigating surface water drainage, checking the operational status of speed indicator signs.
2. Consultation (1) - Review of Local Government Ethical Standards: Stakeholder Consultation by DCLG (closing date 18/05/18) <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation>. NOTED by councillors without comment.
3. Consultation (2) - 2018 KALC Membership Survey (closing date 29/03/18). Councillors RESOLVED that Chairman Burnham and the Clerk should complete the survey.
4. Consultation (3) – KCC Archive Search Room Opening Hours (closing date 12/03/18) <https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/archivesearchroom/consultationHome>. NOTED by Councillors who encouraged interested individuals to respond.
5. General Data Protection Regulations – Report of Kent Association of Local Councils Workshop held 05/02/18 (RS). Councillor Silkin commented on his report and recommendation that the Council set up a small working group to help ensure it would be fully compliant with new regulations. RESOLVED: the working group to comprise Councillors Burnham, Lain-Rose, Silkin and Smith.
6. Governance, Procedures and Transparency Conference – Report of event organised by Kent Association of Local Councils 08/02/18 (Clerk). NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/others.aspx>.
7. Parking at Church Green – Correspondence from resident and comments from Kent Highways. Councillors NOTED the correspondence. Councillor Perry said that there were plans to mark yellow zigzag lines at Church Green. Councillors asked that the subject of speeding on rural roads and through the village be tabled for discussion on the next agenda. *Councillor Claridge left the meeting during this item.*
8. The Parade – Correspondence from Neighbourhood Plan Review Group. Councillors discussed the correspondence which highlighted the poor condition of The Parade.

Councillor Riordan explained that the clearance of the plant beds had been delayed due to the required machinery breaking down, but work should recommence very shortly. Councillor Reardon said the status of the proposed works on the pavement and the drainage problems would be discussed at the meeting with Kent Highways on 20/02/18.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported: the caretaker had repaired damaged play equipment at Surrenden and was mending the memorial bench on Church Hill; a date for a meeting with representatives of neighbouring parishes about gypsy and traveller issues would be available shortly; the Office was seeking bids for Christmas light installation and for toilet servicing; the Office team was auditing its personal data records, reviewing and editing website content ahead of the move to the new website.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - a) Jubilee Field Management Committee – Draft Minutes of Meeting 17/01/18. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/jubilee_fields_users_group.aspx.
 - b) Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Draft Minutes of Meeting 07/02/18. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/rural_settlement_group.aspx.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only
 - a) Friends of Wimpey Field – Councillor Spearink reported that the Friends Group had met on 13/02/18. He asked that the Clerk write to the Community Payback Team co-ordinators to thank them for their good work on Field projects. Councillor Buller said that a Wimpey Field display was to be arranged in the library during a period to be confirmed.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Oral Report – Councillor Perry reported that he would be meeting MBC directors to discuss Surrenden Playing Field and he would arrange another meeting with David Wilson Homes to discuss Hen & Duckhurst Farm.
2. KALC Area Committee – Report of meeting 05/02/18 (RS) including discussion of differential council tax for parishes. Councillor Silkin's report was NOTED and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kent_association_of_local_councils.aspx. Councillor Silkin said he had volunteered to join the area committee's Parish Liaison Group. Councillors discussed the question of whether differential rates would be fairer to parishes than the current Parish Services Scheme arrangements. Councillor Perry commented that such a scheme would require complete clarity and certainty about the services for which parishes were deemed responsible.
3. Parish-Police Liaison Meeting – Draft Minutes of Meeting 17/01/18. NOTED by Councillors and posted at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx.

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

1. Maidstone Neighbourhood Watch – Minutes of AGM 29/11/17. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx.
2. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – Minutes of meeting 11/01/18. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx.
3. Staplehurst Health Centre Patient Participation Group – Minutes of meeting 24/01/18. NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/patient_participation_group_at_health_centre.aspx. Councillor Silkin commented on the recent announcement that the Health Centre had been placed in special measures. He commented that the problems related to specific services and did not relate to the level of medical care. *Councillor Gosling left the meeting.*

URGENT MATTERS (at Chairman's discretion, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting)
Councillor Riordan commented that it was very disappointing to see cases of cyber-bullying

on social media, particularly in recent posts about the Health Centre. Councillor Manning asked about the parking situation near Bower Walk; Councillor Riordan said MBC had reviewed the area and it was not a priority for additional measures by the authority.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting comments were made about the following: (i) a delivery van had driven and become stuck on public footpath KM302A (end of Bell Lane); (ii) some newly planted trees at Wimpey Field had been damaged; (iii) the Parish Council meeting agenda did not reflect residents' issues; (iv) the Horticultural Society was keen to pursue a Staplehurst in Bloom project; it was suggested that land held by the Parish Council alongside Marden Road and High Street could be utilised to good effect. After the meeting comments were made about: the condition of the Parade; developments built by David Wilson Homes; the status of the Community Health Council; the relative numbers of town and rural ward borough councillors at MBC.

Meeting closed 10.10pm.