

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
 South Hall, Village Centre  
 Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 at 7.30p.m.

**PRESENT:**

Councillors Buller, Bowden, Castro, Clifton, Lain-Rose, McLaughlin, McLean, McPhee, Perry, Smith, Spearink and Riordan who was in the Chair and Parish Clerk, Miss A Smith.

**1. APOLOGIES:**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Sharp for personal commitments and Councillor Hotson for medical reasons.

**2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the agenda:**

- 2.1. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests – None declared.
- 2.2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda. Councillors Perry, Smith and Riordan, declared an interest in item 5.3 regarding the Jubilee Field, in that Councillor Perry is a trustee on the lease of the land, Councillors Smith and Riordan are members of the Jubilee Field Management Committee.
- 2.3. Requests for Dispensation. Councillors Perry and Smith requested and were granted a dispensation to participate in discussion and voting on item 5.2 in accordance with Section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011. Councillor Riordan had a dispensation for his term in office regarding Jubilee Field already approved.

**3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES**

- 3.1. Pages 1970 – 1972 of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021 available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes to be signed by Councillor Riordan.

**4. SPECIAL MOTION**

The Clerk had received requests from the required number of Councillors in line with standing order 7.1 and the following motion was therefore brought forward. "To rescind the adoption of the emergency procedure and scheme of delegation as amended at the meeting of the 10th January with immediate effect and to refer the creation of emergency procedures to the Finance and Strategy Group; additionally, to suspend item 7.2 of standing orders to allow any proposal by the Finance and Strategy Group be brought back to Council as soon as they are available." Whilst all Councillors recognised the need for emergency procedures to be put in place some Councillors raised concerns about the adopted scheme of delegation as it was currently written. Other procedural concerns were raised about the appropriateness of revisiting a previously democratically agreed motion, particularly when standing order 7.1 only required 5 Councillors and not a majority to bring a motion back to Council. The Clerk advised this point could be discussed by the Finance and Strategy Group and a recommendation brought to Council. Councillors agreed this would be sensible. An amended motion "to keep the emergency procedure and scheme of delegation as amended at the meeting of the 10th January with immediate effect and to refer the creation of emergency procedures to the Finance and Strategy Group; additionally, to suspend item 7.2 of standing orders to allow any proposal by the Finance and Strategy Group be brought back to Council as soon as they are available" was proposed but not seconded so did not proceed. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the original motion as detailed above and on the agenda. Councillor Castro requested a named vote, voting was as follows: -

For the motion: - Cllrs, Castro, McLaughlin, Lain-Rose, Riordan, Smith, Spearink, McLean, Perry, Clifton and McPhee

Against: - none Abstentions:- Cllrs Buller and Bowden

Councillor Buller requested that the following comments be minuted. Councillor Buller stated that she had concerns about being intimidated and felt distraught by what had happened from the last meeting until this meeting. She felt unable to speak on this motion even though she had a lot to say at the previous meeting as she felt she had lost the right to her freedom of speech.

## **5. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS**

### **5.1. Accounts for Payment – for approval.**

It was RESOLVED that the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022 totalled £14,912.65; income for the period was £17,072.83.

<b><u>Approved Payments 5th January - 25th January 2022</u></b>	<b>Amount</b>
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance December	410.80
Medway Galvanising Co. - Surrenden Play Area Gate Repair	576.00
National Allotment Society - Annual Subscription	66.00
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription January	23.99
Arron Services Ltd - Annual Service Contract	714.00
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance January	410.80
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Open/Clean December	736.84
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries December	22.58
Staplehurst Community Centre - Hall Hire Sept, Oct, Dec	135.00
Staplehurst Community Centre - Office Rent January	350.00
HMRC - Tax & NI December	1,644.51
KALC - Dynamic Councillor Training BM	60.00
Staplehurst Community Centre - Hall Hire January	108.00
J Grimwood - Community Payback Refreshments Nov	32.00
Staff WFH Allowance December	26.00
Payroll & Pension Costs January	6,326.82
Bouygues Ltd - Xmas Motif Installation	2,045.87
Homeleigh Timber - Top Soil & Bark GSG (WBF)	453.50
Adobe - Subscription December	15.17
Morrisons - Microwave, Handwash, Cleaner, Milk Powder	49.60
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 January	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 January	72.00
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilet Water December	39.73
Opus Energy - Bell Lane Toilet Electricity December	24.06
Opus Energy - Parish Office Electricity December	91.43
Opus Energy - Surrenden Pavilion Electricity December	15.93
npower - Street Light Energy December	96.85
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection December	81.00
Lloyds Bank Charges - January	7.85
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange Services January	214.32
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>14,912.65</b>

**TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE**

**0.00**

- 5.2. Summation of Accounts – for noting  
NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.
- 5.3. Approval to instruct solicitors on various items relating to Jubilee Field  
Following a short discussion Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE initial expenditure of up to £10,000 + VAT to instruct Warners solicitors to provide advice in the following areas:- to provide pre application advice on the proposals to enter into a funding application with the Football Foundation for the provision of a 3G pitch at Jubilee Field and if the application proceeds to act on behalf of the Council through the process of the application; to provide advice on the best governance structure for Jubilee Field and once a structure is approved to act on behalf of the Council for any subsequent legal actions; to provide legal advice and support to enable the Council to appoint a new set of Trustees and retire any that are no longer active if needed. Additionally, if required to provide financial support to the JMFC to enable them to become a separate legal entity in their own right.
- 5.4. Repairs at Surrenden Playing Field Children’s Play Park  
It was RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £2,666.00 + VAT to purchase a replacement climbing wall and angled climbing wall in the children’s play park from HAG/SMP, and to apply for s106 money from MBC. During the discussion the provision of funding for allotments was raised. The Clerk advised Council that there was a specific reserve of £10,000 for the purchase of land for allotments, but as yet no suitable land had been identified.

## **6. CORRESPONDENCE AND PARISH ISSUES**

- 6.1. Christmas Motifs  
After discussion Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE that a display of 24 motifs should be created for the year 2022, and requested the Deputy Clerk seek quotations to facilitate the replacement or repair of the 6 that are currently inoperable.
- 6.2. Results of the Road Traffic Surveys  
Councillors were pleased to receive the analysis of the road traffic surveys provided by Resident Buller and expressed their thanks to him for the work undertaken. Councillor Riordan also wished to extend his thanks to Councillor Lottie Parfit-Reid for the assistance in funding towards the costs. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the results as presented and the draft article for the Village Update and for them to be published on the Council’s website and the article in the Village Update.
- 6.3. Request for permission to use Surrenden Playing Field by SCEG  
Following a request from Staplehurst Community Events Group, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE permission to the group for the following events: - The Party in the Park 1pm – 9pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> June, to include the provision of up to 10 small fair ground rides for young children and the 10k Fun Run on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. Additionally, it was agreed that the Group could include a leaflet advertising the events in the Annual Report when it is distributed.
- 6.4. Housing Needs Survey  
Councillors agreed that the timing was not right for the Council to conduct a survey at this time.
- 6.5. Request to create a recycling point  
Councillor Buller updated Councillors that she was still awaiting an outcome from her enquiries with the Free Church to see if they would be willing to provide some facilities.
- 6.6. Message of thanks from the Merit Award Winners  
Councillors noted the messages of thanks.

## **7. PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS**

### **7.1. Clerks Report**

The Clerk advised Councillors that the date for the next Village Clean up had been set as Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> April. She also advised Councillors that the first session with the young people to seek their views on imagery for the painting of the skate park walls was on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February, with painting days provisionally scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> February, weather dependent. She invited as many Councillors as possible to attend at some point during the project and to encourage young people to get involved. The Clerk updated Councillors that the new CCTV cameras in Surrenden Park were hoping to be installed by the end of February. She also advised that she had made contact with Staplehurst School following the request from the previous meeting. It would seem that the school do not have a defibrillator and they are considering the proposal made by the Council. The Clerk advised Council that she would update them with progress at future meetings. The Clerk confirmed that she was on target to receive and take ownership of the Youth Club building on the 1<sup>st</sup> February and was looking to work with the Bridge Club and Mens Shed to get them back into the facility as soon as was practically possible. Finally, the Clerk raised a query from the Greener Staplehurst Group; previously Council had approved the expenditure of £350 + VAT to purchase wood to make planters for the gateways on the Headcorn Road (Min 1935). The GSG now wished to redirect this funding and use it towards planters at The Parade, and she was seeking general consensus from Councillors that they were comfortable for this redirection of funding. Councillors confirmed that they were happy for this to occur.

### **7.2. Written reports on Committee, Group and Project Activities – for decision or noting**

#### **7.2.1. Temporary Youth Club Working Group**

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the following Councillors and the Clerk to become members of the working group, Cllr, McPhee, Riordan, McLean, Castro, Bowden and Perry. It was also agreed that a resident who had been integral in bringing forward the issues of youth service provision be invited to join the group.

7.2.2. Communications Group – Councillors NOTED the report of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022, published at [Communications Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/communications-group) Councillor Castro commented that he was in the middle of collating the articles for the next edition of the Village Update. He also suggested the Council was looking for more volunteers to help distribute the Village Update. A few members of the public present volunteered to help.

#### **7.2.3. Greener Staplehurst Group**

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE partnering with All Saints Church to promote and deliver an Eco Day on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

### **7.3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors**

7.3.1. Chairman's report – Councillor Riordan updated Councillors on the successful Christmas Tree disposal event at the Parade, where £502.00 was raised in donations from shredding Christmas Trees for the Heart of Kent Hospice. It was agreed that the Clerk should write a letter of thanks to the owners of Kent and Sussex Tree Care who had kindly provide their services and machinery to undertake the shredding. The Chair updated Councillors that the Sainsbury's shuttle bus service was in the final stages of approval and he hoped to hear that it was up and running very soon. The Chair advised that he was still in discussion with MBC regarding repairs to the brickwork at the Parade, and advised Councillors that the matter was complicated by the difficulties over ownership and contacting the landlord. He congratulated all the merit award

winners and confirmed that they had all now received their award. The Chair advised Councillors that he and the Clerk had a positive meeting with a senior Inspector in Kent Police following up on matters raised at the Community meeting and updated on some successful outcomes achieved since this meeting. He advised Councillors that he was due to attend the Ward Cluster Meeting with the Police on the 12<sup>th</sup> April and asked Councillors to advise him of any issues in advance of this meeting. Councillor Riordan commented that he and Councillor Perry had undertaken a very successful Councillor Surgery the previous weekend and would be providing the Clerk with a written report. Finally, he commented that he was delighted to advise that a new youth boxing club was due to start soon in the West Hall of the Community Centre.

#### 7.4. Future Councillor Surgeries

Councillor Castro volunteered for Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April and Councillor McLaughlin volunteered for the 28<sup>th</sup> May.

## **8. REPORTS FROM OTHER COUNCILS, AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS – For noting**

### 8.1. Borough Councillors Report – Oral reports by Councillor Perry & Councillor Brice

Councillor Perry was pleased to confirm that the new constitution for MBC involving blended approach of a Cabinet and Committees was well underway and hoped it would come into effect after the May election. He confirmed that the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority had been achieved to move to a 4 yearly election cycle and updated Councillors on the Boundary Review. He was hopeful that the existing ward boundaries for Staplehurst would remain and with two Councillors. Councillor Perry confirmed that the Local Plan Review was on target for submission to the Inspector later this year. He stated that MBC was still working on its budget plans but hoped to have them completed shortly. He also advised Councillors of MBC's plan for 1000 affordable homes to be developed in the local area over the next few years.

Councillor Brice updated Councillors about her work to get double yellow lines painted in Market Street and ensure parking enforcement were taking an active approach to these new lines. She advised that she was also working on issues around Poyntell Road where vehicles were having to drive over grass land because of parking issues. She again confirmed that she continues to press for the installation of traffic lights at the Hawkenbury Bridge, and reminded all residents of the importance of reporting incidents, including near misses. Councillor Brice was also keen to press home the importance of the need for electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the village because of the large number of residents who would be unable to have charging points installed in their properties. Councillor Brice also commented that she wished to extend her thanks to several of the residents present for their work in moving forward the proposals for the 3G all weather pitch at Jubilee Field and urged the Council to continue to support the project.

*At this point proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Castro it was RESOLVED to APPROVE suspending standing order 3.24 to extend the meeting for 10 minutes to allow the completion of business.*

8.2. Councillor Parfitt-Reid had extended her apologies due to commitments at MBC.

8.3. Police Report – Councillors noted the December report

8.4. Maidstone Area Committee of KALC – Councillors noted the minutes of the meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November.

**9. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS**

None

**10. CO-OPTION TO FILL COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

Candidate Paul Skinner gave a short presentation to Councillors. Mr Skinner was proposed and seconded and it was RESOLVED to APPROVE his co-option. Councillor Skinner signed the declaration of office and was welcomed to take his seat at the Council.

**11. URGENT MATTERS**

None.

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Twenty-five residents attended the meeting. Residents spoke about the following issues; - the condition of the roads on some of the estates, in particular Jaggard Way and Bathurst Road/Surrenden Road/Thatcher Road. Residents also asked questions and spoke primarily in objection to the scheme of delegation. A resident advised Councillors of the appointment of a new practice manager at the Health Centre, that the computerised patient check-in and call systems were now up and running and that five clinics were held and over 1000 people had received their booster jabs.

Meeting closed at 9.40pm