

Staple Parish Council

Minutes of an Ordinary Council Meeting, Wednesday 14th October 2020

7.30pm via Zoom (due to Covid 19)

Present: Cllr T Bartlett (in the Chair)
Cllr Mrs Coulson
Cllr N McCollum
Cllr G McCollum
Cllr J Kirk
Cllr D Kirk
Cllr R Loukes
Cllr M Conolly
Cllr S Chandler
Parish Clerk: Lisa Acarnley
Jonathan Mount (new clerk)
2 members of the public

1. To receive and approve apologies for absence.

None

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests.

None

3. To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 9th September 2020 and to report any matters arising therefrom not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Item 5 was omitted from the agenda for today's meeting in error. This will be added in as this is for the Council to hear from members of the public.

In the September meeting, Cllr Loukes raised an item regarding Staple becoming a Wildlife friendly village. This will be discussed again today.

- minutes were approved.

4. Report from District Councillor – Mike Conolly

District Councillor's Report

1. Finance: Cabinet has approved a revised budget for the current year and this will go to Full Council for confirmation on October 21st. While a large number of uncertainties remain the picture for this year is reasonably healthy. However the picture for 21/22 is extremely challenging with a large funding gap. A number of possible actions are being worked on and Cabinet members will be holding an Away Day to review these and make provisional decisions. Clearly there will be some difficult and unpalatable decisions to make. (KCC is in a similar position on a much larger scale.)

2. Housing Update: The transfer of housing stock from East Kent Housing to the four individual councils went ahead as planned on October 1st. We are finding major problems in the accessibility, completeness and accuracy of much of the data, which is causing a huge amount of work, as is the backlog of uncompleted repair work and compliance issues. Regrettably, and perhaps understandably given the low morale at EKH, a number of their former staff whom were offered posts at DDC have now decided against transferring. This is causing additional strain. On the plus side tenants have broadly welcomed the change, but as indicated in my last report, these problems will not be resolved overnight.

3. Maison Dieu: We were delighted to learn that we have been given a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of over £4 million for the regeneration of Dover Town Hall, Maison Dieu. This will allow us to bring this wonderful but sadly outdated building into much wider use for residents to visit and enjoy.

4. Leisure Centres: Both the Dover District Leisure Centre at Whitfield and Tides at Deal are operating but on a restricted and booking only basis. Clearly if there are further lockdown measures these centres are likely to be on the hit list.

Cllr Conolly explained that the government are proposing that 1279 new houses are built in the district, which is over double the figure which was previously suggested. Virtually every MP in Kent is lobbying on this and will continue to oppose the idea.

Cllr S Chandler advised that Headstart Kent, which is a mental health organisation have been funded £1 million, which is very welcome, especially in the current climate. KCC have sent a strong message to government opposing the new housing targets.

5. To hear from any members of the public

Following on from last month's discussion regarding the HGVs, Lynne Ewart explained that the 2 new 'Not suitable for HGVs' would not be sufficient. Lynne and Peter have requested 3 more signs from KCC but have been unsuccessful and have therefore issued a complaint and will continue to pursue. Mrs Ewart explained that water is being pushed from Nash road on the Rush road and she has concerns that the tree trunks are responsible for this. This is making the road extremely muddy, wet and dangerous.

Cllr Bartlett has spoken to planning enforcement and is awaiting a reply.

KCC can request the landowners to clean up the area - Cllr Chandler has escalated this and it is being dealt with. Cllr Chandler said that the drainage in that area is not appropriate and has never been adequate, even after all the work that was done there. Cllr Chandler will refer for further advice.

Cllr Loukes advised that he was told that the work would be stopping between now and Christmas.

6. To receive any updates on the Community Speedwatch and Speed Indicating Devices.

Community Speedwatch & SID Report

October 2020

We have started sessions again ~ at last under careful Covid-19 rules.

We have run sessions since the end of last month and in the first 2 session we caught 9 drivers travelling at 35 mph or more.

Is everyone happy with the speeds in the village? Only one person has come forward to express dissatisfaction with speeds along Durlock Road. Unfortunately currently our site outside Crofters Lodge is not allowed by the Police. We are only allowed 2 sites whilst we have the pandemic.

We will very happily accept any new volunteers who would like to see a reduction in speeds through the village.

Please contact me if you want further information:- roger43@gmail.com or 01304 812306

SID report (for September)

Durlock Road – North direction

85th Percentile Speed = 35.2 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 15,638 counts

50th Percentile Speed: 29.2 MPH

Total Vehicles = 18,398 counts

Average Speed: 28.2 MPH

Max Speed = 70.0 MPH on 02/08/2020 14:35

Lower Road Staple East

85th Percentile Speed = 34.8 MPH

85th Percentile Vehicles = 12,358 counts

50th Percentile Speed: 20 MPH

Total Vehicles = 14,539 counts

Average Speed: 27.8 MPH

Max Speed = 60.0 MPH on 06/09/2020 at 18:50

I would like to activate our Parish Council owned SID (which is “not allowed” by KCC). It was intended to be used and is identical internally to the 2 currently in use; currently it is sitting in my garage. The only difference is the 12 volt NiCad battery instead of LiPbPo4 that the other 2 use. Unfortunately the battery has failed. I can purchase a new battery for £26:99 inc VAT plus Post/packing (£6:99)
Kent Police are interested in the figures. Cllr Loukes will pass them over.

Report by Cllr R Loukes

Cllr Bartlett thanked Cllr Loukes and the Speedwatch team for their work.

7. Appointment of the new Parish Clerk

Cllr Bartlett welcomed Jonathan Mount, who has been appointed as the new Parish Clerk and will be taking over duties in the next couple of weeks.

8. Discuss and agree the AGAR submission/Exemption Certificate

It was agreed that the Parish should complete and submit the exemption certificate as before, due to the income level being below £25000 per year.

9. To discuss any planning applications

i) 20/01016 | Change of use and conversion of a detached garage to form residential annexe | Dormer Cottage The Street Staple CT3 1LN

It was agreed to support the application.

10. To receive an update on any financial matters, including:

(i) Cheques for approval

- Annual donation to Staple Village Hall Management Committee (this amount helps with the insurance payment) - £700
- Clerk Salary - £190

All cheques approved

11. To receive any footpath updates

Cllr Coulson confirmed there was nothing to report and no complaints have been made.

12. Discuss the Highways Improvement Plan

This was due to be discussed with residents at the AGM in April that did not go ahead due to restrictions. Cllr G McCollum said that we need to ensure we reach as many residents as possible for their input. An item can be put in the Escallop and on social media. It was suggested that the article should be put in December's edition of the Escallop as all households receive one of these.

It is important to make the residents aware that any suggestions are still subject to approval by KCC.

13. To receive any highways and transport update

Cllr Chandler said that it had been decided that the SID is unable to be put at Piglet Place as it was determined that it was unsafe due to there being a bank. The officer also said that he could not find any other suitable sites around the village.

Even though the current SID is on a bank, Cllr Chandler confirmed that she has checked and this one does not need to be taken down.

Cllr Bartlett said that the area for the SID at Piglet Place is not on a bank. Cllr Chandler will visit the area and report back..

14. To receive a Village Hall & Recreation Ground report.

Cllr J Kirk said that there has unfortunately been some vandalism. The defibrillator is not covered within the village hall insurance. Clerk to look in to insurance quotes for this.

Cllr D Kirk advised that some of the playground equipment is looking a bit tired. He has continued to repair and maintain these. They could have a repaint in the summer months.

Cllr Loukes has checked that the defibrillator is in working order. It is important that regular checks are carried out to ensure that it is functioning.

15. Any confidential items to be discussed.

None

16. Any additional correspondence as permitted by the chairman

A counter proposal was put forward by a resident after the agreement to name the new road Bartlett Close. The clerk explained that Alison Thompson from English Rural attended a parish meeting some months ago before the development was agreed, and at that time she asked for the naming to be put on the September agenda. Unfortunately this was not added to the September agenda in error. An email was received from Alison the day before the meeting asking for this to be discussed as it was important to get a decision asap.

Cllr J Kirk gave a vote of confidence in the Chairman - Cllr Bartlett and this was agreed and supported by all councillors.

It was suggested that the new road be called Ernest Cox Close, after a man who lived opposite the new development and died around 3rd - 5th September 1918, aged 21. He was in the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Fusilliers. He has no know grave and it was thought that this would be a fitting name for the new close. Full details can be found on the Staple British Legion page.

Two letters of support for naming the road Bartlett Close were read out. (extract of letter read out under item 4)

The Bartletts farmed for 100 years in the village. Arthur Bartlett who left the ground to his family was Deacon of Barnsole Chapel, where he ran a large Sunday School for local village children. He was in Staple Home Guard during the last war, served on Staple Parish and Village Hall Committees for many years and was also Governor of the local Primary School until it closed.

The Bartlett family have supported the village in so many ways ~ serving on the Parish Council and Village Hall Committees and the Playgroup and Youth Clubs, Country Fayre and in all fund raising events.

In the light of the commitment and service he gave to Staple Village it would be an honour to have the Close named after him

This was discussed at length and agreed that both names were worthy, however it was decided to continue with the name that was already agreed at the previous meeting.

Cllr G McCollum said that the council must be clear with their processes as this could be misconstrued as us attempting to keep information from the public.

We need to check whether the salt bins need refilling in time for winter. Cllr N McCollum will check Chapel Lane, Cllr S Coulson will check the one on School rd/Lower rd and Cllr Loukes will report back on bins at The Forge and Pedding Lane. Clerk to reply to email requesting the filling up if required.

Shelley Morris proposed that Staple become a Wildlife friendly Village. This was discussed and Cllr Loukes will ask Shelley to produce a project plan. Could a working group be set up after recruiting supporting villagers. This could maybe be done through The Escallop or door to door canvassing.

The working group should walk around the village and suggest suitable areas that could be turned into wildlife areas ~ such as the on the Village Hall field and areas near the Playgroup coral

Workshops could be arranged so that residents can become involved.
Cllr Loukes to feed back plan to the meetings.

17. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 11th November at 7.30pm via Zoom. (TBC)

Mrs L Acarnley Clerk to the Council

Signed by Cllr Bartlett..... Date