**STAPLE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of an Ordinary Council Meeting held on Thursday 19th July 2018

At Staple Village Hall

Present: Cllr Bartlett (in the Chair)

Cllr Mrs Bennett

Cllr Brooman

Cllr Mrs Coulson

Cllr Facey

Cllr McCollum

Cllr Kirk

Clerk to the Council Miss L Fidler

29 members of the public

1. **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

1. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Bartlett declared *another significant interest* in item 8(iv): matters relating to the site on which the Rural Housing Scheme is proposed, as this site is owned by a close family member.

1. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting, held on 13th June 2018, were received, approved and signed. Cllr Bartlett reported that the hardcore mentioned in Minute 11(iii) does indeed belong to the new landowner; it has not been dumped.

**RESOLUTION: Cllr Bartlett will enquire with DDC as to whether the site has appropriate permission in place for the dumping of waste.**

1. **DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL & KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr Bartlett reported the following updates:

**(i)** First round funding from the National Lottery has been received to fund restoration of the historic Maison Dieu in Dover. The project aims to restore key parts of the Grade 1 listed building and Scheduled Monument, including the interiors designed by Victorian architect William Burges. The aim is to create a thriving cultural venue open to the community and visitors, and complementing Dover’s many heritage assets to build a stronger visitor economy. This is the first phase in a bid of £4.7 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which it is proposed will be matched with £3 million from DDC. Subject to a successful second bid, work is expected to start on Maison Dieu in 2020.

**(ii)** The number of people in temporary (B&B) accommodation fell by 40% between October 2017 and May 2018 – the seventh monthly consecutive fall – as a result of concerted action by DDC to address homelessness. The number of people and families housed in temporary accommodation in the district fell from 99 in October to 59 in May. DDC are taking a number of initiatives including the purchase of three empty properties on Folkestone Road in Dover that have been extensively refurbished into nine flats providing interim accommodation.

**(iii)** DDC has welcomed the decision of SAVE Britain’s Heritage to include 57 New Street in Sandwich on their 2018/19 Buildings at Risk Catalogue, Revive and Survive. DDC have also issued a section 215 notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in an effort to improve the condition of the property.

**(iv)** DDC has also served a section 215 notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on the owners of The Regent on Victoria Parade in Deal. The notice requires the owners to undertake various works to improve the condition of the building.

**(v)** DDC has brought together the various landowners and property owners to agree a plan to clear the unsightly hoardings and overgrown vegetation from properties on the corner of York Street and Townwall Street in Dover within the next four weeks.

**(vi)** A crackdown on street drinking and associated anti-social behaviour in Dover is having an early success with three arrests, two of whom have been charged. One person was charged with public order offences, and a second with a breach of a criminal behaviour order. This is part of a wide-ranging programme of work by Kent Police and DDC’s Community Safety Unit.

**(vii)** There will be a chance to meet the district’s dog warden team at locations around the district from mid-July to mid-September for a range of information, help and advice, and free microchipping for your dog. Details can be found on the DDC website.

1. **PUBLIC RIGHT TO SPEAK**

**(i)** Matters relating to the bus service are recorded under Minute 7.

**(ii)** A request was received to make the agendas and minutes better available to the public.

**RESOLUTION: The agendas and minutes will be posted on the** [**http://www.staple-online.com/**](http://www.staple-online.com/) **website.**

**(iii)** A new charger for the speed indicating devices is required and the health of the batteries was questioned.

**RESOLUTION: The Clerk will liaise with Mr Rothschild on this matter.**

**(iv)** Feedback was received regarding the new Unsuitable for HGV signs that have been installed – they do not appear to have been successful. Cllr Bartlett noted that since the signs have been erected Staple Road has been closed, which has led to increased traffic problems. Hopefully an improvement will be noticed after the road re-opens. It was confirmed that the signs are advisory and not mandatory; KCC are not prepared to issue mandatory signs.

1. **POLICE REPORT**

No report was available.

1. **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**(i)** Councillors received an update from Cllr Facey following the ‘Big Conversation’ Parish Seminar. The focus of the project is looking at alternative ways to support rural transport and three ideas were proposed; a feeder service, a bookable flexible bus service and use of a taxi style service instead of a bus – other ideas can still be proposed. Further information about the initial three ideas can be found in the consultation booklet at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/81978/Big-Conversation-Consultation-Booklet-June-PDF.pdf> . There is also a questionnaire that individuals and organisations can complete, hard copies of the questionnaire can be obtained from the local libraries and an electronic questionnaire can be complete at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/travelling-around-kent/big-conversation>. The market research team aim to collate responses for KCC by October. KCC will then be looking to undertake a number of pilot schemes from 1st April 2019 for one year. It was acknowledged that due to the size and diversity of Kent it may be necessary to have different schemes in place; for example a scheme that works around the outskirts of Maidstone may not be suitable for linking small villages and hamlets together with the wider public transport network.

Cllr Facey reported that there was general criticism about the lack of information available prior to the seminar, and it was clear that many attendees do not understand the relationship between KCC and Stagecoach – that KCC do not control the operations of Stagecoach, they only subsidise a number of commercially non-viable routes and fund concessionary passes for certain members of the community.

**RESOLUTIONS: The Council will now wait until the results of Big Conversation questionnaire are known in the autumn before deciding how to proceed. The Council will not respond to the questionnaire on behalf of the Parish because the Council does not have enough information to answer which of the three proposed community transport schemes would best suit the residents – it would be more meaningful for as many local residents as possible to complete the questionnaire.**

**(ii)** Councillors received the following updates from the *Bring Back Our Bus* campaign group:

- At Prime Minister’s Questions on 5th July, Rosie Duffield MP for Canterbury, asked a question specifically raising the issue of the withdrawal of the No. 14 bus. BBOB has been in touch with Rosie Duffield to thank her for her intervention and to make her aware of its activities;

- BBOB’s petition asking for the Competition and Markets Authority to investigate Stagecoach’s dominance in the provision of a bus service in East Kent is nearing its target of 1000 signatures. The group are planning to hand the petition into 10 Downing Street in August.

- Phil Lightowler, KCC Head of Public Transport, has accepted the group’s invitation to visit Staple to see the situation for himself and will walk the route to Ash, this meeting will take place on 20th July.

- The group have been working with the Northbourne campaign group who have also suffered from the removal of the No.14 bus. This group have been in correspondence with Paul Carter, KCC Leader, about their situation and in their correspondence have referred to Staple indicating that they, like us, would just like a minor modification to route the bus through Northbourne. In his reply Paul Carter assured them that the Public Transport Team “continue to have meaningful discussions with Stagecoach following the withdrawal of the 14 in an effort to try to find a solution to the problem and that there was an indication Stagecoach might be able to divert their services through Northbourne.” the BBOB group are hopeful that the same applies to Staple and will discuss this with Mr Lightowler on the 20th July.

Cllr Mrs Bennett noted that hopefully these are signs that KCC are showing notice and acknowledging some responsibility.

**(iii)** Councillors received an update from Mr Barden and Mr Loukes, who have been investigating the feasibility of a community bus scheme, with their feedback from the Big Question Parish Seminar and one of the public seminars.

Mr Barden also explained that in tandem with any potential funding from the Big Question KCC will also continue to issue its routine grants, which could be used for a community bus scheme. The next round of funding is expected to be available towards the end of the year. It was noted that this funding could result in a community bus being in place sooner, but being part of a Big Conversation scheme might offer a better quality provision. All present agreed that the first preference would be for Stagecoach to re-instate the original public bus, however, the Council will continue to support investigation into a community bus scheme, as a backup plan.

Mr Barden and Mr Loukes asked the Council to formalise their support, as at present Mr Barden and Mr Loukes do not have the remit to talk to DDC/KCC on behalf of the Parish Council.

**RESOLUTION: Cllr McCollum was nominated to represent Staple Parish Council in discussions with KCC about community buses, with Mr Barden and Mr Loukes being available to assist as required.**

Mr Loukes provided the latest summary of responses from their questionnaire, only 25% of houses have responded, however this has been enough feedback to suggest that 92 bus trips per week are possible, which supports the feasibility of a community bus scheme.

1. **PLANNING**

**(i)** 18/00276 | Erection of an agricultural building for use as an oast house/hop store | Land at Great Pedding Farm, Pedding Lane, Shatterling, CT3 1JS

**RESOLUTION: To support this application.**

**(ii)** 18/00509 | Erection of an agriculture building, polytunnels and creation of road | Layham Garden Centre, Lower Road, Staple, CT3 1LH.

**RESOLUTION: To support this application.**

**(iii)** 18/00609 **|** Erection of a building to facilitate dining/kitchen and utility area | The Willow, Beaute Lane, Shatterling, CT3 1JN.

**RESOLUTION: To recommend refusal due to following material considerations:**

**- Layout and density of building: the proposed structure is overly large for the approved number of residents.**

**- Design, appearance and materials: insufficient information is available in the application about the materials to be used and the drawings are not technically correct. The Council also has concerns about pollution and drainage.**

**- Government Policy: there is nothing in DDC’s gypsy and traveller site policy to stipulate that permanent structures must be provided, only pitches.**

**(iv)** The Clerk reported the following information from Alison Thompson at English Rural Housing Association “English Rural has finalised the Land Option Agreement with the landowners of the site.  I have commissioned a Drainage and Highways feasibility study and hope to have the report next week.  The Ecological Scoping Survey identified that there might be reptiles and badgers present on site and so our Ecologist is carrying out more detailed species surveys to clarify this.  I have also commissioned a tree survey.  Our architect is working on the more detailed drawings required for a planning application which I still hope to be able submit early in the autumn”.

**RESOLUTION: That this information be noted.**

1. **FINANCE**

**(i)** A payment schedule totalling £939.47 was received for approval.

**RESOLUTION: That all cheques be authorised.**

**(vi)** A quote of £45.00 to clean graffiti off the bus shelter in Shatterling, the ‘Welcome to Staple’ sign and village gate post was received.

**RESOLUTION: That this quote from DK Services be accepted.**

1. **FOOTPATHS REPORT**

The footpath to Hammill is believed to be badly overgrown.

**RESOLUTION: Cllr Mrs Bennett will walk this path to establish where the problem is and the matter will be reported to KCC, or possibly Woodnesborough Parish Council if the problem lies within their parish.**

**(ii)** Councillors considered whether a response is required to KCC’s consultation *Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2018/2028* details of which can be found at: [*https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/rightsofWayImprovementPlan2017/consultationHome*](https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/rightsofWayImprovementPlan2017/consultationHome)

**RESOLUTION: It was agreed that this consultation is designed to be completed by individuals, not organisations, and so individual councillors and members of the public should respond.**

1. **HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION**

**(i)** It was confirmed that six potential volunteers are available to manage a Speedwach Scheme; the minimum required amount.

**RESOLUTION: A meeting will now be arranged with PSE Alan Watson, Community Speedwatch Manager at Kent Police, for the volunteers to find out more. Representatives from Stourmouth Parish Council will also be invited; who have expressed an interest in sharing the cost with Staple PC.**

**(ii)** Councillors considered the latest email from Stephanie Wadhams, Dover District Manager KCC’s Highways & Asset Management, in which Ms Wadhams confirmed that the proposed housing developments in Staple are not sufficient to warrant a review of the traffic management across the parish.

**RESOLUTION: As a starting point, Ms Wadhams will be asked if 30mph repeater signs can be installed and the Clerk will re-iterate that there are traffic problems in the parish that must be addressed.**

**(iii)** A report was received at the meeting from the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator regarding an incident of traffic confusion and indecision that occurred on the morning of 19th July at the junction of Buckland Lane and Mill Road. It was noted that this is not a new problem and intermittent blockages are a regular occurrence, with vehicles often having to reverse along Buckland Lane.

**RESOLUTION: This report will be shared with Ms Wadhams to help explain the problems faced in the Parish; included with the response mentioned at Item 11(ii).**

**(iv)** Cllr Brooman noted that the broken street light at the entrance to the village hall car park has been reported to KCC and the broken lamp has been removed.

2) MostcarsarespeedingandtheyspeedmostonDurlockRoad.

3) Durlockrecordeda90mphrecordat12:50onSaturday2

nd

DecemberbeatingeventhepreviousShatterling

best.

4) Statisticsmonthbymonthanddaybydayareprettyconsistent.Evenweek‐endsaresimilartoweek‐days

withoutthepeaksasmarked.

1. **VILLAGE HALL & RECREATION GROUND**

Cllr Kirk asked for clarification on who will cut the shrub’s back from building; previously this has been Harmer & Sons Ground Maintenance, but then due to the foliage becoming overgrown this was last undertaken by DK Services.

**RESOLUTION: The Clerk will ask for Harmer & Sons Ground Maintenance to re-quote for this work, clarifying exactly the area to be maintained.**

Cllr Kirk also reported that the cooker is not fit for purpose due to being too small and an upgrade to a larger unit is being investigated.

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no additional correspondence.

1. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Staple Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 12th September 2018 at 7.30pm in Staple Village Hall.

The meeting was closed by Cllr Bartlett at 21.30hrs

Approved: . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (Chairman)