

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Virtual Meeting via Zoom video-conference  
Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 7.00p.m.

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

Parish Clerk Miss Nicola Ideson

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Thomas sent her apologies; these were accepted. Councillor Lain-Rose was absent. Councillor Forward and Councillor Perry sent their apologies for not being present at the beginning of the meeting, as they were attending other meetings on the behalf of the Parish Council.

**CO-OPTION TO FILL COUNCILLOR VACANCY** - followed by the signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Councillors considered the personal statement provided by Mr Simon McNeill as candidate for co-option. It was RESOLVED to co-opt the candidate to the Parish Council. Councillor McNeill signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took his place at the Council meeting.

**COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the Agenda:

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillor Riordan declared an interest in the Accounts for Payment and said he would abstain from discussion and voting. Councillor Riordan declared an interest in the donation to Youth football team and requested dispensation

Requests for Dispensation – Dispensation was granted to Councillor Riordan to participate in discussion and voting regarding the donation to the Youth Football Team in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 Section 33(2)(c)

**APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES:** Proposed by Councillor George seconded by Councillor Castro minute pages 1835 - 1838 of the Full Council meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 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/>.

### **FINANCE REPORTS**

1. Accounts for payment – for approval. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Miller the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Councillor Riordan abstained. Expenditure for the period 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 to 23<sup>rd</sup> June totalled £17,349.11; income for the period was £577.44.

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| <b><u>Approved Payments 3rd June - 23rd June 2020</u></b>          | <b>Amount</b>    |
|--|------------------|
| Stationery Costs - Staff Reimbursement                             | 37.97            |
| SLCC - Annual Subscriptions  | 444.00           |
| Polybags - Black Sacks   | 44.45            |
| Staplehurst Village Centre - Covid-19 EHT Third Party Rent         | 250.00           |
| Covid-19 EHT Third Party Funds - Cllr Reimbursement                | 902.88           |
| Choice Support - Village Planter Maintenance June                  | 391.62           |
| Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance - Donation                        | 250.00           |
| Community Centre Debt Advice Staplehurst - Donation                | 200.00           |
| Maidstone Citizens Advice Bureau - Donation                        | 300.00           |
| Kenward Trust - Donation   | 100.00           |
| Involve Kent Ltd - Donation  | 75.00            |
| Maidstone & Weald Samaritans - Donation                            | 100.00           |
| All Saints Staplehurst PCC - Donation re Parish Magazine           | 75.00            |
| HMRC - Tax & NI May  | 1,883.38         |
| Bradley Hawkins - Mowing/Strimming Wimpey Field                    | 125.00           |
| KCC re Medway Valley Countryside Partnership - Donation            | 50.00            |
| GeoXphere Ltd - Parish Online Mapping Tool Annual Subscription     | 108.00           |
| Stationery Costs - Staff Reimbursement                             | 16.99            |
| Field Water Installations Ltd - Jubilee Field Drainage Project     | 3,984.00         |
| S Gullett - Greener Staplehurst Group Sundries Reimbursement       | 11.76            |
| ALCC - Annual Subscription   | 40.00            |
| KCS - Photocopier Rental Apr-Jun                                   | 163.00           |
| Crestala Fencing Ltd - Timber Screws re Wooden Planters Station Rd | 22.73            |
| KCS - Stationery   | 51.12            |
| Payroll & Pension Costs - June                                     | 7,382.68         |
| E-on - Street Light Energy May                                     | 54.77            |
| Kent County Council - Youth Club Lease Purchase Jun-Sept           | 212.50           |
| Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection May                      | 65.76            |
| Lloyds Bank - Service Charge June                                  | 6.50             |
| <b>TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE</b>                           | <b>17,349.11</b> |

**TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE**

0.00

2. Summation of Accounts – NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>
3. Bank Account Signatory – Proposed by Councillor Buller, Seconded by Councillor Bowden it was APPROVED to add Councillor Thomas to the list of bank account signatories.
4. Donation to Youth Football Team – Proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Sharp it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the reallocation of the donation originally sourced for the Staplehurst Community Hub to the Staplehurst Youth Football Team to aid them with expenses incurred to enable their safe return to practice in accordance with Covid-19 Guidance. Staplehurst Community Hub confirmed that funds were no longer needed.

**CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:**

1. Formal Adoption of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan – Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Sharp, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the updated Neighbourhood

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Plan subject to the final drafting changes confirmed by the Parish Council. It was further RESOLVED that, following completion of the final changes the final version should be sent to MBC.

2. TWBC Local Plan – Councillors NOTED the revised timetable of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan.
3. KCC Amendment no.45 Order – Councillors NOTED the speed limit order reducing the speed limit order from 40mph to 30mph along the Marden Road. The Parish Council will send comments to KCC supporting the speed limit reduction and enquiring about the repositioning of the village gateways, resurfacing of the Marden Road and the need for the increased enforcement of speeding violations.
4. MBC Proposed Traffic Regulation Order – Councillors NOTED the introduction of 'no waiting' restrictions along the entrance to Chapel Lane. The Parish Council will send comments to MBC supporting the introduction of the 'no waiting' restrictions and the repair of the double yellow lines. Staplehurst Parish Council will also send comments requesting the double yellow lines be extended to further along Chapel Lane.
5. Land at Chestnut Avenue – Proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Bowden, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the installation of a telecommunications street cabinet to access a high-speed internet connection on the land between Chestnut Avenue and the High Street, by CallFlow.
6. Footpath Names – Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Spearink it was RESOLVED to APPROVE that Councillors were agreeable to the change of both proposed footpath name endings from 'Path' and 'Weg' (Min1837) to 'Walk' after a request from MBC.
7. Maidstone Borough Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies – First Review – Invitation from consultants working for MBC to respond to questions to facilitate a review of the strategies – Councillors COMMENTED on the questions asked by the consultants and these were passed on to the consultants.
8. Antisocial Behaviour PSPO – Councillors NOTED the survey from MBC relating to antisocial behaviour in the town centre and decided to make comments as individuals.
9. Sainsburys reply to Charles Bushe – Councillors NOTED the letter received from Charles Bushe. The Parish Council will reply with their comments including the comments from Mr Malcolm Buller. Councillors commented that they appreciated Sainsburys taking the time to be open and to and listen to their comments.

Councillor Forward joined the meeting at this time.

10. Donations – Councillors NOTED the thank you letters received from the charities that the Parish Council made donations to.
11. Installation of CCTV Cameras – Proposed by Councillor Bowden, seconded by Councillor George, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the installation of two CCTV cameras onto the Jubilee Field pavilion building, by Staplehurst Monarchs United Football Club. Councillors commented that confirmation be obtained that the equipment will be insured by Staplehurst Monarchs United Football Club and any subsequent damage to the pavilion if the CCTV cameras were attacked. Confirmation will also be sought clarifying the official Data Controller.
12. Reopening of the Jubilee Skate Park and Surrenden Playing Field Play Area – Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Spearink, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the opening of the Skate Park on 7<sup>th</sup> July after adequate safety signage had been installed and when a caretaker would be available. Surrenden Field play area will remain CLOSED. Councillors commented that smaller children could lack the understanding of social distancing, and possibly be unable to understand written signage. The Parish Council felt that they were unable to police the area thoroughly and regularly enough to keep to Government Guidelines. A full RoSPA (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) inspection needs to be carried out on the play area before it can be allowed to reopen it, in

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accordance with Government Guidelines. The Clerk has contacted the inspectors requesting a date of when they will be available to conduct the investigation.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported that the office staff had talked about a possible return to the office. It was felt that the office layout was too small for four members of staff to safely keep to social distancing regulations. The lack of water pressure into the building is insufficient to provide adequate hand washing facilities. It was decided to continue working as we are for the meantime, splitting our time working both from home and from the office.
  
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities –
  - 2.1 Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – update report of Covid-19. The SEHT reported that they were now scaling back their service as demand had declined. It was stated however that provisions were now being put in place, through separate organisations, to permanently aid the highly vulnerable. It was discovered via feedback from SEHT volunteers that some residents of the village were suffering from serious social issues. These highly vulnerable residents have only just been uncovered by the volunteers of the SEHT. The SEHT commented that no resident needing help will be left without any. Councillor Castro thanked his volunteers for the tremendous effort they had put in particularly now most had returned to work, but had continued to support those residents of the village that require it. Councillor Riordan thanked Councillor Castro and the SEHT for their immense performance, working tirelessly for the last four months without one day off.
  
  - As the meeting had reached two hours in duration, Proposed by Councillor Forward, seconded by Councillor Buller, it was RESOLVED to suspend standing order 3.24 and extend the meeting for up to thirty minutes.
  
  - 2.2 Road Safety Group – Councillors NOTED the response from KCC highways regarding concerns for Staplehurst, the Sainsburys roundabout and connected highways issues. Councillors and Mr. Malcolm Buller will consider how to respond to the letter.
  - 2.3 Employment Group – Proposed by Councillor Forward, seconded by Councillor Sharp it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the updated risk assessments. It was also AGREED by Councillors that the Parish Office can make arrangements for a temporary, part-time Caretaker to start work.
  - 2.4 Communications Group – Proposed by Councillor Rawlinson, seconded by Councillor Bowden it was RATIFIED that the current Terms of Reference were satisfactory. They were published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>
  - 2.5 Employment Group - Proposed by Councillor Forward, seconded by Councillor Sharp it was RATIFIED that the current Terms of Reference were satisfactory. They were published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>
  
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
  - 3.1 Annual Reports – It was NOTED that approximately 80% of the copies of the Parish Council's Annual Report had been delivered to addresses in the parish. Volunteers to help distribute the remaining copies would be welcome.

Councillor Perry joined the meeting at this time.

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

1. Borough Councillors Report – Councillor Perry commented on a particularly challenging MBC Planning Committee meeting, but it did however have some successful results for Staplehurst, including a Hedge Retention Order for the hedgerow along the Marden Road next to the new roundabout. The next MBC Full Council meeting will be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**SPECIAL MOTION & REPORT**

1. To move that the public be excluded from item 10.2 due to its confidential nature.
2. Confidential recommendation from Employment Group. Council agreed to adjusting the Clerk’s hours on a temporary basis. The Chairman will write a letter for the Clerk to add to her contract.

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**PUBLIC FORUM:**

Two members of the public attended.

Proceedings finished at 9.30pm

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