

## **MINUTES OF THE STAPLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Held on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.30pm** in Staple Village Hall.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Bartlett (Chairman), J Kirk(Vice-Chairman) Loukes, Davis-Marks, Martin and Ewart.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** There were 6 members of the public in attendance, Cllr M Porter (DD), PC Bowler and Hannah Biggs-Halles (clerk).

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and wished congratulations to the Clerk on her new Clerking role at Ickham and Well Parish Council.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr D Kirk and accepted unanimously by the Council. The Council sent well wishes to Cllr D Kirk and wished him a speedy recovery from his recent operation.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Georgina Martin declared an interest in item 6.4 – Planning Application No. 24/00188.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (paper copy available to view) –**

#### **3.1. To approve any amendments and sign minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024.**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed unanimously by the Council and duly signed by the Chairman.

#### **3.2. To report and discuss any completed actions/matters arising therefrom not covered elsewhere on the agenda.**

Cllr Loukes has cleaned the white Staple signs on entrance to the village, but reports that they need repainting. Cllr Davis-Marks raises that the finger posts also need attention.

**ACTION:** Clerk to include this in a future agenda.

Cllr Loukes reported the faded white lines on the corner of Buckland Lane were reported to KCC and have been repainted.

Cllr Loukes has sent correspondence to the landowner regarding footpath E191. There has been no response so far.

The Clerk has queried with KCC who cuts the grass on Bates Close but has had no response. The clerk wondered whether a parishioner may have done it and will ask them.

The clerk has spoken with our insurer, Zurich, and it has been confirmed that we have no assets covered in our insurance. The Clerk is going to acquire quotes to increase cover.

The Clerk requested for PC Bowler's email address to be included in The Escallop, this has been actioned.

The Clerk has completed the £1000 transfer from current to reserve account, as agreed in February.

The Clerk has emailed Cllr Chandler again regarding potholes and flooding. There has been no response to date.

The Clerk has spoken to Barclays regarding setting up Cllrs Bartlett and Kirk to make online payments, but they have issued the incorrect paperwork so will make contact again.

The Clerk notes that communication regarding the rubbish opposite the church has not yet been made.

The Clerk also notes that contact has not yet been made with Wingham PC regarding tactics to reduce dog mess being left on the playing field.

The Chairman raised the issue of flooding in the village again and that it will be included in the HIP, the Clerk responded that the HIP has not been started yet and raised concerns that completing it within her 5 hours per week is unrealistic. The Clerk requested that it be taken on by a Cllr and Cllr Loukes has agreed to work on it again.

The Chairman raised that most of the new Village Welcome Pack is complete and requested an update from the Clerk on the Parish Council's contribution. The Clerk confirmed that it is not yet finished but will be done as soon as possible.

### **4. PUBLIC SESSION (Max. 15 minutes)** Opportunity for members of public to make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of the business on the agenda. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 4 minutes and should direct comments to the chairman. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking. A question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

A member of the public raised concerns and frustration regarding the closure of Durlock Road last week, with no notification or notice of how long it would be closed. The member of public has queried what the correct procedure is for closing a road and why it seems that KCC are not following the procedure.

The member of the public raised that there was a survey, published in Kent Online, stating that a third of road closures in Kent were done outside of the rules and therefore shouldn't have happened. The Council noted that Cllr Loukes is attending the A257 Group meeting on Saturday and Cllr Chandler may be there to speak to. It was also noted that the A257 Group have very recently written a letter to Cllr Neil Baker, regarding the lack of clarity surrounding road works and closures. It was raised that the Council could do the same. The Clerk will draft a letter regarding what has happened on Durlock Road and querying what the rules state should have happened and what will happen in the future.  
ACTION – Clerk to draft a letter to Neil Baker re. survey and concerns raised by the public.  
ACTION – Chairman and Martin Porter to encourage all villages to do the same.

## 5. FINANCE

### 5.1. Financial Statements for February 2024 to include income, expenditure and bank reconciliation as at 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

Cllr Davis-Marks noted the forecast underspend of roughly £800 which can be added to the reserves.

### 5.2. Bills to be approved

5.2.1. Clerk's expenses and overtime

5.2.2. Replacement Defib Pads (£130.80)

5.2.3. Website charges (251.70)

Cllr Kirk raised concerns regarding the unpaid Website Invoice which as now accrued a late payment charge of £10. The Clerk reassured Cllr Kirk that on contact with One.com, following February's meeting, she was assured that payment following March's meeting would be fine and late charges wouldn't be incurred. The Clerk will make further contact with One.com regarding this.

All payments agreed unanimously by the Council.

ACTION: Clerk to continue communication with one.com.

ACTION: Clerk to order replacement defib pads.

### 5.3. Bills to be noted

5.3.1. Clerk's salary

## 6. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED For Information Only

6.1. 19/2/24 – Harmer & Sons – Quote for 2024

The Council raised concerns as the quote is very unclear. The Clerk will go back and query the cost for the grass to be cut on the field, and around the village signs, and the annual lift and tidy of the border trees on the green.

ACTION: Clerk to seek clarification on the contents of the quote.

6.2. 19/2/24 – A257 Group – Letter to Cllr Neil Baker

6.3. 1/3/24 – KALC News – March 2024

6.4. 5/3/24 – Urgent Road Closure – Grove Road – 8/3/24

## 7. REPORTS (to be provided in advance in writing where possible please)

### 7.1. District Councillor – Report circulated with Agenda (Appendix b)

Cllr Porter reports that Little Stour and Ashstone Ward (which includes Staple) are due to receive their new Green Waste Bins first. There have been some issues for residents on smaller lanes, where the van is unable to reach and therefore, they are unable to receive the service.

Cllr Porter also reports that DDC's budget went to Full Council and has been agreed with a 2.98% increase. This was agreed with a vote in favour of withdrawing £2.8million from reserves to pay for the Port of Dover Health Checks, as DEFRA has withdrawn funding. Lots of Cllrs feel this is a mistake as Council tax payers are funding a national service.

Cllr Porter reports that the controversial Betteshanger Planning Application has now been voted through.

The Chairman asked if the Council has any questions for our DDC Cllr.

Cllr Davis-Marks raised the severe frustration of the village surrounding the continued lack of action by DDC to remove the travellers from the Summerfield Site. Cllr Davis-Marks informed Cllr Porter of a recent altercation which had to be reported to the police, after a villager was threatened by travellers from the site. Cllr Davis-Marks also reported the increase in caravans since the Enforcement Order was issued 10 months ago, suggesting that the travellers have no intention of leaving and that they know DDC won't act. Cllr Davis-Marks queried what DDC are actually doing and what the Council can do the push for action. Cllr Porter suggested we could write to the Officer on the case, but the Chairman responded that several members of the public write regularly and rarely get a response.

Cllr Porter assured the Council that himself and Cllr Bartlett are meeting with Sarah Platts (DDC Head of Planning) and will raise it with her. He also raised that often there is a hesitance to go to court because of the cost.

**7.2. County Councillor – not present**

No report received and no apology for not attending. The Council have agreed that the Chairman will discuss this with Cllr Chandler, as they feel it is important to receive a report.

**7.3. Highways (SID, Speedwatch, footpaths)**

The SID and Speedwatch Report was provided to the Clerk in advance of the meeting (Appendix c) Cllr Loukes informed the Council that he and the Chairman met with a local landowner, as agreed, following correspondence regarding the reinstatement of missing footpaths. The landowner was helpful and informed the Cllrs that he can't currently roll the paths as it's far too muddy but it will be done when possible.

**7.4. Planning (Appendix a)**

ACTION: Clerk to submit comments on both applications.

It was noted that the standing item of Village Hall was removed from the Reports section of the Agenda. The Council would like all standing items reinstated. There was some discussion on the production of the agenda and the role of the clerk.

**8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**8.1. To resolve a date for the SPC Annual Parish Council Meeting – 8<sup>th</sup> May**

The clerk clarified the difference between the APCM and APM and the requirements for both, according to the LGA(1972). The APCM must take place in May. The Council resolved unanimously to move the APCM to the 8<sup>th</sup> of May.

**8.2. To confirm arrangements for the Staple Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Parish Assembly (10<sup>th</sup> April 2024)**

Cllr Martin has arranged for Barnsole Vineyard to offer a talk about their local business, and provide wine to be sampled, and for The Black Pig to provide food.

It is agreed that the Chairman will provide a succinct report and offer an opportunity for the public to comment.

The Council will have a brief ordinary meeting at 7pm for any important or time sensitive items to be addressed.

ACTION: Clerk will provide a summary of Accounts for the year, for the public to view.

ACTION: Clerk will produce leaflets for the event, to be hand delivered by the Council.

**8.3. To retrospectively resolve to apply for the Parish Council Winter Support Scheme Grant**

The Council agreed unanimously to apply for the Grant.

**8.4. To receive an update on the Summerfield traveller site**

Discussed under item 7.1.

**8.5. To resolve plans for D-Day 80**

The Council agreed unanimously to hold a joint event with the Staple Branch of the RBL and light the beacon at 9:15pm on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June. Cllr Davis-Marks will liaise with the RBL and report back.

The Chairman recalls that last time a tree was planted and there were singers and food.

Joint with RBL, light beacon on 6<sup>th</sup> June 9:15pm

ACTION: Cllr Davis-Marks to liaise with the RBL to resolve plans.

**8.6. To resolve to setup a Direct Debit for NI and PAYE payments to HMRC**

The Council agreed unanimously.

ACTION: Clerk to setup a Direct Debit for payment of NI and PAYE.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

- The deadline for Agenda items to be included is the end of the day on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2024.

Signed:.....  
Chairman, Cllr Trevor Bartlett

Date:.....

**Please note that these Minutes remain as draft Minutes until the Parish Council approves them at their next Parish Council Meeting.**

## APPENDIX A - PLANNING

### 1. For discussion

REF. #	ADDRESS	PLANNING FOR	COMMENT S	DATE FOR SUBMISSIO N	STATUS
24/00188	Barnsole House Barnsole Road Staple CT3 1LE	Erection of a detached dwelling for staff accommodation and creation of parking	The Council discussed the style of the dwelling and its location and agreed that one dwelling for the applicant's son is preferable to the field being sold and developed into multiple dwellings. The Council agreed unanimously to support the application.	20/3/24	AWAITING DECISION
24/00106	Shatterling Cottage Roman Road Shatterling CT3 1JR	Erection of 3 dwellings, associated parking and landscaping (existing dwelling to be demolished)	The Council raised concerns regarding the increase in cars joining and leaving the busy highway. For this reason, the Council unanimously agreed to object to the application.	14/3/24	AWAITING DECISION

### 2. Applications received after agenda was printed

REF. #	ADDRESS	PLANNING FOR	COMMENTS	DATE FOR SUBMISSION	STATUS
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### 3. Decisions received from Dover District Council

REF. #	ADDRESS	PLANNING FOR	COMMENTS	STATUS
23/00094	1 Bartlett Close, Staple, CT3 1SR	Formation of a vehicular access and associated parking		WITHDRAWN

## APPENDIX B – DDC Report

### Dover District Council Monthly Report for Little Stour and Ashstone



#### **Proposed Solar Farm at Ash levels**

Thank you so much to everyone who has taken the time to object to this application for the proposed solar farm. If planning permission is granted this will have devastating consequences for our community, wildlife, countryside and heritage, especially the most historic monument in our district, Richborough Fort.

#### **Anti-social behaviour**

If there are any incidents of anti-social behaviour, theft or break-ins, you must report this to the police on 111 as soon as possible

#### **New Defibrillators**

Kearsney Abbey has installed a new defibrillator. This is in addition to another new one that has been installed in the porch of St James' Church, Staple.

Defibrillators can increase a person's chance of survival from cardiac arrest from around 5% to between 50% and 70%. Training is not required, although the odds of survival increase if the person using the equipment has been trained.

#### **Kearsney Parks Community Day/Easter Trail**

On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, Kearsney will hold a Community Day and Easter Trail. As part of the day, DDC teams, including the communities and environmental protection teams will be on hand to talk to you and provide a range of help and information. The RSPB will also be attending and there will be arts and crafts.

There will also be a chance to help find Easter Bunny's friends who are hiding in the park, with an Easter Trail for all the family. To book on the trail, or for more information, please see the Kearsney Parks website.

#### **Great British Spring Clean**

The biggest mass-action environmental campaign is taking place from 15-31 March. You can pledge to pick up a bag of litter. Please support your local litter-pickers.

Do remember we are here for you and please do get in touch with any concerns.

*Trevor Bartlett and Martin Porter  
District Councillors  
March 2024*

## Community Speedwatch & SID Report

March 2024

### Speedwatch

Over the last month we held 4 sessions and 16 vehicles were reported for travelling 35 mph or more on our village roads.

We had one session earlier than normal between 8 and 9 am and 10 vehicles exceeded the limit. One vehicle has been reported more than 3 times and has received a strong letter from the Police. The next time it will be a personal visit by a Police officer. Hopefully, this will curb their excess speed.

We held 2 sessions on Durlock Road near the Oast Houses ~ this is the first time in this location.

### SID

The SID has been working along The Street for traffic travelling towards Wingham. Results will be available next month.

Hi Roger

This is a **Staple** report

**Some results from Staple**

During the last week 12 vehicle(s) were input

During the last month 16 vehicle(s) were input

During the last year 62 vehicle(s) were input

**Secondly some results from Kent**

During the last week 333 vehicle(s) were input

During the last month 1095 vehicle(s) were input

During the last year 27080 vehicle(s) were input