

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Virtual Meeting via Zoom video-conference
Monday 30th November 2020 at 7.00p.m.

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

REMEMBRANCE: A one-minute silence was held in remembrance of Barrett Manning, an ex-Councillor and prominent resident of the Parish.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Gartan, Rawlinson and Thomas whose apologies were accepted.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillors Riordan declared an interest in item 4.1 as he was in receipt of reimbursement for accounts paid.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillor Riordan requested and was granted a dispensation in regard to item 4.1. Councillor Perry requested and was granted a dispensation in regard to item 4.7 as he is a Trustee of the Youth Club. Dispensations to participate in this way were granted in accordance with Section 33(2)(e) of the Localism Act 2011.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: Proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor George, minute pages 1869-1873 of 9th November 2020 were APPROVED by Councillors, to be signed by Chairman Riordan and made available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>. Councillor Lain-Rose abstained.

FINANCE REPORTS

1. Accounts for payment – for approval. Proposed by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Forward, the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 4th November to 24th November totalled £16,078.27; income for the period was £0.28.

<u>Approved Payments 4th November - 24th November 2020</u>	Amount
The Living Forest - Tree Works Surrenden Field	1,929.48
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rent September	350.00
Cam-tech Security - CCTV Repairs Surrenden Field	90.00
Cllr Reimbursement - Community Payback Refreshments	41.16
Aylesford Electrical Contractors Ltd - Xmas Lights	1,980.00
NPRG Member - Computer Support Reimbursement	18.00
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Clean/Open Oct	695.49
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries Oct	32.02
Arron Services Ltd - Power Cable re Office Laptop	42.00
Cam-Tech Security - Replacement CCTV recorder Surrenden Field	455.76
Forestry First Ltd - Youth Club Hedge Cut	360.00
Aylesford Electrical Contractors Ltd - KCC Permit re Xmas Lights	196.80
HMRC - Tax & NI October	1,450.61
SLCC - Budgeting Webinar	36.00
Arron Services Ltd - Norton Security Annual Subscription	126.00

KALC - Chairing Virtual Meetings Webinar	42.00
CLlr Reimbursement - CP Refreshments x2 Jubilee Field	72.66
Payroll & Pension Costs November	7,529.98
Subway - Community Payback Refreshments SCC/Parade/Chestnut	29.40
Post Office - Stamps 350 x 2nd class Autumn Update	227.50
E-on - Street Light Energy October	54.77
BT - Parish Office Phone & Broadband Nov/Dec/Jan	89.76
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection October	81.24
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 December	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 December	72.00
Lloyds Bank - Charges November	6.50
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	16,071.13
TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE	7.14

2. Summation of Accounts – NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.
3. Signage for Ashdown's walk and Dautrepoint's Walk: Item for decision. The revised quotation from MBC for the installation of the signage was discussed and the increase in costs explained. Councillor Buller proposed and Councillor Forward seconded to accept the new quotation. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £961.25 and for the Parish Office to ask MBC to initiate works.
4. The Parade: A proposal for decision was presented to Council to install galvanised steel angle irons to the brickwork at the Parade as a way to protect the brick walls from damage from parking vehicles. It was noted that the work would enhance property of which the Parish Council were not the landowners, but that the Parade was a recognisable and well supported area of interest with residents. It was also noted that MBC had already undertaken repairs to the walls. Councillor Lain-Rose asked that the landlord be contacted to agree the works. Proposed by Councillor Buller and seconded by Councillor Forward it was RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £630 to undertake the works, subject to approval being granted by the landlord.
5. Staplehurst Youth Club: Proposed by Councillor Forward and seconded by Councillor Sharp, it was RESOLVED to ratify the expenditure of £150 for emergency tree works.
6. Donation: Councillor Perry proposed and seconded by Councillor George; it was RESOLVED that a donation of £100 be made to the Kent Air Ambulance service in remembrance of Barrett Manning.
7. Office Staff Training: Councillor Forward proposed and seconded by Councillor Perry, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the recommendation from the Employment Group for the expenditure of £150 for staff training.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

8. Christmas Tree at The Parade – A request from a resident group for support for the installation of a crowd funded Christmas Tree and associated lighting had been received. Following approval from the landlord the work had been completed with great success on the 28th November. Proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Sharp, it was RESOLVED to ratify Council support for the project.
9. Update from Staplehurst Help Team – An update report had been received from the Help Team. It was NOTED there had been considerable continued community efforts to support residents throughout the summer and recent second Lockdown. Councillor Castro confirmed that he kept regular contact with all volunteers encouraging them and thanking them for their continued support. He advised that there had been positive feedback from within the

wider community regarding the support provided and in a few instances appropriate referrals of residents had been made to the Help Team by external agencies. Councillors were keen to recognise the tremendous efforts of the team via a thank you email.

10. Kent Association of Local Councils Community Awards Scheme: Councillors were invited to adopt the scheme (for decision). Councillors acknowledged that 2020 had been an exceptional year and indicated that this year would be a good year for an individual or a group to be recognised by this prestigious award. It was noted that there was no cost to the Council. Some initial nominations were discussed. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Lain-Rose it was RESOLVED to adopt the awards for 2021, and for nominations to be considered at a later date. Councillor Forward abstained.
11. Kent Highways Annual Parish Seminar 19th November: Council NOTED the report submitted by Councillor and Mr M Buller who attended the meeting. Councillor Buller noted that it had been an interesting meeting with many new technology-based developments being discussed.
12. New Planters: Councillors considered a proposal to install new flower planters at each of the village's 8 gateways. Councillor Riordan confirmed that permission had been received from KCC to install them and that the project would not attract any costs. He confirmed that the wood had been acquired by donation via Councillor Gartan. Councillor George stated that the bulbs and plants were being donated. Ongoing management and maintenance would be by the Greener Staplehurst Group. Proposed by Councillor Sharp and seconded by Councillor Forward, it was RESOLVED that the planters be installed.

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

13. Clerk's Report: Bus Shelter The Clerk advised Councillors that the investigation into MBC assuming responsibility for the new bus shelter on the south bound side of Station Road, was progressing positively and indications were that MBC would adopt the shelter. Final confirmation was hoped to be brought to the next Council Meeting. Christmas Lights The Clerk confirmed that the Deputy Clerk had been working hard to resolve the issues with the Christmas lights that had emerged since erection last week. She said that the failure of some of the lights to work was disappointing given that KCC had advised that they should be fine. She advised Council that they would have a chance to review the Christmas light provision early next year as the contract with the existing installer expires and there would be a requirement to retender. Local Plan Review The Clerk invited Councillors to note that some early consultation responses from residents had been received and that the office were logging and saving them, for review as required. Puffin Crossing – Marden Road. The Clerk confirmed that work had now commenced installing the Puffin Crossing in Marden Rd following Council's agreement for such works. She said that she was exploring with KCC Legal team if formal legal agreements were necessary to cover ongoing access rights.
14. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting.
 - 14.1. General Data Protection Regulations: Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose and seconded by Councillor Forward, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the adoption of the reviewed policies.
 - 14.2. Communications Group Report: The report of the meeting on the 22nd of October were NOTED by Council and published on the Council's website at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/communications-group/> Councillor Buller suggested that the Communications Group may wish to direct Councillors in terms of articles needed for the Village Updates. Councillor Castro confirmed that this would be their approach moving forward. He also invited any Councillors to join the group.
 - 14.3. Greener Staplehurst Group Report: The report of the meeting on the 26th October were NOTED by Council and published on the Council's website at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council->

- [13607/greener-staplehurst/](#). Proposed by Councillor George and seconded by Councillor Castro, it was RATIFIED that Councillor Gartan become a member of the Group.
- 14.4. Neighbour Plan Review Group: The report of the meeting on the 11th November was NOTED by Council and published on the Council's website at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/neighbourhood-plan-review-group/>. It was noted that there may be a number of old established trees that may be worthy of protection by a TPO on the two sites identified as potential development sites for the Local Plan Review. Councillor George confirmed that this item was to be discussed at the next GSG meeting and he would get the volunteers taking this item forward to prioritise these two sites.
15. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
- 15.1. Chairman's Report: The Chairman formally welcomed the new Clerk and wished her well on behalf of the Council. He further commented: Commemoration: he had received a number of suggestions for a longer-term commemoration of Barrett Manning and would revert to Council in due course. Merit Awards: the Headmistress of the school had been approached to present the Junior Merit Award and Councillor Buller would present the Adult Award; sponsorship of £300 had been received for the Awards from a local business. Village Update: a number of positive comments had been made on social media about the latest edition. S106 Funds: MBC is holding a Bovis contribution of £67,083.45 and a number of ideas had been brought forward in respect of projects to spend these monies in line with the appropriate covenants e.g. a new path in Surrenden Field to access the play area. Drainage issues in Marden Road: he thanked Councillors Bowden and Perry for their continued work and efforts in trying to help resolve the associated issues; Helen Grant MP had been actively engaging with the Councillors and as a result the planning application regarding the removal of the hedge in Marden Road had been withdrawn pending engineering surveys and reports. Puffin Crossing - Marden Road installation was underway. Surrenden Field Hedging: had been cut and trimmed back to the agreed height. Christmas Lights: now erected and problems with timers were being dealt with. Chapel Lane: work was due to take place very soon installing the new lamp posts in Chapel Lane. Greener Staplehurst Group: he noted that the Group was very busy getting on planting the 700 bulbs and other plants that had been donated. Local Plan Pre-consultation: a number of Councillors would be attending a pre-consultation briefing given by MBC and would report back. Sainsburys' site development: he had liaised with a resident and Sainsbury's about some significant concerns about the impact of construction works on a property adjoining the site. Home Farm: developers for Home Farm site had requested a meeting prior to submitting plans, which he proposed to discuss with Planning Committee on 1st December. Community Support: he noted how positively the wide range of community groups had worked together to support the village during this difficult year, which was a real credit to the village. He noted the immense support received from Councillors Brice, Hotson and Perry throughout the year. Final Meeting: the final meetings for 2020 would take place in two weeks. With regret, the usual festive activities to thank all the Parish volunteers and contributors would not be possible but the Chairman said he would arrange for a thank you letter to be sent.
- 15.2. Community Payback: Councillor Spearink thanked Councillors Castro, Gartan, George and Riordan for their support during the visits of the Community Payback team and commented on the service users' experiences.

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

16. Borough Councillor's Report: Oral report by Councillor Perry. Councillor Perry was pleased to report that Councillors had been able to save the Hazlitt Theatre but pressure was on

now to reopen as soon as possible. He confirmed that following Helen Grant MP and Parish Council’s involvement that the planning application had been withdrawn in respect of the removal of the hedge on the south of Marden Road. He went on to advise that the Local Plan Review Regulation 18b consultation was due to open on the 1st December and noted that SPC were in discussion with MBC. Councillor Perry went on to confirm that the 2021 Council Tax increase was likely to be capped at 2%. He advised the Council that MBC had managed their budgets carefully this year but they would need to use reserves and that clearly these would need replacing at the earliest opportunity. Following attendance at the Kent Association of Local Councils’ AGM he reported to Council that subscriptions were likely to increase by 3%. He also drew Council’s attention to a motion that had gained agreement for referral to the National Association of Local Councils from Swale BC. The motion was for a littering control arrangement forcing fast food outlets to record purchasers’ details on packaging. The motion had received overwhelming support but clearly had a long way to go before it would be adopted in law. Chairman Riordan thanked Councillor Perry for his work on behalf of Staplehurst.

- 17. County Councillor’s Report: Councillor Hotson advised that he had been supporting the new Clerk with regards to the easement issues on the Puffin Crossing at Marden Road. He went on to advise that KCC had been pleased with the consultation response to the 2021 budget having received over 3000 responses. He continued to advise Council about the data surrounding COVID-19 infection rates in the County and how they compared with Maidstone. He noted that Maidstone regrettably were seeing increasing rates. He confirmed that KCC were awaiting details of the rollout of the vaccination programme. He brought to Council’s attention that there were nutrient neutrality issues in the River Stour and this may have impact on the area in terms of the delivery of the housing allocation. Chairman Riordan thanked Councillor Hotson for his work on behalf of Staplehurst.

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.

None.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM:

- 18. A resident commented on tree-planting and the proposed repair works at The Parade.

Proceedings finished at 9.10pm.