



Staplehurst Parish Council

Council Meeting

9th December 2024

PUBLIC FORUM

A resident stated;

Opportunity for Men's Shed to dispose of a broken Table Tennis table in Youth Club and replace with good quality second hand Table Tennis table.

Borough Councillor's Report (Standing Item):

MBC have awarded Freedom of the Borough to "Key Workers" as defined by the national definition of key Workers – such as Doctors, Nurses etc.

MBC have tightened up "Houses of Multiply Occupancy" policy in the Planning process

MBC have adopted steps to protect Women and Girls in the streets / open space

As Mayor, attended "Light of Life concert" for the Hospice in the Weald and generally very busy on lead up to Christmas with Mayoral duties.

Present: Cllrs Perry, Hotson, Alesi, Arger, Ash, Rhodes, Martin, Pett, Costa, Sharp and McLaughlin plus Clerk

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Riordan, Wakeford and Farragher
2. **COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:**
 - 2.1. Declarations of Lobbying - NA
 - 2.2. Changes to the Register of Interests - NA
 - 2.3. Interests in Items on the Agenda – item 6.2 Cllr Ash has shares in Microsoft
 - 2.4. Requests for Dispensation – Agreed Cllr Ash can speak and vote on item 6.2

3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: (5 minutes)

Pages 2300 – 2306 18th November 2024 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk)

Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the minutes of the 18th November 2024, agreed majority unanimously.

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

4. **FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS**

4.1 **Payment list**

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the payments below – agreed unanimously

<u>Approved Payments 14th November-2nd December 2024</u>	Amount
Maclin Pumps - JF Pump Service & Float Switches	894.00
Artistree Fencing & Landscapes - JF Mowing November	91.20
Homeleigh Timber - Tapping Screws	4.00
Homeleigh Timber - White Line Marker JF	20.40
Homeleigh Timber - Paint Brush Set GSG	7.94
Kingsfords Solicitors - Deed of Variation Girl Guides	200.00
Bradley Hawkins - Mowing/Strimming Wimpey Field October	75.00
P&F Cleaning Services - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open/Sun Nov	1010.00
Cartell Electrical Ltd - Commando Plugs x10 New Motifs	192.00
Paxman Printing - Village Update Winter	813.00
Payroll & Pension Costs – November	9027.41
Amazon UK - Galvanized Mop Buckets x2 JF Pavilion	19.98
Artistree Fencing & Landscapes - Grounds Maintenance JF	144.00
T&T Care Group Ltd - McCabe Memory Cafe CW Grant	310.00
Spar - Mil Parish Office	1.89
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription Nov-Dec	19.97
Business Stream - Waste Water Bell Lane Toilets Sept-Oct	81.50
British Gas Lite – Electricity JF Sewage Pump Sept-Nov	16.32
Castle Water - Potable Water JF Pavilion Oct	46.22
Castle Water - Potable Water Youth Club Sept	21.56
Castle Water - Potable Water Youth Club Oct	10.37
Pozitive Energy - Electricity Youth Club October	82.57
BT - Broadband & Phone Charges Nov-Jan	235.15
Telecoms World - SEHT Virtual Telephone No. October	14.39
Telecoms World - Broadband Youth Club October	29.40
Countrystyle Reecycling - Waste Collection October	96.06
Npower - Street Light Energy October	34.36
British Gas Lite - Electricity Parish Office Oct-Nov	203.58
Business Stream - Waste Water Jubilee Pavilion Aug-Nov	75.97
British Gas Lite - Electricity Surrenden Pavilion Oct-Nov	34.46
British Gas Lite - Electricity Jubilee Pavilion Oct-Nov	361.40
British Gas Lite - Electricity Bell Lane Toilets Apr-Nov	34.18
MBC - Council Tax Parish Office Room 1 December	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Parish Office Room 2-3 December	72.00
MBC - Council Tax Youth Club December	121.00
MBC - Council Tax Bell Lane Toilets December	100.00
Lloyds Bank - Charges November	8.50
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	14,571.78

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

0.00

4.2 **Summation and balance sheet – noted**

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

4.3 Contracts Report

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: Employment, Finance and Strategy Group recommend the approval of the Cartell £160 plus VAT for supply and connect commando plugs on 6 new motifs
Streetlights - additional £220 plus VAT for testing motifs and £775 plus VAT for extra bands and brackets on streetlights

Budget code - Christmas lights

4.4 Pilot Youth Worker scheme report

Following a debate, concern was raised about the increasing costs of the KCC pilot Youth Scheme. Should the Council be doing more to support the Scouts and Guides in the Village?

However, duty to the “youth of the village”, previously 30 / 50 attendance at Youth Club and should aim to work with KCC to bring back a Youth Club to Staplehurst, would require a Service Level Agreement with KCC.

Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Arger seconded the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: approve to proceed with KCC pilot youth worker scheme in Staplehurst, up to £14,000 and develop Service Level Agreement with KCC.

Budget Code – Youth club

4.5 Repair of Hot water system at Jubilee Field pavilion

Following a debate the Clerk raised the point that the hot water tank repairs have been going on for a number of years. That if Council proceed, they would need a plumber to drain the system before Ormandy Rycroft arrive and ideally replace secondary pump system – say up to £1,000 plus VAT.

Query, do we need to do this work if taken on by 3G contractor? Yes as we need to handover in good working order.

The general feeling was that Council need to resolve the hot water tank issue once and for all.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve the appointments of

1. Holman’s Heating £80 plus VAT – inspection
2. Cartell to repair the electrics £148 plus VAT (hot water Tank 1)
3. Ormandy Rycroft to repair and service hot water system £3,470 plus VAT
4. Delegate authority to the Clerk – up to £1,000 plus VAT to appoint plumber to drain the system before Ormandy Rycroft arrive and ideally replace secondary pump system.

Budget code – Jubilee Field

4.6 Draft working budget 2025/26 report for discussion

The Clerk introduced the report with the following

- Basic increases to each expenditure budget where known otherwise inflation increase
- Greener Group £2,500, waiting for formal confirmation from group

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

- Christmas lights – review in new year
- Churchyard budget – already agreed at Council
- Jubilee Field based on Council operating current site
 - increase groundsman salary from £20 to £30 per hour and additional sum of £100 per month for petrol
 - need to include; sum for roof work and ventilation required for pavilion, awaiting costs
- Potential extra CCTV at Jubilee Field – £3,500, plus permanent electrical power supply
- Public Toilets sum for operating Parade disabled toilets included, but not refurbishment costs
- Skatepark – retain costs
- Streetlighting – retain costs
- Youth club includes £8,000 sum for part funding of KCC Pilot Youth Worker scheme – note decision on item 4.4, needs to increase to £14,000
- Office costs - includes £6,000 for Cllr IT as requested by Comms Group
- Parish Office rent - Note SCCT reviewing rent – Clerk has requested figure so we can budget for 2025/26
- Note the figures are projected and will be refined when we know the tax base, unavailable at the time of writing.
- Youth club roof repairs, only just circulated will need to obtain quotes and to be funded from Reserves

Following a debate the additional consideration to feed back to the Employment, Finance and Strategy group are;

- Potential funding for a Christmas Tree (Est £500) feed into discussions on Christmas lights – Cllrs Martin and Sharp meeting RFO and Parish Support officer
- May need quotes for printing costs
- Staff have not received a pay rise in 2024/25, is one budgeted for in 2025/26? Yes £6,000 set aside overall
- Also potential other further increases so overall expenditure figure unlikely to go down.

The Employment, Finance and Strategy group meeting is on the 19th December 2024 to finalise and then come back to Council on the 13th January 2025 for approval. Note the Council meeting on 13th January 2025 will start at 7.pm prior to the Planning Committee meeting.

5 CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS – attached (5 minutes)

Corrections

- a) Council minutes of the 7th October 2024 2287/6.1 need to include "There was no vote on the new resolution / substantive resolution."
- b) Council minutes 28.10.24 – 2296 4.5 "£425 for load bearing test and £430 for brackets plus the additional motifs where on offer so 10 motifs had been purchased not 6"

to

£425 for erection of 6 additional Christmas motifs – Streetlights
 £450 for additional load bearing tests
 Agreed in consultation with the Chairman

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

The Clerk raised the Opportunity for Men's Shed to dispose of a broken Table Tennis table in Youth Club and replace with good quality second hand Table Tennis table, Agreed good idea, Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the above – agreed unanimously.

2108/6.3- Cranbrook Rd – chased again, still waiting will chase again

283/6.1 – Sport and Recreation Management contract –1 bidder dropped out and site visits arranged this week with remaining bidders.

Note Jubilee Field hedge – being cut this week.

Suggested that KCC Cllr is involved in chasing various KCC information.

Council meeting on 6th January 2025 – Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded generally felt retain but if no agenda items by 23rd December 2025 can cancel meeting – agreed majority 9 for, 0 against and 1 abstained.

6 PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION and DECISION

6.1 3G Multi-Sport Working Group – standing report - Noted

Note design and build consultants working on KCC Highways holding objection comments and meeting with MBC planning officers before Christmas.

6.2 IT service contract specification

Following a debate; note Access data base is used in the Parish office
Amend scoring

	From	To
a)		
b) One off fee.	15	20
c) Annual contract fee	30	25
d) IT Equipment recommendation	5	5

Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve the IT service contract specification attached in Appendix A of the report with the above amendment.

6.3 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Plan Preferred Approaches Consultation (Regulation 18b)

Following a debate

- Council thanked Cllr Arger and Mr Oakley for their work
- Extreme disappointment that the audit of sites misses out sites Maplehurst / Frittenden Rd and Marden Rd in Staplehurst and therefore numerous pitches – this is a major flaw in the report.
- MBC Cllr Perry stated he was disappointed and he will take up the missed sites / pitches at Maplehurst / Frittenden Rd and Marden Rd directly with Head of Planning at MBC which is a flaw in the report.

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

- Can the Parish Council support Education and Health to engage more with this element of the Staplehurst community – Clerk to enquire

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

To submit the comments as set out in the report to MBC on the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Plan Preferred Approaches Consultation (Regulation 18b)

6.4 Community Infrastructure Levy Funding Policy

Following a debate, this document is based on legislation and MBC guidance, as they are the Planning Authority. Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: To adopted the CIL policy attached in appendix A of the report

6.5 Skatepark event 2025/26

Following a debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve "skatepark event" date as 30th July 2025

6.6 New Surrenden Field Pavilion

Following a debate, which noted that the CCTV would need to be disconnected and then reconnected in the new pavilion. That a report would come back to Council on the final design and costs.

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the recommendation below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve expenditure of up to £5,000 for professional fees to remove the existing Surrenden Field pavilion and replace with a new Surrenden Field pavilion.

Budget Code professional fees

7 CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

Notes on Cranbrook PC Meeting re Secondary Education Needs discussion emphasised that this is a numbers game regarding the school roll. The increase in housing in the area – Cranbrook, Paddock Wood as well as Staplehurst will increase the school roll and emphasises the need for a secondary school in the area.

Note Cranbrook School is a Grammar School and Cornwallis School is not available for Children in Staplehurst anymore

Staplehurst Primary School currently 2 form entry, some years 3 form entry.

Clerk to contact Staplehurst Primary School about feeding into the process and liaise with Cllr Martin and Arger.

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

8. Chairman's Report

- 8.1 Committee and working group minutes for noting
- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 25th November 2024
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group minutes 2nd December 2024
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group meeting 3rd December 2024 to follow
- 8.1.4 SCEnic next meeting 4th December 2024, to follow
- 8.1.5 3G multi-sports pitch working group next meeting to be arranged
- 8.1.6 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 21st November 2024
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group next meeting to be arranged
- 8.5.8 Communications Group meeting minutes 20th November 2024
- 8.5.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting to be arranged

9 REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS**10 Confidential****10.1 Staff update**

Council discussed a number of staffing issues

- Line marking at Jubilee Field

Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: Thank Josh Melville for his time @£20 per hour – hours varied each month - for marking the lines at Jubilee Field from August to December 2024 –

August £140

September £400

October £520 plus other work at Jubilee Field

November £300

December to be confirmed

Budget Code - Jubilee Field

- Worknest to review staff grades – Cllr Arger felt that we need to be transparent, the Clerk noted that the staff have requested to have input into review of Job Descriptions and inconsistencies of the job evaluation

Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded the resolution below – agreed unanimously

Resolution: to approve the appointment of Worknest to undertake a job evaluation for the fee of £2,260 plus VAT

Budget code – Professional Fees

Note minutes are not verbatim, the decisions are accurate.

Closed 9:30pm

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....