

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 23rd September 2019 at 8.15 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Bowden, Buller, Chapman, Forward (from the point indicated in the minutes), George, Perry, Rawlinson, Sharp, Spearink, Thomas, Walsh and Riordan who was in the Chair.

Parish Clerk: Mr MJ Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillors Lain-Rose and Miller whose reasons for apology 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 requested.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: Minute pages 1782-1785 of 2nd September 2019 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Riordan and made available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>.

FINANCE REPORTS

1. Accounts for payment – for approval. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Thomas, the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 28th August to 11th September totalled £6,017.21; income for the period was £604.58.

Approved Payments 28th August - 11th September 2019

	Amount
KCC - LGPS Cessation Liability 1st 1/2-year payment	3,450.00
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilets Open/Clean Aug	695.49
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilets Sundries Aug	110.29
KCC - Stationery Supplies	18.00
Councillor Expenses Reimbursement re Parade	5.41
KALC Conference	72.00
Homeleigh Timber - Bulk Bags re The Parade	17.10
Kent County Council - Bioblitz Wimpey Field August	420.00
Bradley Hawkins - Wimpey Field Mowing/Strimming August	160.00
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance August	391.62
Kenward Trust - Donation	100.00
Bank Charges August	6.50
Community Payback Refreshments - The Parade	41.16
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MBC Council Tax - Room 1 September	61.00
MBC Council Tax - Room 2-3 September	71.00
E-on - Street Light Energy August	54.77
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection August	78.72
Kent County Council - Youth Club Lease Purchase Sept-Dec	212.50
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	6,006.72
TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE	10.49

2. Summation of Accounts – for noting. NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.
3. Parish Council Insurance – Quotations for renewal of policy (for approval). RESOLVED: AGREE to enter into a three-year contract at £3,135.00 per annum with Axa Insurance via Came & Company.
4. Wimpey Field Maintenance – Proposal to increase the contractor's hours (for approval). RESOLVED: engage Brad Hawkins for an additional sixteen hours until the end of 2019 at a cost of £320.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Greener Staplehurst – reports for consideration and decision:
 - 1.1. Parish Council for a Greener Staplehurst – Proposal by Councillors Thomas and George. Councillors Thomas and George introduced their report on proposals to engage the Parish Council and community in initiatives to create a greener Staplehurst (published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/reports-for-noting/>). Councillor Thomas said that she and Councillor George had engaged with MBC about biodiversity strategy. She said that the proposals represented the start of a long-term project. Councillor George commented that he had contacted the Woodland Trust about sourcing trees. Councillors expressed support for the proposals. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Perry, it was RESOLVED that Councillors Thomas and George should lead a focus group to take the initiative forward.
 - 1.2. Planting Wild Flowers in Staplehurst – Residents’ Proposal for Consideration by the Parish Council. Councillors expressed support for planting of wild flowers at suitable locations, with engagement from landowners and the relevant authorities. It was AGREED that the Greener Staplehurst Focus Group should liaise with the residents and give consideration to suitable locations. It was also AGREED that the Group should make contact with the Staplehurst Horticultural Society.
2. Kent Highways Parish Seminar – Invitation to send two delegates to seminar on 28/11/19 (for decision – to be notified by 11/10/19). RESOLVED: Councillors George and Perry to attend.
3. Parish Council Surgery – Report on surgery held 21/09/19. Councillor Sharp said that a visitor had asked about the increasing population in Staplehurst and about Sainsbury’s plans for its sites in the village.
4. Staplehurst Free Church – Letter of thanks (for noting). Councillors NOTED the letter of thanks for a donation made by the Parish Council in recognition of the support the Free Church gave as a venue for the Staplehurst Emergency Help Team.
5. Telephone Box at Church Green – Update. Councillors NOTED the Clerk’s report about BT’s consultation on proposed decommissioning of the telephone box. RESOLVED: express no objection to the decommissioning of the telephone but ask BT whether it would allow the Parish Council to take on the box for community use.
6. World War One Commemorative Bench – Update. Chairman Riordan reported that the Community Events Group did not feel that the library location suggested by the Parish Council (Min1777) was appropriate. Councillors NOTED that All Saints PCC had offered to assist the Group with the submission of a faculty request that would be required to locate the bench in the churchyard, but the Group had not pursued this. Chairman Riordan volunteered to talk to Group representatives about other options.

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

1. Clerk’s Report – The Clerk reported: new councillor e-mail accounts were live; he had attended the KALC Parish Clerks’ conference which had provided some useful information including advice on website accessibility; the Parish Office was busy preparing for the Village Clean-Up and had obtained additional clean-up equipment for regular use from MBC; the Office was also working on a review of the Parish Council’s financial regulations, preparation of a draft budget for 2020-21 and a review of playground and skatepark equipment following the annual inspection; the Office had produced the Autumn Village Update for which Councillors expressed thanks. The Clerk said that he was arranging a meeting with South East Water about works that the company planned to undertake on Marden Road. He said he was also seeking a meeting with Southern Water about drainage on Hen & Duckhurst Farm. He reported that Helen Grant MP had forwarded a message from Sainsbury’s which indicated that Staplehurst was one of a number of projects that

the company was reviewing but that it was unlikely to commence building for some considerable time. *Councillor Forward joined the meeting during this item.*

2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - 2.1. 125 Years Exhibition – Reports of meetings 27/08/19 and 09/09/19 (for noting). The reports were NOTED by Councillors. Councillor Sharp asked councillors to support the event by signing up to the rota for the Parish Council’s stand. She advised that to date 21 village organisations had asked to participate. Chairman Riordan said that the Communications Group would prepare a slide presentation. He suggested that neighbouring parish councils be invited to attend.
 - 2.2. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Minutes of meeting 28/08/19 (for noting) and recommendation to seek meetings about foul water and surface water drainage at Hen & Duckhurst Farm (minutes section 8) (for decision) <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/neighbourhood-plan-review-group/>. Councillors NOTED the report and that the Clerk was already seeking a meeting.
 - 2.3. Play Scheme 2019 – Report on attendance and financial outcome (for noting) and proposed payment for scheme manager (for approval). It was NOTED that attendance figures were higher than in 2018 and that consequently the scheme’s operating deficit was lower. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Spearink, it was RESOLVED to fund Play Place’s net expenditure of £739.60. Councillor Buller reported that the school had yet to issue an invoice for hire of the facility; it was expected that there would be an additional cleaning bill which she intended discuss with Play Place.
 - 2.4. Road Safety Group – Report of meeting 29/08/19 (for noting) <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/road-safety-task-and-finish-group/>. Councillors NOTED the report and commended the good work of the Speedwatch team. In response to a question from Councillor Perry, Councillor Sharp explained that the reason the Group had written to Hush Heath Winery was to engage with the company to identify ways of co-operating to achieve improvements on the roads surrounding the estate.
 - 2.5. VE Day 75th Anniversary – Report and proposal for budget allocation (Cllr Spearink). Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor George, it was RESOLVED to allocate a budget of up to £1,000 for expenditure related to VE Day 75th anniversary activities to be organised by the Parish Council. Councillors NOTED that although VE Day 75 was in the next financial year, most expenditure would be likely to be incurred in 2019-20.

With the meeting approaching two hours in duration, members RESOLVED to suspend standing order 3.24 to permit discussion of the remaining agenda items.

3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
 - a. Local Plan Review – Councillor Buller reminded Councillors to send her their comments on the review questions by 24/09/19.
 - b. Planning Committee Report– Chairman Riordan reported that on 26/09/19 MBC Planning Committee would discuss planning application 19/501105 Whiteacres Marden Road. He said that, having called in the application, the Parish Council should send a representative to speak. RESOLVED: Chairman Riordan to attend; Councillor Perry to speak to the Chair of MBC Planning Committee to confirm whether the agenda item was likely to be deferred or, if retained, to seek a position on the later part of the agenda.

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

1. Borough Councillor’s Report – Councillor Perry commented that MBC would soon be releasing the results of its call for sites to inform its review of the Local Plan. He said that

the Loose Neighbourhood Plan was being proposed for approval by the Council and that its policies were very detailed.

2. Police Report – PCSO Gardner’s report for August. Councillors NOTED that the report listed six reportable crimes committed in Staplehurst.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)

1. Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – Minutes of meeting 11/09/19 <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/emergency-help-team/>. NOTED by Councillors.

URGENT MATTERS (at Chairman’s discretion, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting)

None.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Before the meeting two residents spoke about green initiatives. Mr Buller of the Road Safety Group said that 59 responses had been received to a letter seeking views about introducing a 20mph limit on roads around the school, of which 56 were in favour. After the meeting Mr Buller commented that the Group was looking into pedestrian safety.

Proceedings finished at 10.25pm.