

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Committee, Group or Sub Group	
FINANCE GROUP	
Meeting Date & Venue	
2.00 p.m. Tuesday 10 th February 2015, Parish Office, Staplehurst Village Centre	
Report Author	
Sue Bassett – Responsible Finance Officer	
Report	
<p>Present: Councillors Rory Silkin (RS) – Chairman, John Perry (JP), Paul Kelly (PK), Simon Green (SG), Paul Butcher (PB), Sam Lain-Rose (SLR); Sue Bassett - RFO (SB)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apologies: Councillors Tom Burnham (TB) and John Reardon (JR). 2. Minutes of last meeting (06/01/2015) had been circulated and were agreed as a true record. 3. Review of Council Suppliers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. <u>Parish Office Lease from Village Centre</u> – No action yet taken by PK/Village Centre. Draft paperwork awaited. 3.2. <u>Bell Lane Toilets Lease renewal</u> – Terms of the draft Lease were noted (little change from existing). Whilst Councillors requested that reference to future grants and indexation to RPI be included in the draft Lease, they recommended acceptance of a side letter provided it be agreed with MBC at the same time as the signing of the Lease. In addition the issue of MBC contributing towards electricity for the car park lighting remained outstanding. SB to progress both issues with MBC. 3.3. <u>Bell Lane Toilets Cleansing Contract</u> – PK withdrew from the meeting whilst this subject was discussed. Councillors considered the report by SB dated 10/02/15 with enclosures. After discussion <u>Finance Group Recommendation for Full Council agreement: That Paxman Services (UK) Ltd continue the cleaning and opening of Bell Lane Toilets from 1st May 2015 for one year with an option to extend if performance is good.</u> In addition, a quote for Paxman Services (UK) Ltd to carry out a deep clean would be sought. 4. Chapel Lane Street Lights – The Assistant Clerk had confirmed that the lighting above the Village Sign had been removed, Chapel Lane lights to remain until the lights failed, at which point they would be decommissioned (KHS and residents notified), Headcorn Road and Crowther Close lights would be upgraded before the end of March 2015, Nicholson Walk lights were believed to have been converted to part night lighting but not yet confirmed. Councillors requested the latter be checked and LED's considered. SB to check with maintenance contractor. JP agreed to ask MBC if street lighting costs could be included under the Parish Services scheme. 5. Pensions Policy –Councillors noted the Clerk's telephone note dated 22/01/15 on the subject of the Local Government Pension Scheme and potential future exit payment. SB's report of 10/02/15 incorporated the Clerk's report dated 30/12/14 gave full details of Auto-Enrolment Pensions. These were discussed at length then <u>Finance Group Recommendation for Full Council agreement: (1) Auto-enrolment date as soon as possible (agreed previously). (2) Pension provider to be NEST. (3) Qualifying Earnings calculation to be based on whole salary. (4) Full Council to decide upon the % employer contribution up to a maximum of 6% (but not less than Government minimum). (5) Contributions to be made by Direct Debit.</u> 	

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6. **Youth Leader Project** – Noted that PB had not progressed the updating of trustees and signatories to the Youth Club Charity account. RS was concerned that this should be regularised by proper resolution of the trustees. Under basic Land Law the Youth Club Building belonged to the land owners (SPC under Lease/Purchase from KCC) and it would save the Youth Club paperwork if SPC formally took it over. It was recommended that a form of agreement (Licence to use) be reached between SPC and Youth Club Trustees. SB was requested to obtain insurance quote for the building and research maintenance responsibility.
7. **Village Centre re-building strategy** – PK advised that only one volunteer (Andrew Watson) had come forward to help with the working group.
8. **Donations 2015** – After a short discussion **Finance Group Recommendation for Full Council agreement: To add a subscription to Kent County Playing Fields Association £20 p.a. to those agreed previously for 2015-2016.**
9. **Parish Services Grant expenditure** – SB had circulated a report that confirmed Parish Services expenditure against the 2014-2015 grant would almost break-even.
10. **VEGroup future plans** – PK reported that KHS had refused permission for a project of (saddle-shaped) oblong planters on the High Street metal fencing.
11. **Parish Services Agreement 2015-2016** – Councillors noted the new Agreement for a grant of £7,060 and this was signed by RS. JP's meeting with MBC about rationale for not allowing other areas of maintenance expenditure was awaited (street lights, footpaths, Play Areas and open churchyards).
12. **Surrenden Playing Field** – JP reported that MBC had agreed to grant a 125 year Lease. Councillors noted the four areas of priority expenditure drawn up by the SPF group (drainage, footpaths, fencing & flower beds). There was no support for the fencing or flower beds proposals and no decision reached about footpaths. **Finance Group Recommendation for Full Council agreement: that drainage works should proceed.**
13. **Date of next Meeting** – To be agreed.
14. **Staff Appraisals and Salaries** – SB left the meeting at this point as the Finance Group went into confidential session.

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To be agreed	