

STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW GROUP

Minutes of virtual meeting held on 9th December, 2020

1. **Present:** Paddy Riordan (PR) PC Chairman and Zoom Host, Robin Oakley, Secretary(RO), Margaret Arger, Chairman (MA), Cllr. Sue Forward (SF), John Kelly (JK), Tom Burnham (TB), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB), Cllr. Adele Sharpe (AS), Cllr. John Perry (JP), Cllr. Louise Brice (LB) Robin Kenworthy (RK)
2. **Apologies:** Cllr. Colin Bowden, Colin Love
3. **Tribute:** At the start of the meeting, Chairman Margaret Arger, noted the fact that John Kelly is moving away from Staplehurst to the Sussex coast and paid tribute to John's work as the former Chairman of the group and his achievement in bringing the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan into existence.
4. **Minutes of Meeting held on 11th November 2020:** Agreed
5. **Matters Arising:** None
6. **Maidstone Local Plan :** MA explained that a group of parish councillors had a virtual meeting on the 8th December when they were presented with a draft response to the Local Plan which had been prepared by Cllr. Joan Buller. This was discussed at length and was used as the basis for a response which AS, as Chairman of Planning, had prepared. Copies of the response had been circulated to Group members prior to this meeting for their consideration prior to it being offered to the full Parish Council for approval at the meeting on 14th December. The Planning Committee would be recommending to the full council that Home Farm Site 114 should be rejected as it was not shown on the Neighbourhood Plan.(NP) They would be recommending that Lodge Road Site 066 which appears in the NP should be accepted on the basis that it would be part housing and part industrial to provide employment and the scheme should include extension of the Dickens Gate spine road, provided that it could only be used for cars and light vans and no heavy good vehicles. PR reported that he had spoken with Civils who own site 066 and they are happy with the spine road being extended through their site to connect to Lodge Road.
7. **Tree Preservation Orders:** PR said that following last month's meeting, the Greener Staplehurst Group will be applying for Tree Preservation Orders on mature trees existing on site 066 and 114. LB said that KCC have a scheme where people can apply for assistance in planting trees. JK pointed out that the Parish Council could add the quantities of trees planted on to the log being run by the BBC Countryfile TV programme.
8. **Any other business:**

Bulbs: PR said that the parish council had been offered a large quantity of daffodil and other bulbs for planting around the village. MA suggested that some could be planted on the verges at the approach to the railway bridge on the A229. AS suggested that some could be planted at the Community Centre.

Village Update: PR said that he had received favourable comments on the Green sites explanation in the Village Update. The Group needs to prepare a piece for the next Update to explain its role.

Post Office: It was noted that the Post Office is inviting comments on a proposal to re-locate the Post Office to the Spar supermarket. RK commented on the importance of accessibility for wheelchairs and scooters. PR said he would be putting together a list of positives and negatives relating to the proposal which is on the Parish Council's Agenda for 14th December.

Poultry Farm at Chainhurst: RK drew attention to a planning application No. 20/505751 for a new poultry farm for Fridays on a site at Chainhurst. Whilst this is in Marden parish, when the farm is operational the chicken manure will be transported through Staplehurst to Friday's new anaerobic digester plant at their Knoxbridge Farm. It also seems likely that when the farm is populated and

depopulated this will give rise to additional traffic along roads between Chainhurst and Staplehurst which are narrow and unsuitable for large vehicles.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm. Next meeting on 13th January, 2021

Robin Oakley 11th December, 2020