

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Virtual Meeting via Zoom video-conference
Monday 11th January 2021 at 7.00p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Bowden, Buller, Castro, Forward, Gartan, George, Lain-Rose, Perry, McNeill, Miller, Sharp, Spearink, Thomas and Riordan who was in the Chair and Parish Clerk Miss A Smith.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Perry's gave apologies for late arrival at the meeting due to a prior attendance at another meeting, these were accepted.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – none declared

Requests for Dispensation – none declared

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: Proposed by Councillor Lain Rose, seconded by Councillor Sharp, minute pages 1879-1883 of 14th December 2020 were APPROVED by majority of Councillors, to be signed by Chairman Riordan and made available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>. Councillors Thomas and McNeil abstained as they were not present at the meeting.

FINANCE REPORTS

4.1 Accounts for payment – for approval. Proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Lain Rose, the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 9th December to 5th January totalled £14,699.26; income for the period was £0.50.

<u>Approved Payments 9th December 2020 - 5th January 2021</u>	Amount
SLCC - Agendas & Minutes Webinar	72.00
KCC - KCS Stationery	59.15
Homeleigh Timber - Workshop Tools	53.45
HMRC - Tax & NI November	1,761.98
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open Nov	695.49
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries Nov	63.65
Bradley Hawkins - Mowing/Strimming Sept/Oct/Nov Wimpey Field	75.00
Paxman Printing - Village Update Printing Winter	268.00
Forestry First Ltd - Youth Club Tree Limb Removal	180.00
SLCC - Webinar	36.00
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance December	410.80
Homeleigh Timber - Rock Salt x5 Bags	41.94
Homeleigh Timber - Rock Salt x5 Bags	41.94
Cllr Reimbursement - Workshop Tools	24.68
The National Allotment Society - Subscription	66.00
GRS Arboricultural - Annual Tree Survey	300.00
Homeleigh Timber - Hammerite re Street Light Columns	11.99
Payroll & Pension Costs December	8,947.53
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Clean/Open Dec	695.49
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries Dec	25.02
WP Drainage - Bell Lane Toilet Blocked Drain Clearance	145.00

Chairman's initials

Nickis Florist - Flowers CW	45.00
Opus Energy - Parish Office Electricity November	18.14
Opus Energy - Surrenden Pavilion Electricity November	42.31
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection November	64.80
Kent County Council - Youth Club Lease Purchase Dec-Mar	212.50
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 January	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 January	72.00
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilets Water December	26.26
Lloyds Bank Charges - December	7.85
Arron Services - Hosted Exchange Services January	171.00
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	14,696.97

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

2.29

4.2 Summation of Accounts – NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>. Councillors attention was drawn to the amounts of S106 and CIL monies held by the Council in particular the date by which the CIL money needed to be allocated to an approved project. Councillor Riordan suggested that Councillors put forward any projects they would like to see taken forward to the Finance and Strategy Group.

4.3 Staff Training – proposed by Councillor Lain Rose, seconded by Councillor Sharp, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £30 for the online training module for Operation London Bridge

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

5.1 Application for renewal of Street Traders Licence – Pizz d’Onore, Lodge Road – Proposed by Councillor Lain Rose, seconded by Councillor Castro, it was RESOLVED by majority decision to ratify their previous comments of no objection for the renewal of the licence. (Min 8, P1882).

5.2 Virtual Meeting Protocol – Councillor Riordan gave Council feedback regarding a recent virtual training module he had completed regarding chairing virtual meetings. A key learning had been that parishes find it useful to have a virtual meeting protocol and he had prepared one for the Council in conjunction with the Councillor Sharp, as the Chair of Planning, and requested that Councillors agree to adopt it. Proposed by Councillor Lain Rose, seconded by Councillor Spearink, it was RESOLVED to adopt the protocol.

5.3 Councillor Casual Vacancy Policy and Procedure – Councillor Riordan explained in light of the decision of Councillor Rawlinson to step down there was now the possibility of the Council needed to co-opt a new member. With this in mind it was felt useful that a new Policy and Procedure be developed that could both guide Councillors and potential applicants. After discussion a motion to accept the document with two amendments was proposed by Councillor Lain Rose and seconded by Councillor Forward. The amendments proposed were 1) to alter the sentence in the eligibility section to show ‘You are’ on the electoral role of the parish; and 2) that Councillors be allowed to abstain from a vote where they believe that they have a clear conflict of interest. It was also included in the second amendment that should an abstention be made by a Councillor, then said Councillor should not vote for the remainder of the voting process. It was RESOLVED to ADOPT the policy and procedure, with the proposed amendments, subject to the Clerk seeking clarification from MBC Electoral team that this amendment was acceptable. Councillor Spearink also requested that any future applicant be given access to past Council documents. The Clerk confirmed that applicants would be given access via the Council’s website to the public documents and confirmed that these documents were already freely available. She also clarified that the public documents were only redacted

Chairman’s initials

for personally sensitive and/or commercially sensitive data, and as such mirrored very closely what Councillors receive.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (from Committee/Groups/Office on specific issues or as regular update)

- 6.1 Clerk's Report: KALC Community Awards Scheme The Clerk reminded Councillors of the need to receive their nominations by the 15th January and that nominations may be for either an individual or group. Each nomination should be accompanied with 30 words explaining the reason for the nomination.
- 6.2 Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting.
- 6.2.1 Community Enhancement Group: The report of the meeting on the 25th November 2020 was NOTED by Council and published on the Council's website at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/communications-group/>. Due to the meeting having occurred sometime previously it was noted that that the first item, regarding the awarding of the contract to clean Bell Lane Toilets had now been made to Paxman, and that Council had previously made the decision not to open the Disabled Toilets for the time being (min 4.3.4, P1880). Councillor Spearink commented that the Planters to be installed at the Village Gateways were on hold pending better weather and the lifting of National lockdown restrictions.
- 6.2.2 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – The report of the meeting on the 9th December 2020 was NOTED by Council and published on the Council's website at [Neighbourhood Plan Review Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](#)
- 6.3 Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
- 6.3.1 Chairman's Report: The Chairman welcomed Councillors back to the New Year. He mentioned the following points: that the Finance and Strategy Group are due to meet this week on the 13th January and Councillors needed to get any final budget requests to the group for consideration, prior to final budget sign off on the 1st Feb; that the Greener Staplehurst Group is due to meet next week along with the Communications Group, who were making good progress on the next village update; that the emergency help team and the Community Hub were well underway in supporting residents in Lockdown three. He noted the work that had been done by the Deputy Clerk and the Payback team in getting one street light working in Chapel Lane; he reported that there were electrical supply issues with the second column which was in the process of being resolved. He also confirmed that he was working with the Deputy Clerk to try to resolve the issues over the Christmas Motifs and looked to report back to Council shortly. He also commented; that quotes were being sought for Surrenden Park's new pathway; that KCC had been responsive to drainage issues with ditches around the village; that the gateway planters were underway but temporarily on hold. He reported to Council the blockage problem at Bell Lane Public Toilets, and thanked the office team for their swift actions in resolving the situation. He advised that sandbags were at the village centre for residents if required for flooding and commented that it was pleasing to see that Hurst Close/Newlyn Drive was now being resurfaced. He finished by thanking Councillor Rawlinson who had stepped down from the role of Councillor for her vibrant and energetic contribution during her term in office and looked forward to a new Councillor joining the team.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COUNCILS, AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS for noting: -

- 7.1 County Councillor's Report (Standing item): Councillor Hotson thanked Borough Councillor Perry for his hard work in driving action to deliver the vaccination programme within the Weald PCN. He confirmed he had seen correspondence between the Deputy Clerk and KCC regarding trying to resolve issues with the Christmas Motifs and applauded her for starting the process early. He advised that under current circumstances, certain on-site activities by KCC had been suspended. He noted the closures on Marden Road due to occur to finalise works. He gave Councillors an update on some of the challenges KCC are facing in this year's budget process

Chairman's initials

and sought Councillors feedback on an option to increase Council Tax by a further 1% to that currently proposed, to aid services for the elderly and youth of the County. Councillors were invited to email their thoughts. He also confirmed that he was now acting as an independent Councillor and would be standing in the election in May in this capacity.

Councillor Perry joined the meeting at this point.

7.2 Borough Councillor’s Report (1) (Standing Item): Oral report by Councillor Perry. Councillor Perry updated Council on the progress being made with the COVID-19 vaccination rollout programme for the Weald, being serviced by The Ridge PCN. He went on to comment that the Section 18b Consultation process for MBC `s Local Plan was now closed but explained that the extension was to allow various bodies to respond. He also commented that the pressure being put on the Secretary of State for Housing, seemed to be working and that the proposal to recalculate allocations using the new algorithm was under review. This currently meant that MBC’s housing allocation had reverted to the original target of 1214 new houses for the time being. Councillor Perry commented that the campaign to save the Hazlitt Theatre was going well and discussions were taking place with the current contractor. He also reported that he continued to work with Helen Grant MP to try to resolve the drainage problems in Marden Road.

Councillor Riordan thanked Councillor Perry for all his hard work in relation to the vaccination rollout programme.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)

No items.

URGENT MATTERS - at the discretion of the Chairman, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting.

No items

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM:

9. A resident shared an update on the progress of the COVID-19 Vaccination Roll out programme for the Weald PCN at the start of the meeting.

Proceedings finished at 8.10pm.