

Stansted Parish Council
comprising the villages of
Stansted & Fairseat

**Items of interest from the Meetings of the Parish Council held on Monday
12th May 2014**

The Parish Council held two meetings on Monday 12th May. We started with the Annual Parish Meeting – the yearly meeting for the parishioners, who aren't restricted on contributing to the meeting. It was attended by Cllrs Sarah Hohler (KCC) and Ann Kemp and Matthew Balfour (Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council); Simon Webb, KCC Education Department; Alex Teare, Diocese of Rochester Education Department and Lyn Mason, Chairman of the Governors of Stansted School. The future of the school had been put on the agenda for the meeting and was the main issue of discussion.

Sarah explained the recent history of the school being placed in special measures in July 2013, following an Ofsted inspection and how the Governing Body had been working hard behind the scenes with the local authority and the diocese to turn things round. Since then two visits had been made by HM Inspector for Schools, who had perceived “green shoots” on the second visit but who considered that progress in improving standards had been inadequate. The next inspection was in June. Andrew Livingstone had started in February and had now been appointed Headteacher.

Mr Webb spoke on behalf of the Local Authority and explained that an Interim Executive Board would normally have been appointed when the school went into special measures, but the LA had not appointed one at that time and had supported the efforts of the Governors. However the LA now thought it was time to appoint an IEB, which would consist of two members of the dissolved Governing Body and four people steeped in education. They would remain in place until the school came out of special measures and the time limit was 2 years.

Mr Teare explained the position of the diocese as it is a church school. Of 89 schools for which the diocese has responsibility, it is one of four that are in special measures. In response to a question about academy status, he said the Diocese Academy Trust would only sponsor schools that were financially viable. Mr Webb said that the critical number of pupils was 61.

Matthew Balfour said that we are where we are and the main thing now was to support the Headteacher so that the next report showed progress.

It was pointed out by a parent that of the 9 pupils in Year 6, 5 had passed their 11+ and were going on to grammar school. Another parent said that the children had experienced much change over the last year and what was needed now was stability.

This one agenda item continued for nearly 1½ hours, with various questions being asked. Harry Bott concluded by saying that the community needed to get behind the school so that it was seen as a school that parents wanted to send their children to.

The second meeting was the Annual Parish Council Meeting. This is the yearly meeting when the Chairman and Vice-chairman are elected for the year, following which the normal parish council business is transacted. Most of the parishioners left at this point but a hardy group of about eight stayed on. Cllrs Polly Falconer, George Goring and Janet Howie had given their apologies as they were all on holiday.

Harry Bott and Polly Falconer were duly re-elected Chairman and Vice-chairman respectively. Sheila Goodworth remains police liaison and Janet Howie the Council's representative on the Borough Council's Parish Partnership Panel.

There were 3 planning applications – one for a rear extension at High Tree in Tumblefield Road, for a lawful development certificate for part of the London Golf Club and a neighbouring consultation by Sevenoaks District Council for Threeways at the top of Pease Hill. There were no objections to any of these applications.

The accounts for 2013/14 were approved and signed off, as was the audit annual return, which will now be submitted to the external auditor.

The only other item of note was a report on the rural broadband, which has leapt much closer. Harry will report on this at the June meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 2nd June in Fairseat Village Hall, starting at 8.00 pm. Please do come along - everyone is welcome.

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