

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Virtual Meeting via Zoom video-conference
Monday 19th October 2020 at 7.00p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Bowden, Buller, Castro, Forward, Gartan, George, Lain-Rose, McNeill, Miller, Perry, Sharp, Spearink, Thomas and Riordan who was in the Chair.
Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer: Mrs DA Jenkins

APOLOGIES: Councillor Rawlinson was absent.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillor Perry declared an interest in the item relating to MBC Licensing due to his membership of MBC Licensing Committee. Councillors Riordan and Sharp declared interests in the item relating to Staplehurst Community Centre in view of their positions as trustees and Councillor Riordan declared an interest in the Accounts for payment and said he would abstain from discussion and voting.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillor Perry requested and was granted a dispensation to vote on the item relating to licensing and Councillors Riordan and Sharp requested and were granted dispensations to participate and vote on items relating to Staplehurst Community Centre in accordance with Section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: Proposed by Councillor Thomas, seconded by Councillor Miller, minute pages 1860-1863 of 28th September 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/>. Councillors Buller and Lain-Rose abstained.

FINANCE REPORTS

1. Accounts for payment – for approval. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Thomas, the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Councillors Lain-Rose and Riordan abstained. Expenditure for the period 23rd September to 13th October totalled £6,789.51; income for the period was £1,000.39.

<u>Approved Payments 23rd September - 13th October 2020</u>	Amount
Paxman Printing - Village Update Autumn	298.00
Bradley Hawkins - Mowing/Strimming Wimpey Fields Jly/Aug	150.00
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	25.00
Choice Support - Village Planter Maintenance September	410.80
The Wealden Group - Clerk Vacancy Advert	273.84
PJ Riordan - Covid-19 EHT Reimbursement Third Party Funds	143.09
PL Spearink - Reimbursement Community Payback The Parade	21.56
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	88.92
JS Terry - Parish Office Hand Sanitiser	24.99
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Paint	115.20
Homeleigh Timber - Weed Killer Caretaker	4.64
Homeleigh Timber - The Parade Sundries GSG	38.48
Homeleigh Timber - Top Soil The Library GSG	123.58
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Staplehurst PCC - Churchyard Maintenance 2nd Payment	701.41
Staplehurst Youth Club - Youth Worker Payment 3/4	1000.00

Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Clean/Open Sept	695.49
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries Sept	38.77
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	59.80
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	24.90
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	71.25
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	8.80
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	6.98
PL Spearink - Reimbursement re Workshop Benches	12.99
Cllr D George - GSG Wildflower plants x150 plugs	94.50
Cllr D George - Strimmer line	10.00
Bumbles Plant Centre - Shrubs & compost	133.45
RBL Poppy Appeal - Donation re wreath	100.00
Displaypro Ltd - Sneeze Guards Parish office Covid-19	233.90
Subway - Community Payback Refreshments	23.52
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 October	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 October	72.00
Nest Pension - MW/DJ September	925.37
Nest Pension - NI/JT September	226.49
Business Stream - Surrenden Pavilion Water 2/2	33.43
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilet Water Sept	47.80
SSE - Parish Office Electricity May-Aug	75.22
E-on - Street Light Energy September	53.00
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection Sept	65.76
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange Service October	171.00
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	6,789.51
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. Signage for Ashdown's Walk and Douthreppont's Walk – Proposal for expenditure on signage for two footpaths named by the Parish Council (Min1837 and Min1841). Proposed by Councillor Spearink, seconded by Councillor Miller, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE expenditure of £300 towards the purchase of four footpath signs from MBC. Councillor Riordan reported that the balance of the total cost of £600 was being funded by way of a donation offered to the Parish Council. It was NOTED that the signs would be adopted by MBC following installation.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. Christmas 2020 at The Parade – Correspondence regarding proposed celebration and request for Parish Council's non-financial support (for decision). Councillor Riordan informed Councillors that Staplehurst Community Events Group had today contacted him to offer their support and to underwrite costs. It was proposed by Councillor George, seconded by Councillor Castro and RESOLVED that the Parish Council offer non-financial support for the celebrations. It was AGREED that, for this year, a cut Christmas tree would be preferable at The Parade.
2. Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Neighbourhood Development Plan Pre-Submission Consultation – Invitation from Cranbrook & Sissinghurst PC to comment (deadline 11/12/20). *Chairman Riordan temporarily closed the meeting to invite contributions from the Chairman of the NPRG who commended the document but was disappointed that Staplehurst was only mentioned once, in relation to the station.* It was RESOLVED that Councillors Buller, Riordan and Sharp would confer and submit a comment on behalf of the Parish Council.

3. High Street Petrol Station Site – Correspondence requesting that the Parish Council seek an interested buyer (for comment/decision). Concerns were raised that Councillors could be seen as being pre-determined if they sought an interested buyer for the site. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Buller and RESOLVED that the parish office respond to the resident accordingly.
4. Maidstone Borough Council Budget Survey – Invitation from MBC to comment on budget priorities for 2021-22 (deadline 05/11/20). Link to web page: <https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/council-and-democracy/additional-areas/have-your-say/tier-3-primary-areas/current-consultations>. It was AGREED to DEFER this item to Finance & Strategy Group meeting on 26th October 2020.
5. Maidstone Borough Council - Draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2021 -2026 – Request for comments (deadline 09/11/20). Link to web page: <https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/council-and-democracy/additional-areas/have-your-say/tier-3-primary-areas/current-consultations>. Chairman Riordan offered to submit comments on behalf of the Parish Council. Proposed by Councillor Bowden, seconded by Councillor George and RESOLVED to accept Chairman Riordan's offer.
6. Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review – Proposed steps to respond to the publication of the Local Plan Review evidence base – link to web page: <https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/local-plan-review>. [Full Council minute ref 1862-63 and Planning Committee minute ref 1509P refer]. Following much discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Castro and RESOLVED to delay printing the Village Update by one week. This would enable the submission of an up to date article on the preferred sites following the outcome of MBC Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee meeting on 30th October 2020. Councillor Perry endorsed the publication of Staplehurst green sites published on the Parish Council website. It was NOTED that Councillor Riordan would mention the Local Plan in his Chairman's video report.
7. Pavement Parking – Public Consultation by HM Government about current and possible future measures to address pavement parking - closing date 22/11/20 (for comment) <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/managing-pavement-parking/pavement-parking-options-for-change> It was AGREED that the Road Safety Group would respond to the consultation.
8. Remembrance Sunday – Options for the Remembrance Parade and Nomination of Parish Council representative to lay the commemorative wreath during the church service (for decision. Councillor Sharp updated Councillors on the current status of the parade. Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor George and RESOLVED to AGREE Plan B, the preferred option of the organisers in the context of Covid-19, with authority to amend to Plan C if the situation changes. It was proposed by Councillor Riordan, seconded by Councillor Forward and RESOLVED to nominate Councillor Sharp to lay the Parish Council's wreath at the church service on 8th November. Councillor Sharp abstained. Councillor Lain-Rose suggested the event be relayed via video on the Parish Council FB page. Councillor Sharp believed this would be acceptable if someone could be found to film the event. Councillor Forward offered her thanks to everybody involved in organising the parade.
9. Staplehurst Community Centre – Appointment of Parish Council representative on the Board of Trustees (for decision). Councillor Sharp stated that it was important to appoint a trustee who really wanted to get involved in the Community Centre. Councillor Bowden disclosed an interest in becoming a trustee. Councillor Buller asked Councillor Lain-Rose if he wished to continue in this position. Councillor Lain-Rose was unavailable for comment during this item. Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Thomas and RESOLVED to AGREE to appoint Councillor Bowden as a trustee. Councillor Buller requested that Councillor Lain-Rose is advised of this decision. Staplehurst Community Centre trustees agreed to inform Councillor Lain-Rose.
10. Station Road Roadworks – Notification from SGN of works commencing 26/10/20 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors. Councillor Buller requested that a letter is written to SGN

demanding that the bus stops remain whilst the works take place. The Deputy Clerk responded that the Acting Clerk had written to SGN asking for this clarification.

11. The Parade – Proposal for planting of shrubs between wooden beds at The Parade (item referred to this meeting following initial discussion at Full Council 28/09/20 Min1862). There was much discussion on the siting and height of the plants purchased by GSG who were congratulated for the work they had completed so far in enhancing many areas of the village. Proposed by Councillor Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor George and RESOLVED that the shrubs purchased, excepting the Magnolia tree, would be planted as specified. Councillor Bowden objected. It was AGREED that GSG would, going forward, maintain the shrubs to a maximum height of five feet. An alternative location would be found for the Magnolia Stellata.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Deputy Clerk reported on the office arrangements for the week.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting.
 - 2.1 Communications Group – Minutes of meeting 24/09/20 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors.
 - 2.1.1 Village Update – Recommendation to double the size of the Village Update and make use of higher quality paper and colour printing (for decision). Councillor Castro explained the Communications Group proposal and the costs involved to increase the size of the Update. Councillor Castro stated that the Group had no intention of taking away any business from the Parish Magazine.

The meeting having reached two hours in duration, Councillors voted to suspend Standing Order 3.24 to facilitate the completion of business. Councillor Lain-Rose objected.

There was much discussion about related costs and the proposal for local businesses to write articles about themselves in exchange for a donation towards the funding of the Update. Councillor Buller raised concerns that readers may view these articles as being endorsed by the Parish Council.

Councillor Lain-Rose left the meeting at this point.

Councillor Riordan proposed the Communications Group reassesses the business advertising articles and for the item to be DEFERED for discussion at a future meeting. Councillors AGREED.
 - 2.2 Future Meeting Dates for Parish Council and Planning Committee – Proposed dates for meetings in 2021 (for approval). Proposed by Councillor Forward, seconded by Councillor Riordan it was RESOLVED to AGREE Option D meeting dates. Councillor Spearink abstained. Councillor Perry requested the office to review the date of the Annual Parish Meeting in the event that Councillors are in the pre-election period.
 - 2.3 Greener Staplehurst Group – Minutes of meeting 21/09/20 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors.
 - 2.4 Jubilee Field Management Committee – Report of meeting 02/10/20 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
 - 3.1 Chairman's Report – Oral report by Councillor Riordan. Councillor Riordan reported that he wishes to write a letter to Helen Grant MP regarding the increase in housing and the lack of related infrastructure in Staplehurst. Councillor Riordan will ask NPRG to review the letter before it is sent.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Report – Oral report by Councillor Perry. Councillor Perry was not available at this point. Councillor Brice joined the meeting at this point. Councillor Riordan suggested Councillor Brice speak to Councillor Perry about the Local Plan discussion.

2. Kent Association of Local Councils – Minutes of Maidstone Area Committee meeting 29/06/20 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors.
3. Police Report – PCSO Gardner’s report for September 2020. NOTED by Councillors.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)

1. Staplehurst Community Centre – Minutes of meeting 06/10/20 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors.

URGENT MATTERS - at the discretion of the Chairman, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting. None.

SPECIAL MOTION & REPORT

1. To move that the public be excluded from item 10.2 due to its confidential nature. Proposed by Councillor Miller, seconded by Councillor Sharp, Councillors RESOLVED to discuss item 2 as a confidential item and the Deputy Clerk and members of the public left the meeting.
2. To receive a report from Employment Group and consider its recommendations relating to the appointment of a new Parish Clerk. Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the employment group recommendation in relation to the appointment of a new Parish clerk.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: Five members of the public attended. Before the meeting two members of the public spoke in relation to the Village Update. Kent County Councillor Hotson requested an item ‘County Councillor’s Report’ be added to the Full Council agenda going forward. Councillor Hotson reported: KCC had written to the Secretary of State in relation to the Planning White Paper calculation of housing numbers; KCC will be writing to all Kent businesses requesting assistance in making the Christmas period workable; the Covid-19 rate in Kent is 40 per 100,000 people. Councillor Hotson left the meeting at this point.

Proceedings finished at 9.30pm.