

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on  
Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 7.30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Claridge (until the point indicated in the minutes), Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Perry, Reardon (until the point indicated in the minutes), Riordan, Sharp, Spearink, Whittle (from the point indicated in the minutes) and Silkin who was in the Chair.

Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Smith.

**COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillors Lain-Rose and Perry (Youth Club trustees) declared an interest in the item relating to the Youth Club site. Councillors Riordan and Sharp (Village Centre trustee) declared an interest in the item relating to the Village Centre Redevelopment Group. Councillors Manning and Riordan declared an interest in the item relating to the Communications Group recommendation about reprinting fete programmes. Councillor Manning declared an interest in Wimpey Field.

Requests for Dispensation – All declaring members requested and were granted dispensations to speak and vote on the items of declared interest in accordance with section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011.

**APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES** Minute pages 1629-1632 of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 were proposed for approval by Councillor Manning, seconded by Councillor Sharp, APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Silkin and made available at [http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes\\_of\\_the\\_last\\_meetings.aspx](http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx). Councillor Claridge abstained. *Councillor Whittle joined the meeting.*

**ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** To receive nominations and vote for the position of Chairman further to the announcement of Councillor Silkin (Min 1625) (followed by the signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman). Chairman Silkin explained that he would relinquish the role of Chairman at the end of the meeting. Nominations for the position were: Councillor Lain-Rose (proposed Councillor Manning, seconded Councillor Gosling); Councillor Burnham (proposed Chairman Silkin, seconded Councillor Buller); Councillor Perry (proposed Councillor Spearink, seconded Councillor Whittle). Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, Councillors RESOLVED (ten for, three against, one abstention) that the vote be held by signed ballot in accordance with the provisions of standing order 3q. Councillor Claridge requested that the voting of each councillor be recorded as provided for by standing order 3q. Ballot 1: Councillor Burnham – 5 (Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Sharp and Silkin); Councillor Lain-Rose – 5 (Councillors Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Reardon and Riordan); Councillor Perry – 4 (Councillors Claridge, Perry, Spearink and Whittle). In accordance with standing order 8 a second ballot was held to select between Councillors Burnham and Lain-Rose. Ballot 2: Councillor Burnham – 6 (Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Sharp, Silkin and Whittle); Councillor Lain-Rose – 6 (Councillors Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Perry, Reardon and Riordan); Abstentions – 2 (Councillors Claridge and Spearink). There being an equality of votes, Chairman Silkin exercised his casting vote in favour of Councillor Burnham who was duly elected to the position of Chairman to take effect on closure of the meeting when he signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman. *Councillors Claridge and Reardon left the meeting.*

**FINANCE REPORTS:-**

1. Accounts for payment - for approval. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Gosling, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to APPROVE the list of accounts for payment.
2. Summation of Accounts – as at 11th July 2017 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes\\_of\\_the\\_last\\_meetings.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx).

**CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:**

1. Local Government Finance and Devolution – Invitation from KALC to complete questionnaire (deadline 21/07/17). Councillor Riordan volunteered to complete and submit the questionnaire.
2. Mayor's Charity Event 19/08/17 – Invitation from Mayor's Office to attend a special charity event at Headcorn Aerodrome (for response). Councillor Sharp volunteered to attend the event on behalf of the Parish Council. Noting the cost was £35, this was AGREED by Councillors.
3. Parish Council Surgery – (i) Report on key issues raised 8/15 July (GS/AS): subjects raised were potholes, parking on Headcorn Road, speeding on Marden Road and NatWest in Staplehurst; (ii) Appointment of representatives for future surgeries: 5<sup>th</sup> August Councillor Burnham, 12<sup>th</sup> August Councillor Buller, 19<sup>th</sup> August Councillor Ashby, 26<sup>th</sup> August Councillor Silkin.
4. Request to hold craft fair – Correspondence seeking use of land for the holding of a craft fair during 2018 (for decision). The Clerk said he had sought from the correspondent further information about his request. Councillors agreed to DEFER consideration until such time as the information was received.
5. Rural Service Centre Status - Proposal to submit a written business case to MBC to show that Staplehurst does not meet the criteria of a Rural Service Centre and to request a change of designation in the Local Plan. Councillor Buller discussed her report which set out her view that Staplehurst did not have the facilities to justify being designated in the Maidstone Borough Draft Local Plan as a 'rural service centre'. Councillors discussed the report and highlighted the inadequate level of retail and service infrastructure and issues relating to highways and parking. They NOTED Planning Committee's referral of its concern about the possible development of land north of Henhurst Farm and any future southwards expansion from there (Min 1326P). Councillor Perry said he supported the proposal to write to MBC both now and again at a future date to challenge MBC's housing dispersal strategy when further proposed housing allocations could be put out for consultation; however, he cautioned that the designation of 'rural service centre' status was not within the control of the Parish Council. Councillors RESOLVED (i) to write to MBC as recommended by Councillor Buller's report and (ii) to follow up the letter when MBC consulted again on housing allocation.

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

1. Clerk's Report – the Clerk reported: in the CCTV service programme the second camera was undergoing service; the Parish Office was discussing online banking with the Council's bankers; the Deputy Clerk had covered the office during the Clerk's holiday and prepared reports for council and Finance Group meetings; the Office team was preparing for distribution of the Village Update and the next Village Clean-Up.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
  - a) Communications Group – Report of meeting 04/07/17 (for noting) including recommendation for reprinting fete programmes (for decision). Councillors NOTED the report which was published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity\\_website.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/publicity_website.aspx). Councillors NOTED that an initiative had been launched for residents to hand copies of the fete programme that were no longer required to Helen's Coffee House and that

the additional copies would not be required until late in the year. Councillors therefore DEFERRED discussion of a proposal to fund reprint costs.

- b) Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – Minutes of meeting 29/06/17 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc\\_emergency\\_planning\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/kcc_emergency_planning_group.aspx).
- c) Village Centre Redevelopment Group – Report of meeting 26/06/17 (for noting) including recommendation to dissolve the Group (for decision). Councillors NOTED the report of the meeting which was published at [http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village\\_centre\\_redevelopment\\_group.aspx](http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_centre_redevelopment_group.aspx). Councillors Perry and Whittle commented that it was premature to dissolve the Redevelopment Group. Councillors Lain-Rose and Riordan commented that the Village Centre trustees were planning to take forward a number of workstreams to move towards achieving refurbishment and extension of the current facility. Chairman Silkin commented that the Village Centre trustees were also planning to improve communication, including adding more functionality to the Village Centre website. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Riordan, Councillors RESOLVED by majority (seven for, two against, two abstentions) to dissolve the redevelopment group.
- d) Village Clean-Up – Proposal to hold a clean-up on 16/09/17. The Clerk reported that 16<sup>th</sup> September would be a convenient date for the Youth Club and for Maidstone Borough Council. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Burnham, Councillors RESOLVED nem con to hold the next clean-up on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September. Councillor Spearink said he would prepare information leaflets for use at the event to encourage interest in bulb-planting at Wimpey Field.
- e) Wimpey Field – Correspondence from CSA Environmental following visit and meeting at Wimpey Field 04/07/17 (for noting). Councillors NOTED with pleasure the complimentary comments made by CSA Environmental. Councillor Spearink said that he planned to bring forward at a future date recommendations for the purchase of a storage container and a small mower. He reported that a grass area containing wildflowers surrounding the pond had been cut by the estate management company's contractors and asked that a letter of complaint be sent.
- f) Youth Club Site – Proposal for installation of public seating (for comment) (deferred from 03/07/17). Proposed by Councillor Gosling, seconded by Councillor Riordan, Councillors RESOLVED to approve expenditure of up to a total of £500 on two wooden seats in a sawn timber style, with engraving and fixings, as illustrated by D.A. Edwards Timber. They asked that family consent be confirmed before any commemorative engraving was undertaken.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors
- a) Staplehurst Library Users Group – Request to hold a display about Wimpey Field. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Silkin, Councillors RESOLVED to agree to the request to display material about Wimpey Field in Staplehurst library.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Oral Report – Councillor Perry reported: MBC had been reviewing tower blocks; its emergency plans were under review; he and the MBC Director of Regeneration and Place had discussed Staplehurst station with regeneration experts; there would be a meeting of the full council on 19/07/17; he had moved his next surgery from 29/07/17 to 22/07/17.
2. PCSO Report – covered two periods. (i) 16/05/17-19/06/17: eight crimes - four thefts, three burglaries, one attempted burglary; (ii) 20/06/17-13/07/17: six crimes - two thefts, one vehicle interference, one criminal damage, one burglary with intent to steal, one theft from motor vehicle. NOTED by Councillors.

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

1. Staplehurst Youth Club – Summer Newsletter. NOTED by Councillors who complimented the Club on the informative publication.

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

No items.

**SPECIAL MOTION & REPORT – EMPLOYMENT GROUP:-**

1. To move that the public be excluded from item 2 due to its confidential nature. As no member of the public was present the motion was not moved.
2. To consider the report of the Employment Group regarding staff resource. Councillor Lain-Rose discussed the Employment Group’s confidential report dated 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017 on staff resource requirements, which had been previously circulated to Councillors. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Riordan, Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the recommendations 1-4 listed on page one of the report.

Chairman Silkin thanked Councillor Lain-Rose for his work on the Employment Group report. He thanked the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and all councillors for their support during his term of office. The meeting closed at 10.30pm.

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM:** The Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group commented on the need to make progress with plans for the Village Centre and on behalf of the Youth Club expressed thanks to the Parish Council for agreeing to fund two seats to be installed in the Youth Club grounds.