

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 5th June 2017 at 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Burnham, Gosling, Lain-Rose, Manning, Perry, Reardon, Riordan, Sharp, Smith, Spearink and Silkin who was in the Chair.
Parish Clerk: Mr M J Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Claridge and Whittle.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interest in Items on the Agenda – none declared.

Requests for Dispensation – none declared.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Minute pages 1614-1620 of 15th May 2017 were proposed for approval by Councillor Ashby, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose, APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Silkin and made available at http://staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx. Councillor Gosling abstained.

FINANCE REPORTS:-

1. BT Contract Renewal for Parish Office – Report from Finance Officer (for decision). Councillors NOTED the Finance Officer's report dated 25/05/17 covering the terms offered by BT for the renewal of the office telephone and broadband contract from 29/06/17. Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Burnham, Councillors RESOLVED to approve a 24 month BT Business Complete contract with fibre broadband and unlimited UK landline calls on the terms set out in the report.
2. Electricity Contract for Parish Council – Report from Finance Officer (for decision). Councillors NOTED the Finance Officer's report setting out three suppliers' quotations to supply electricity to the Parish Office, Surrenden Pavilion and Bell Lane toilets with effect from the expiry of the current contract at the end of July. Proposed by Chairman Silkin, seconded by Councillor Sharp, Councillors RESOLVED to approve a three-year contract with SSE Business Energy offered via Energy Helpline on the indicative terms set out in the report.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Consultation – DCLG Park Run: Invitation to comment on charges for use of public parks (closing date 05/07/17). Councillors NOTED the consultation without comment.
2. Consultation – Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Plan: Issues and Options; Draft Landscape Character Assessment; Second Call for Sites. Report (JB & TB) (deadline for response 12/06/17). Councillor Buller explained that in the plan document the key section for Staplehurst was the one covering cross-border issues. She recommended that the Parish Council write to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to comment: development particularly in the Hawkhurst, Cranbrook and Frittenden areas would have an impact on Staplehurst via increased traffic travelling through the village to and from the station or Maidstone and beyond; a share of developer contributions for Staplehurst would therefore be appropriate. Councillor Lain-Rose recommended the comments should also cover the need to improve the bus service. Councillor Buller explained that the plan document sets out five possible approaches to housing allocation including one for a new 'garden village' settlement; she proposed commenting that such a development should not be located in the vicinity of Staplehurst. Councillors RESOLVED

to submit the proposed comments and asked the Clerk to send an appropriate response. Councillors thanked Councillor Buller for her report on the plan document.

3. Mayor of Maidstone – Invitation to attend WW2 Reflective Charity Event at Leeds Castle on 5/07/17. Councillor Perry said he would be attending the event.
4. Staplehurst Village Centre – Correspondence: Update on strategy for redevelopment. Councillors NOTED the letter dated 23/05/17 from the Chairman of Staplehurst Village Centre Trust, which set out the Trustees' intention to pursue a strategy of refurbishing the existing main building and rear extensions and to draw back from the Village Centre Redevelopment Group. There followed a long discussion: Councillors Silkin and Sharp said that the Trustees had sought to articulate the view that after initial good progress by the redevelopment project now was the time to push on; Councillor Lain-Rose said the next Redevelopment Group meeting had been on hold pending investigation with KCC of the status of Youth Club land but this had now moved forward; Councillors Lain-Rose and Burnham said that more research was needed to establish a representative community view and a robust financial case to support any preferred option; Councillor Perry said he felt the Parish Council had a key role to play in the Village Centre's future, as did other community groups, adding that he was disappointed that the formal notice from the Trustees was the first indication received by the Parish Council; Councillors Riordan and Buller stressed the importance of collaboration and advocated discussion between the key stakeholders. The following actions were AGREED: Chairman Silkin will convey Councillors' views on the letter to the Trustees; Councillor Lain-Rose will arrange a meeting of the Village Centre Redevelopment Group; the Parish Council will receive copy minutes of Trustees' meetings and further updates as appropriate via the Council's appointed representatives. *During this discussion Councillor Sharp declared an interest as trustee of the Village Centre and Councillors Lain-Rose and Perry as trustees of the Youth Club. Chairman Silkin closed the meeting temporarily to allow contributions from members of the public, which included some historical and financial context of the relationship between the Village Centre and the Parish Council.*

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

1. Clerk's Report – the Clerk reported: the Parish Office had implemented contract renewals and donation payments agreed at the previous Council meeting; considerable research had gone into the Finance Officer's reports on the phone/broadband and electricity contract renewals; NatWest had advised its Tuesday afternoon drop-in sessions at the library would start from 20th June but there was as yet no confirmation about the mobile branch visits; the Parish Council's annual report was scheduled for delivery throughout the parish on 9th June; the programme and booking information for summer play scheme were on the village website; the Department for Transport had acknowledged receipt of the Parish Council's comments on the rail franchise consultation and advised that a stakeholder response would be issued in the autumn; Redrow Homes had contacted KCC and the Parish Office about proposed street lighting on its Fishers Farm development (which it was calling Woodland Green); Sainsbury's had advised the Parish Office it was still looking at store options but there were no plans to open in 2017-18; the period for the exercise of electors' rights in respect of the Parish Council's annual return and accounting records had commenced on 5th June and would run until 14th July.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - a) Employment Group (formerly Staff Group) – Terms of Reference (for approval) (SL-R). *Councillors Gosling and Sharp temporarily left the meeting.* Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Ashby, Councillors RESOLVED to approve the terms of reference which were published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policies_information.aspx.

- b) Fireworks Group – Request to apply for and fund a Premises Licence to cover Jubilee Field & nomination of a designated premises supervisor (for decision) (SL-R). *Councillor Gosling returned to the meeting. Councillor Perry declared an interest as member of MBC Licensing Committee and abstained from discussion and voting.* Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Spearink, Councillors RESOLVED to approve the report's recommendations: (i) apply for a premises licence for Jubilee Field as set out in Appendix B of the report; (ii) spend up to £300 on the advertising required by the application process; (iii) pay future years' renewal costs (currently at a level of £180); (iv) note that Councillor Lain-Rose agreed to be appointed as Designated Premises Supervisor; (v) Councillor Lain-Rose to join the Staplehurst Fireworks Group as parish council representative to ensure oversight of the licensable activities. *Councillor Sharp returned to the meeting.*
- c) Police – Parish Liaison Group – Report of meeting 24/05/17 (for noting) (BM). Councillor Manning's report was NOTED by Councillors and published at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx.
- d) Staplehurst Annual Parish Meeting – Summary of Feedback (for noting). Councillors NOTED the feedback following the Annual Parish Meeting on 20th May: presentations should be shorter with more focus on Staplehurst; some attendees had difficulty hearing; there was a need to help some people use the microphone effectively – Councillor Gosling offered to assist; there were more attendees than in recent years although figures are still low relative to other parishes. Councillors asked that a letter of thanks be sent to presenters.
- e) Staplehurst Carnival & Fete – Content and Management of Parish Stalls (for decision). Councillors NOTED the requirement to man the Parish Council stall at the Fete on 24th June and a number of volunteers came forward.
- f) Surrenden Field – Quotations for new footpath and drainage work (for decision) (JR). Councillor Reardon discussed his report (circulated prior to the meeting) containing three quotations for construction of a new footpath at the southern end of the field and installation of a land drain. Proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Spearink, Councillors RESOLVED to accept the quotation by of £15,890 by Whites Landscaping, with the work to proceed subject to agreement from MBC as freeholder (to be confirmed by Councillor Reardon).
- g) Wimpey Field – Quotation for additional footpath work and grass-cutting (for decision) (PS). Councillor Spearink discussed quotations received for: (i) regular cutting of paths and open areas and (ii) for a new footpath, comprising an update to the quotation for a 70m path approved by the Parish Council on 15/08/16 (Min1554) and an extension from the main path to the seating area. Councillors RESOLVED to accept quotations (i) from Twig Group at £981.50 per cut; (ii) from South East Groundworks for £2,800 covering the entire length of the path; commencement of works being subject to confirmation that they are acceptable under the terms of the management plan and European Protected Species licence for the site currently held by Taylor Wimpey (Councillor Spearink against).

Councillor Spearink left the meeting. The meeting then closed at 10.30pm.

The following items were deferred:

Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only

- a) Facebook Training – Report on training session held for parish councillors 24/04/17. Deferred.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Oral Report – Deferred.

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

- a) McCabe Day Centre – Minutes of meeting held 27/04/17. Deferred.
- b) Patient Participation Group – Minutes of meeting held 19/04/17. Deferred.

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

No items.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: No items were raised.