

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 19th April 2010 at 8 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Best, Buller, Burnham, Butcher, Fairfax, Kelly, Knowlden, Perry, Sankey, Spearink and Chairman Arger.

Parish Clerk: Mrs. J S Bassett

APOLOGIES: Councillors Munn, Reardon and Smith whose reasons for apology were accepted.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

1. Lobbying – Councillors declared they had been lobbied in respect of:-
 - Clapper Farm Lane – all Councillors.
 - Jubilee Field – Councillor Perry.
 - Public Toilets - Councillors Buller, Fairfax and Sankey.
 - Staple Drive Play Area – Councillor Fairfax.
 - Carnival & Fete - Councillors Buller and Sankey.
2. Personal Interest – Jubilee Field – Councillor Perry as Trustee of JFMC.
3. Prejudicial Interest – None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The Minutes of the previous Full Council meetings PAGES 963-966 of 15th March 2010 and PAGE 967-968 of extra-ordinary meeting on 6th April 2010 having been circulated were approved and signed by Chairman Arger.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Bell Lane Toilets – Councillor Fairfax referred to Minute Page 967 that MBC had not agreed to the removal of Clause 9 but had agreed to the other amendments. The Lease had now been signed ready for the handover on 4th May 2010. Negotiations with Ecocleen regarding Terms and Conditions of the cleaning contract were continuing.
2. CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) – Publication “Maidstone Town – A view from the Villages”. Councillor Spearink spoke in support of this document which contained several excellent ideas such as creating a town square in front of Maidstone Library/Brenchley gardens.
3. Jubilee Field – Councillors noted the letter from the Solicitors regarding the completion of the Lease. Councillor Perry then spoke on two issues which had been raised by footballers:-
 - The Men’s Football Club would need to create hardstanding for spectators and two “dug-outs” shelters for officials if it were promoted to the local premier league. Councillors discussed and recommended support in principle but issues such as detailed siting, planning permission and funding would need to be addressed.
 - Field Drainage Report prepared by the JFMC had been circulated and Councillor Perry emphasised that no labour costs had been included as this work would be undertaken by volunteers. Councillor Best commented that this Council’s final accounts would need to be assessed

to decide where funds could be applied as there were several demands on this Council's resources, including drainage problems at Surrenden Playing field, Jubilee CCTV and lighting scheme had been requested. Councillors agreed to support this maintenance project in principle but would need to assess where the funding would be obtained.

Temporary closure of meeting – With the agreement of fellow Councillors, Chairman Arger suspended proceedings temporarily to allow a member of the public to speak on the next item.

4. Clapper Farm Lane – Councillors noted the meeting to be held on 29th April. Councillors Perry, Butcher and Kelly agreed to attend the meeting with KHS.
5. KHS Winter Service Policy and Plan for 2010/2011 – This consultation was noted. Councillor Spearink requested that SPC goes through the process of applying for new salt bins. Councillors agreed to request bins for Lodge Road, corner of Bell Lane/Jaggard way and near Staplehurst Library.
6. Parish Councillor Vacancy – MBC had confirmed (following the required period of Public Notice) that the Parish Councillor Vacancy created by the resignation of Councillor Barry Franks could now be filled by co-option. Further publicity and research would be undertaken to encourage local electors to put themselves forward.
7. Frittenden Road flooding – MBC's update was noted. It was hoped that the ditches would be dug out before the next winter.
8. Staplehurst Action Plan – This had been circulated to Councillors for information and was the result of much work by the Partnership Group. Councillor Buller recommended that MBC and Borough Councillors should be sent a hard copy. Councillor Fairfax was requested to include a report on the Strategic Action Plan in the Village Update. Councillor Kelly offered to produce some hard copies also for the Parish Office and Library. Councillor Arger proposed the adoption of the Staplehurst Action Plan and Councillors agreed unanimously to this. Councillor Arger also gave formal thanks to Roy Laming for his expertise and all those on the committee who assisted, including Bill Piper "for his staying power".
9. Staplehurst Carnival & Fete – The request for permission to use Surrenden Playing Field was considered by Councillors. After much discussion Councillors agreed to give permission for the Carnival & Fete proposals to include the fair operating on Friday 25th, Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th June closing at 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 6 p.m. on Sunday. Councillors confirmed that this permission was given on the understanding that permission would be withdrawn if the condition of the field was too wet to take the weight of the fairground rides, local residents to be fully-informed and any damage to the field, gates or hedges is to be made good. Councillor Sankey reported on the recent meeting and enquired if this Council would have a stand at the Fete. Councillor Perry and Spearink offered to organise the stand.

COMMITTEE & SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Planning Committee – The Minutes Pages 918P-920P of 6th April 2010 had been circulated, were approved with the addition of "Application Withdrawn"

in respect of MA/10/0064 Mill House, High Street on Page 920P, then signed by Chairman Arger. The application to build homes on the garage site off Winch's Garth had been approved by MBC Development Control despite vociferous local opposition. Borough Councillor Lusty had raised the issue of a parking plan for the area. The Chairman then reported that a Noise Survey had been submitted for comment relating to the Woodford Depot application MA/10/0219. Councillors noted this without comment.

2. Amenities Committee – The Minutes Pages 561A-562A of 6th April 2010 had been circulated, were approved and signed by Committee Chairman Burnham, who then gave a verbal update on progress.
3. Publicity & Website Group – The March Usage Report was noted and Councillor Best commented that this reflected "business as usual". The next meeting would be held on 22nd April. Councillors were reminded that their submissions and articles for the Annual Report & Summer Update content were needed by 17th May at the latest.
4. Finance Group – Notes of meeting held on 17th March had been circulated and were noted. Councillor Fairfax suggested and it was agreed that this Council should write to the owners of The Parade in advance of their taking over the cleansing and maintenance in June to enquire what arrangements they were putting in place.
5. Summer of Fun 2010 – Councillor Fairfax reported that arrangements were progressing with PlayPlace and a further meeting was to be held this week. Although the running of Playscheme had been contracted out, this Council still had to monitor and keep a close check on what PlayPlace were doing.

COUNCILLOR REPORTS:

1. Councillor Spearink's Reports – The following reports had been circulated for noting; Older Person's Forum & Committee meeting, Voluntary & Community Sector Focus Group, Parish Liaison Meeting, Fire Safety Talk at McCabe. Uploaded at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/councillors_reports.aspx
2. Speedwatch – Mid Kent Police Spring 2010 Update had been circulated. In addition, Councillor Buller spoke on the local Speedwatch activities. Uploaded at <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/speedwatch.aspx>
3. Parish/Police Forum – Notes of meeting held on 17th March with details of Kent Police Crime Reduction initiatives had been circulated for noting. Councillor Butcher reported that new legislation was being considered which would allow the Police to deal with cars parking on verges. Uploaded at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/police_liaison.aspx
4. Employment Matters – Councillor Perry's report had been circulated and was noted. He emphasised the area of employment law was a legal minefield where due process and evidence was very important. Report uploaded at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/policy_group.aspx
5. Kent Rail Summit – Councillor Burnham's report had been circulated and he commented that there was a good deal of high-level strategic thinking and ideas being considered which did not currently directly affect Staplehurst. Councillor Burnham had, however, spoken with Murray Motley about the non-completion of the works for 24/7 disabled access to the Footbridge and

this should be addressed shortly, if not already. Report uploaded at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/hawkhurst_transport.aspx

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCES:

1. Website & IT Support – Councillor Best explained the changes and division within Zulogic’s business. Whilst the Website service was satisfactory at £150 per annum (a specification would be agreed shortly) and was to be continued by David Henley, the opportunity had been taken to seek tenders for the IT Support against a written specification. Three quotes had been received; one had offered only standard contract options (not quoted against the specification), another had also paid a site visit before quoting and references had been taken up. Of the three, Councillor Best recommended Arron Services and this was unanimously agreed.
2. Staple Drive Play Area Project – Councillor Fairfax reported that various quotes had been obtained following MBC’s recommendations which she had studied. In consideration of the public views expressed, the overall service received to date and outline costs, Councillor Fairfax recommended that the preferred supplier should be Playdale, which Councillors supported.
3. CCTV Repairs – Councillors noted and agreed the Cam-tech quote and recommendation for CCTV improvements in the sum of £765.43.
4. KALC Subscription 2010/2011 – After discussion Chairman Arger proposed and it was agreed nem con that this subscription be renewed at £1,020.
5. Audit Commission Annual Return for year ended 31/03/2010 – Councillors had received a copy of the completed Annual Return. The Clerk reported that work to finalise the Fixed Asset Register was continuing and that the sum to be shown at Box 9 would be completed in consultation with Councillor Perry and the Internal Auditor. Subject to completion of the Fixed Assets Register, Chairman Arger proposed and it was agreed nem con that the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2010 be adopted.
6. Summation of Accounts - The summation to date had been circulated to Councillors and was noted.
7. Accounts for payment – The list had been circulated to Councillors and was read out by the Clerk and totalled £23,453.36. It was proposed by Councillor Best, seconded by Councillor Kelly and agreed that the accounts as listed be paid.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: No members of the public raised any issues.

POLICE REPORT: The Chairman read out the emailed report as follows:-

14 Crimes; 3 criminal damages, 1 theft from motor vehicle, 4 thefts, 5 thefts of motor vehicle, 1 vehicle interference. It was pleasing that there were no burglaries this month however the increase in vehicle related crime (7) is noted. The mobile police station is being deployed at the parade. Another 6 bikes were security marked at Jubilee Field last week. One of the young adults at The Parade received a £215 fine at Court for littering with a beer can at The Parade. There will be a partnership CCTV at the junction of Tomlin Close soon due to some nuisance activity in the area.