

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Monday 13th January 2020 at 7.57p.m.

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

Parish Clerk: Mr MJ Westwood

APOLOGIES: Councillor Lain-Rose was absent.

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 Bowden, seconded by Councillor Sharp, minute pages 1805-1807 of 16th December 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. Parish Council Budget & Precept Requirement 2020-2021 – Proposal by Finance & Strategy Group (for approval). *Councillor Perry arrived during this item.* Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor George, it was RESOLVED that a precept of £183,000 be set to match the net expenditure requirement of identical amount, equating to a Council Tax charge of £73.79 per annum or £1.42 per week per Band D property (an increase of 23p per week per Band D property). Proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Forward, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the draft budget V5 projecting the identified expenditure.
2. Finance & Strategy Group – Report of meeting 08/01/20 – NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/finance--strategic-planning-group/>. Recommendations: (i) Surrenden Playing Field – play area repairs and hedge cutting: proposed by Councillor Forward, seconded by Councillor Castro, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £149 to Sovereign Play and £285 to HAGS SMP for work relating to repairs of Surrenden play area equipment, with discretion extended to the Chairman and Clerk if a need for reasonable additional expenditure were identified during the HAGS site visit; proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Perry, it was RESOLVED to renew the contract with Forestry First for hedge cutting at Surrenden Field in 2020-21 (£1,460); (ii) renewal of contract for maintenance of parish planters: Councillors NOTED that one bid had been submitted in response to the Parish Council's invitation to tender; proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Sharp, it was RESOLVED to accept the bid from existing provider Choice Support (£4,107.90 per annum for a four-year contract); (iii) Repainting of Jubilee Field Skatepark in 2020-21: after reviewing the quotes received, proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Spearink, it was RESOLVED to accept the bid from Yew Tree Construction (£4,950.75); (iv) proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Sharp, the following contract and subscription renewals for Q1 2020 were APPROVED: to continue to support Staplehurst Youth Worker Project £4,000.00 p.a. (subject to review of the charity's financial accounts); to continue using Paxman Printing for the Village Update and Annual Report £1,310.00; to renew the annual contracts for playground inspection with Playsafety £167.00; Surrenden CCTV - Cam-tech Services £140.00; Jubilee Field pump - Maclin Pumps £392.00; Bell Lane Toilets

water with Business Stream £366.18; Bell Lane Toilets - Eco-san Ltd £80.00; Jubilee Field maintenance – Jubilee Field Management Committee £2,500.00; Surrenden Pavilion waste water with Business Stream £88.08; Parish Office and Parish Council bins waste collection - Countrystyle Group £682.24; Christmas Motifs unmetered electricity supply with E-on £30.00; Internal Audit - Iden Business Services £400.00; Office computer system support - Arron Services £450.00; pay annual subscriptions to ACRK £100.00, KALC £1,515.00 and County Playing Fields Association £20.00. *During discussion of this item, Chairman Riordan briefly closed the meeting to allow a contribution from a trustee of Staplehurst Youth Group.* Councillor Rawlinson said that she would like to become more involved in the activity of Staplehurst Youth Group.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Maidstone Borough Local Plan – Comments on sites in Staplehurst submitted in response to MBC's Call for Sites <https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/planning-and-building/primary-areas/local-plan-review/call-for-sites> (for decision as to response to be sent to MBC). *During the discussion of this item Chairman Riordan closed the meeting to allow a contribution from Borough Councillor Brice.* Councillors discussed comments made by Councillors Buller and Forward and by the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group. Councillor Buller said that the position set out in the comments was to oppose all the submitted sites. Councillors Buller and Thomas agreed to review the comments to add policy references to them before circulation to parish councillors and submission to MBC. The Neighbourhood Plan Review Group will similarly review its comments. Councillor Perry said that he and Borough Councillor Brice had sent their comments to MBC and that he was pressing for many sites to be eliminated from consideration at an early stage.
2. Marden Road Flooding – Correspondence from Southern Water and Maidstone Borough Council regarding flooding and development on Marden Road (for noting). The correspondence was discussed during the item relating to the Call for Sites. Chairman Riordan commented that the Parish Council would continue to press the authorities to take responsibility for the problems.
3. Parish Council Surgery – appointment of representative to attend surgery on 25/01/20. Councillor Castro volunteered to attend the surgery.
4. Planning Committee Meeting Postcards – Discussion of delivery arrangements (for decision). It was NOTED that the Parish Council delivered notifications of its planning committee meetings to properties near sites for which planning applications were to be discussed. It was also NOTED that the Parish Council was under no obligation to issue such notifications. Councillors Buller, George, Perry, Rawlinson, Riordan, Thomas and Walsh volunteered to help deliver the notifications.

As the meeting had reached two hours in duration, Councillors RESOLVED to suspend standing order 3.24 and extend the meeting for up to fifteen minutes. *Councillors Rawlinson and Walsh left the meeting.*

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (1) (from Committee/Groups/Office on specific issues or as regular update)

1. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - 1.1. Community Payback – (i) Schedule of work activity (for noting); (ii) Renewal of policy <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/> (for decision). ITEM DEFERRED.
 - 1.2. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – (i) Report of meeting 04/12/19 – noted by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/neighbourhood-plan-review-group/>; (ii) Consideration of prices for updating the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan (Mins 1803 & 1807 refer - for decision). Councillors NOTED that Fera Urbanism had not yet quoted a price for updating the Neighbourhood Plan. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Bowden,

it was RESOLVED to purchase a licence for InDesign software to facilitate the update (£25.28 per month, minimum one year £303.36).

2. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
No items.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Report – Councillor Perry reported: MBC proposed to increase Council Tax by 2%; he planned to attend a public meeting at Lenham about local proposals in the Call for Sites. Councillors AGREED that at their next meeting they would consider arrangements for a public meeting in Staplehurst.
2. Police Report – PCSO Gardner's report for December. Councillors NOTED that the report listed five reportable crimes in Staplehurst.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (2)

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported: he had met a representative of Heart of Kent Hospice to discuss the launch of its Compassionate Neighbours scheme; the next Village Clean-Up was being planned for Saturday 28th March; BT had offered the Parish Council the opportunity to adopt the telephone box at Church Green.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)

No items.

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, a resident commented on the condition of Bell Lane car park where there was a large pothole. It was noted that the car park was the responsibility of Maidstone Borough Council. County Councillor Hotson said that he could possibly assist with funding for lighting in Chapel Lane and drainage work at Jubilee Field. After the meeting, subjects raised were fly-tipping, MBC's Call for sites, the Arriva bus service and success for a local dance school student in a national competition.

Proceedings finished at 10.11pm.