

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
Kathie Lamb Centre  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August at 7.30p.m.

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Buller, Castro, George, Grimwood (at the point indicated in the minutes), Lain-Rose, McPhee, Perry, Sharp, Smith, Spearink, Riordan who was in the Chair and Deputy Clerk, Mrs D Jenkins.

**1. APOLOGIES:**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Bowden (for health reasons), Gartan, Grimwood, McNeill & Thomas (for work reasons).

**2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the agenda:

- 2.1. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests – None declared
- 2.2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda. Councillor Perry declared an interest in item 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 as a trustee of both organisations.
- 2.3. Requests for Dispensation. Councillor Perry requested and was granted a dispensation to participate in discussion and voting on items 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 in accordance with Section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011.

**3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES**

- 3.1. Pages 1926 – 1931 of 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021 available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Smith it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes to be signed by Chairman Riordan.

**4. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS**

- 4.1. Accounts for Payment – for approval.

On the request of Councillor Buller, Councillors apologised to staff for the late payment of July salaries.

Proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor George, the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 15<sup>th</sup> July to 4<sup>th</sup> August totalled £15,296.17; income for the period was £3,274.53.

<u>Approved Payments 15th July - 4th August 2021</u>	Amount
Cllr Reimbursement re GSG Sundries	89.01
KCC KCS - Office Stationery	33.66
KCC KCS - Office Photocopier Rental July-Sept	133.15
Homeleigh Timber - Caretaker Gloves	5.98
Cllr Reimbursement re CP Refreshments Jubilee Field	57.02
Staff Payroll & Pension Costs July	5,722.84
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance July	410.80
Commercial Services Trading Ltd - Surrenden Mowing Apr-Jun	156.38
Arron Services Ltd - Norton Security re Cllr	84.00
Balanced Audio Visual - CCTV Replacement Labour & SIM cards	7,296.16
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription August	23.99
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open July	736.84
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries July	74.72

Chairman's initials .....

CLlr Reimbursement CP Refreshments	44.26
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilets Water July	4.79
E-on - Street Light Energy June	53.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 Aug	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 Aug	72.00
Information Commissioners Office -Annual Data Protection Fee	35.00
Business Stream - Surrenden Pavilion Water May-July	11.09
Business Stream - Wimpey Field Water May-July	11.48
Lloyds Bank - Service Charges July	7.00
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange Service Aug	171.00
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>15,296.17</b>

**TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE**

0.00

4.2. Summation of Accounts – for noting

NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.

4.3. Finance & Strategy Group – Report of meeting 21/07/21 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and published at: <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/finance--strategic-planning-group/>. Recommendations relating to financial matters:

4.3.1. To approve the Maintenance and Management Agreement for Jubilee Field (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Smith and RESOLVED to APPROVE the Maintenance and Management Agreement for Jubilee Field.

4.3.2. To approve suspension of funding for a Youth Leader for the Youth Club, until such time as the Youth Club reopens in the financial year 2021/22. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Sharp and RESOLVED to APPROVE to suspend payments to the Staplehurst Youth Club until the re-opening.

4.3.3. To approve the Internal Auditors Report for the financial year 2020/21. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Sharp and RESOLVED to APPROVE the Internal Auditors Report for the financial year 2020/21. Councillor Lain-Rose wished to record the Council's thanks to the Internal Auditor for the work performed. Councillor McPhee noted the Internal Auditors report with regard to backups and suggested he speak to the Clerk with regard to backing up to the Cloud.

4.3.4. To approve the Terms of Reference for the Finance and Strategy Group. Councillor Perry requested an amendment to the word 'strategy' in item 3 (l) in the Terms of Reference, which should read 'statutory'. Subject to the amendment it was proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Smith and RESOLVED to APPROVE the Terms of Reference.

4.3.5. To approve the Financial Regulations following amendments to paragraphs as set out in the notes of the Finance and Strategy Group meeting of the 21/7/21. Proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Castro and RESOLVED to APPROVE the Financial Regulations.

4.3.6. To approve the Financial Risk Assessment for 2020/21. Councillor Castro requested an addition to the final sentence of the "Notes of events/action taken during 2020/2021" on page 14 relating to 'Parish Council website and Facebook page' of the Financial Risk Assessment to end "...in accordance with the existing Social Media policy of the Council." Subject to the addition it was proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Smith and RESOLVED to APPROVE the Financial Risk Assessment for 2020/21.

Chairman's initials .....

4.3.7. To approve the recommended list of donations as detailed in the notes of the Finance and Strategy Group meeting of the 21/7/21. Proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Sharp and RESOLVED to APPROVE the following donations: Annual Clean Up £200; CCDAS £200; CAB Maidstone £300; Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal £100; Maidstone & The Weald Samaritans £100; Parish Magazine £75.00; Kenward Trust £100.00; Medway Valley Countryside Partnership £50; Involve Kent £75 and Heart of Kent Hospice £250.

*Councillor Grimwood arrived at the meeting during this item.*

4.3.8. To approve the next Quarter contract payments as set out in the Finance and Strategy Group notes of the meeting of the 21/7/21. Proposed by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Sharp and RESOLVED to APPROVE the renewal of the following contracts: KCC Highways licence to erect poppies on lampposts £30.00 p.a.; MBC Remembrance Day road closure licence £75.00 p.a.; KCC Highways licence to erect Christmas motifs on lampposts £30.00 p.a.; Sevenoaks DC premises licences at Jubilee Field and Surrenden Field £180.00 p.a. and £70.00 p.a. respectively; Sage accounts software package approximately £168.00 p.a.; Sage Payroll software approximately £200.00 p.a., E-on parish street light electricity approximately £634.61 p.a. and subscription to The Events Industry: The Purple Guide £25.00 p.a.

- 4.4. Request for a donation to the Staplehurst Scout Group from Councillor Riordan for £200 to support their payment of rent for their Scout Hall. Following much discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Spearink and RESOLVED to APPROVE a donation of £400 to Staplehurst Scout Group to spend as they see fit. Councillor Lain-Rose agreed to assist the Scout Group in applying for a grant from KCC to assist with their rental costs.
- 4.5. To approve a contingency increase of 10% per edition (£29.00 ea.) for printing costs for the 2 remaining Village Updates for the year 2021/22, due to the increase in wholesale prices for paper. Quoted price approved in the meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (Min 1914, 6.2.1). Proposed by Councillor Castro, seconded by Councillor McPhee and RESOLVED to APPROVE a contingency increase of 10% for the printing of the remaining Village Updates for 2021/22.

## **5. CORRESPONDENCE AND PARISH ISSUES**

- 5.1. (For decision) – to review the proposals for future meeting arrangements and agree the dates and venues for the meetings. Councillors reviewed the meeting schedule and venue options as suggested in the Clerk's report. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Castro and RESOLVED to APPROVE the meeting schedule without amendment. The venue of future meetings caused much discussion with regards to location, acoustics and size. Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Perry and RESOLVED by 8 votes with 2 against, including Councillor Lain-Rose, and 1 abstention, to APPROVE that both the Full Council and Planning Committee meetings resume at South Hall, Village Centre from September 2021.
- 5.2. (For noting) – A letter of thanks from local residents regarding support from the Council. Councillors appreciated and NOTED the resident's letter.
- 5.3. (For decision) – Request from Kent Police for feedback on proposed new PCSO reorganisation. To decide who will prepare the feedback on behalf of the Council. Councillor Riordan offered to prepare a very strong letter of objection to the proposals in relation to the PCSO ward moves, to be shared with Councillors before sending to Kent Police. Councillors AGREED and thanked Councillor Riordan for his offer.

Chairman's initials .....

- 5.4. (For decision) – Consultation request from KCC on budget and service proposals for 2022/23. To decide who will prepare the feedback on behalf of the Council.  
Councillor Lain-Rose offered to review the consultation and to prepare a response to KCC to be shared with Councillors by the end of August, before submission.  
Councillors AGREED to Councillor Lain-Rose preparing a response to the KCC budget consultation and thanked him for his offer.

*Councillor Lain-Rose left the meeting at this point in the proceedings.*

## **6. PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS**

### **6.1. Clerks Report**

The Deputy Clerk advised Councillors that a provisional date of 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021 had been proposed for the Resident's Annual Meeting, to be held at Staplehurst Primary School Infant Hall. Chief Inspector Gary Woodward, Maidstone District Commander West Division had accepted an invitation to speak and respond to questions at the meeting. Medway Valley Countryside Partnership had confirmed that they have evidence of Greater Crested Newts residing in the new pond at Wimpey Field; this is deemed as a great success. Following recent incidents at Poyntell Pond with three trees having fallen down and dealt with by MBC a survey is to be carried out by Andy Jessen, MBC Parks and Open Space Officer, to decide whether there is a need for a maintenance plan to be initiated. Councillor George requested to attend the survey when it occurs. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that shot blasting of the skatepark ramps had been completed and the office had already received positive feedback from users of the park. The painting of the skatepark ramps began today and will be completed this week. The Clerk wished Councillors to consider authorising the CEG's agreement to a request received in June, from a Yoga teacher, to hold fitness classes on Surrenden Field. Councillors AGREED to the request which would be ratified at the next Full Council meeting. The Deputy Clerk would respond to the Yoga teacher confirming approval of her request to use Surrenden Field for fitness classes with immediate effect. Finally, the Clerk reported that she had today received notification from PKF Littlejohn, the external auditor, confirming that the AGAR for 2020/21 was satisfactory.

### **6.2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project Activities**

- 6.2.1. Communications Group – (for noting only) report of the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021; Councillors NOTED the report of 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021, published at [Communications Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/communications-group)
- 6.2.2. Greener Staplehurst Group - (for noting & decisions) reports of the meetings on the 21<sup>st</sup> June and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The reports of the meetings held on 21<sup>st</sup> June and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were duly NOTED, published at [Greener Staplehurst - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/greener-staplehurst)
- 6.2.2.1. (for decision) – to approve expenditure of £100 for the purchase of materials for the planters at the Headcorn Road gateways. Councillor Spearink stated that a sum of £100 would not cover the cost of the materials to complete two planters. Proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor McPhee and RESOLVED to APPROVE the sum of £350 from the GSG budget to pay for the two new planters.
- 6.2.2.2. (for decision) – to approve the Wimpey Field Engagement Plan. Proposed by Councillor Castro, seconded by Councillor Sharp and RESOLVED to APPROVE the Wimpey Field Engagement Plan.
- 6.2.3. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group (for noting only) report of the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Councillors NOTED the report of the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021,

Chairman's initials .....

published at [Neighbourhood Plan Review Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](http://staplehurst-pc.uk).

- 6.2.4. Road Safety Group (for noting only) report of the meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Councillors NOTED the report of the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2021, published at [Road Safety Task and Finish Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](http://staplehurst-pc.uk)

### 6.3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors

#### 6.3.1. Chairman's report

The Chairman reported that clarification from MBC on the Welcome Back Fund had been received; the Parish Council would pay for goods and services received and reclaim the costs from MBC. In relation to the WBF Councillor Riordan was progressing white lines at The Parade car park and new litter bins and Councillor George was actioning new planting. With regard to the proposed gate alterations at Wimpey Field, Councillors Riordan and Sharp would be visiting individual households at The Bartons starting tomorrow. Following the resignation of Councillor George as Chairman of GSG, which had gone from strength to strength under his leadership, Councillor Riordan asked whether a Councillor would consider taking over this role. Councillors were asked to assist the very busy office staff wherever possible and to monitor and respond to emails from the Clerk requesting assistance. An item will be placed on the next agenda to discuss the role of a Parish Councillor and the amount of work individual Councillors carry out on behalf of the Parish Council. The Clerk, the Chairman and the RSG are responding to a complaint from a resident relating to a request from the Parish Council to trim a hedge. Councillor Riordan also updated Councillors regarding criminal activity and anti-social behaviour in Staplehurst over the weekend.

## 7. **REPORTS FROM OTHER COUNCILS, AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS**

– for noting

- 7.1. Borough Councillors Report – Oral reports by Councillor Perry & Councillor Brice. Councillor Perry updated Councillors on the following items: all Committee Chairs had now been appointed and that Councillor Perry is Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee; MBC are moving to a more cabinet based system with advisory committees, which will be politically balanced and this will go to Council for approval in the autumn; issues in the town centre have led to a review of parks and also CCTV provision; Lock Meadow is now open for more events; the area around the Archbishop's Palace is being assessed for enhancement; MBC wish to make Maidstone an attractive place to visit and live and will work closely with KCC on this matter; the Local Plan is on track to go to Regulation 19 in the autumn and in the meantime more consultations will take place; Councillor Perry has written to Helen Grant MP in relation to the Government putting more emphasis on Local Plans and taking power away from local people by turning it into a tick box exercise; Councillor Perry has also written to Helen Grant MP regarding the Planning Inspector's decision on the planning application at Land Adjacent to South Cottage; a Boundary Commission review is currently taking place and three constituencies are proposed for the Maidstone Borough: Faversham, Maidstone and Weald; a Local Government boundary review on elections and the number of MBC Councillors is also taking place and Councillor Perry stated that it was imperative that the productive link between the Parish and the Borough is maintained.
- 7.2. County Councillors Report – Report by County Councillor Parfitt-Reid:  
None.

Chairman's initials .....

7.3. Maidstone Area Committee KALC - (for noting) Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Councillors NOTED the report of the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 which Councillor Riordan had been unable to attend.

7.4. PCSO Report- (for noting) – Report from July 2021. Councillors NOTED the PCSO's July report.

**8. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS**

None.

**9. URGENT MATTERS**

None.

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM**

At the start of the meeting a member of the public commented on a point in the Finance and Strategy Group meeting notes relating to the replacement of current bus shelter noticeboards with lockable noticeboards and after the meeting a resident commented on the lack of policing in the area.

Meeting closed at 9.28pm