

Staplehurst Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan Review Group (NPRG) – Minutes

5th April 2017 - 8pm at The Village Centre

Minutes Secretary: Robin Oakley

1. Introductions

Attending were Margaret Arger (MA), Robin Oakley (RO), John Kelly (JK), Cllr. Tom Burnham (TB), Cllr. Joan Buller (JB), Cllr. Sam Lain-Rose (SL-R) (Observer) who arrived at 8.25 pm, and Cllr. John Perry (JP) who arrived at 9.05pm having come from a previous Borough Council meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Perry had warned that he would probably be late as he was attending an earlier meeting in Maidstone.

3. Positions of Chairman and Minutes Secretary

Following the resignation of John Kelly as Chairman, Margaret Arger and Robin Oakley had offered to take on the roles of Chairman and Minutes Secretary respectively. It was proposed by JB and seconded by JK that their offers should be accepted, and this was agreed with no dissent.

4. Membership of the Group

No change.

5. Minutes of meeting held on 8th March, 2017

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

6. Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) Draft Local Plan Changes

JB reported that Staplehurst Parish Council (SPC) had asked that the NPRG should examine the MBC Draft changes to the Local Plan and report back. This document, titled 'The Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications Regulation 19 Maidstone Borough Local Plan' is available on line or as hard copy in the public library. JK reported that he had read the document and could find no mention of Neighbourhood Plans, or gypsy and travellers. It was agreed that members of the Group would look at the document and report back to the Chairman so that the Group's views could be submitted to SPC by 30th April, 2017.

7. Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan

JB reported that SPC had decided to attempt to progress the matters of the proposed supermarket and the station area development. Cllr. Claridge would be progressing the supermarket and Cllrs. Joan Buller, Gill Smith and Tom Burnham would attempt to obtain S. 106 monies to allocate towards the station area development. SL-R suggested that SPC should ask William Cornell of MBC to become involved in the latter. JB said that the next step would be for SPC to obtain the names of landowners in the station area.

8. Solar Farm Appeals

JB reported that the Planning Inspector's Report on the Pagehurst scheme is still awaited. JB also reported that she and JP would be attending the planning enquiry on the Pullen Farm scheme which is being held in Maidstone on 10/11th May, 2017.

9. Future of Village Centre

MA reported on the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Village Centre Trust held on the 4th April, 2017 when it was agreed that the Trust should be re-organised with a new modern constitution based on the Charity Commission model. SL-R said that if, as has been suggested, the Youth Club land was to be incorporated in the Village Centre re-planning, and the Youth Club would need a separate building or designated space in any new scheme.

10. Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Nothing to report.

11. Sainsbury's Supermarket

Nothing to report.

12. Staplehurst Post Office

It was noted that the Post Office wished to re-locate Staplehurst Post Office from its present position in the High Street to the premises known as Station Newsagents in Station Road. SPC are concerned about the proposal as are various residents and SPC is writing to the Post Office as a response to their consultation document. JB commented that the Post Office is not shown on the map of the High Street area which forms part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

13. Any other business

JB and SL-R reported that they attended the Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Plan event. Feria have been appointed to prepare the plan. The local people were interested to hear what SPC were attempting to do in respect of the Station area. Cranbrook Parish Council are starting a Community Land Trust which they hope to use as a means to buy land and build affordable homes. The man behind this scheme offered to come to talk to SPC.

RO reported that Bovis, who are one of the developers involved with the site to the North of Headcorn Road, have been the subject of takeover bids from developers Galliford Try and Redrow, both of whom have walked away without a deal being agreed. It was felt that if Redrow had in fact succeeded in their bid it might have resulted in a replanning of the site layout at Headcorn Road as Redrow have the site adjoining the Bovis site.

JP reported that the planning applications for housing on land south of Marden Road (16/507661) and for redevelopment of the Railway Tavern site (16/505966) are both going to be considered by MBC's Planning Committee on 27th April, 2017. SPC has recommended refusal in both cases and JB will attend to speak on behalf of SPC using the Neighbourhood Plan as evidence.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the NPRG would be on Wednesday, 3rd May, 2017 at 8.00pm in the Village Centre.