

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on  
Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.45p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Bowden, Buller, Castro (from the point indicated in the minutes), Chapman, Forward, George, Lain-Rose (until the point indicated in the minutes), Miller, Perry, Rawlinson (from the point indicated in the minutes), Sharp, Spearink, Thomas, Walsh (from the point indicated in the minutes) and Riordan who was in the Chair.  
Parish Clerk: Mr MJ Westwood

**APOLOGIES:** none.

**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 José Castro as candidate for co-option. It was RESOLVED to co-opt the candidate to the Parish Council. Councillor Castro signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took his place at the Council meeting. *Councillors Rawlinson and Walsh joined the meeting during this item.*

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

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillors Perry (trustee of Jubilee Field Management Committee), Riordan (Chair of Jubilee Field Management Committee) and Miller (member of Jubilee Field Management Committee) declared an interest in items relating to Jubilee Field. Chairman Riordan also declared a financial interest in the item relating to repair of the Jubilee Field lamp column and said he would absent himself from the meeting for that item. Chairman Riordan declared an interest in the proposal for Christmas Lights due to the involvement of and his connection with Staplehurst Family Fireworks.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillor Perry requested and was granted a dispensation to participate in discussion and voting on items relating to Jubilee Field in accordance with Section 33(2)(c) of the Localism Act 2011. Chairman Riordan and Councillor Miller exercised the dispensations previously granted for their term of office (Mins 1778 and 1782 respectively).

**APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES:** Minute pages 1790-1794 of 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were APPROVED by Councillors, 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 Forward, seconded by Councillor Bowden, the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 9<sup>th</sup> October to 29<sup>th</sup> October totalled £21,966.57; income for the period was £7,400.79.

<u>Approved Payments 9th October - 29th October 2019</u>	<b>Amount</b>
Royal British Legion - Poppy Wreath Donation	100.00
Staplehurst School - Playscheme Venue Hire Charge	955.00
Play Place - 2019 Operational Deficit	659.60
Forestry First Ltd - Mowing Chestnut Ave/A229 x 4 cuts	312.00
Forestry First Ltd - Mowing Youth Club x 4 cuts	192.00
Forestry First Ltd - Hedge Cutting Youth Club	360.00
HMRC - 2nd Qtr Tax & NI Jly-Sept	3,963.21
Cllr Travel Expenses	12.75
Staplehurst Youth Club - Village Clean-up Donation	50.00
Staplehurst Men's Shed - Village Clean-up Donation	50.00

Lloyds Bank Charges - September	7.15
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance October	391.62
KCS - Photocopier Rental Oct-Dec	160.64
KCC - Stationery Supplies	73.13
Staplehurst Village Centre - Hall Hire July	42.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rental July	350.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Hall Hire August	42.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rental August	350.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Hall Hire September	84.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rental September	350.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Hall Hire October	204.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rental October	350.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Hall Hire November	84.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rental November	350.00
Staplehurst Village Centre - Hall Hire December	52.50
Staplehurst Village Centre - Office Rental December	350.00
Parish Office Laminator - Reimbursement	29.99
Cam-tech Security - CCTV Repairs The Parade	799.20
Homeleigh Timber - Plantex Weed Ground Cover re The Parade	40.00
October Payroll & Pension Costs	10,135.01
Landscape Services - Surrenden Field Mowing 3rd Qtr	639.47
Staplehurst WI - 125 Years Stallholder Refreshments	38.40
Community Payback Refreshments - Lodge Road	57.40
The Tree Council - SE Tree Warden Forum Cllr Training	15.00
Community Payback Refreshments - KM312, Bell Lane Car Park	37.76
MBC - Council Tax November Room 1	61.00
MBC - Council Tax November Room 2 & 3	71.00
SSE - Surrenden Pavilion Electricity Jly-Oct	66.59
SSE - Parish Office Electricity Jly-Oct	78.87
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>21,965.29</b>
<b>TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1.28</b>

2. Summation of Accounts – for noting. NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.
3. Finance & Strategy Group – Report of meeting 09/10/19 – NOTED and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/finance--strategic-planning-group>. Recommendations for renewal of contracts and subscriptions for next quarter per section 12 of report - proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Perry, the report's recommendations for the contracts and donations listed in Appendix A of the report were APPROVED: Staplehurst Village Centre, Play Scheme, All Saints Churchyard, Staplehurst Youth Club, Royal British Legion, Village Update and Annual Report, Surrenden Playing Field maintenance, Jubilee Field hedge maintenance and skate park, National Allotment Society, Transport Accessibility Group, Kent Pond and Tree Warden, Bell Lane toilets maintenance.
4. Financial Regulations – Update of Parish Council's financial regulations following the issue of new model regulations by the National Association of Local Councils. Proposed by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Bowden, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the redrafted financial regulations which were published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>. It was NOTED that although the update did not include the model's provisions for producing three-year forecasts, this did not prevent the Parish Council producing them.

5. Jubilee Field – Ratification of expenditure to repair lamp column (for decision). *Chairman Riordan left the meeting for the duration of this item and Vice-Chairman Perry took the chair.* Councillors considered the Clerk's report of damage to the Jubilee Field lamp column between 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October and his action in requesting P J Riordan Electrical Contractors to undertake emergency repairs in view of the imminent fireworks event. It was RESOLVED to ratify the expenditure of £250 and to thank the contractor for the prompt attention to the job. *Chairman Riordan rejoined the meeting.*
6. Jubilee Field Development – Consideration of financial information provided to support request for funding for development (Mins 1742-1743, 1791). *Chairman Riordan closed the meeting and invited Borough Councillor Brice and a representative of Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club to present information submitted by the club to support its request for allocation of S106 funding to development of football facilities at Jubilee Field.* Funding was required for: pitch fencing £18.5k; 110-seater stand £22.5k; dugouts; £6.5k; floodlighting £57.5k (total £105k). MBC had pledged £36k and the football club £23k. A further £13k was sought from S106 funds to facilitate an application for further funding from the Football Stadium Improvement Fund. A recent survey undertaken for MBC had identified that the Jubilee Field pitch was 'poor quality'. The representative of the football club said that the club believed this was a unique opportunity that would benefit the whole village. *Chairman Riordan reopened the meeting.* Chairman Riordan commented that the floodlights would be the first project deliverable. Councillor Lain-Rose commented that future management and maintenance responsibility had not been determined. Councillor Bowden asked about responsibility for delivery of the project. *In a temporary meeting closure, Borough Councillor Brice said a detailed project plan was not available; there was no expectation that the Parish Council would project manage the development.* Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Walsh, it was RESOLVED to ask MBC to allocate to the proposed Jubilee Field development project £13,000 of the £20k S106 funds that it holds from the Taylor Wimpey development. Councillor Lain-Rose abstained and asked that his abstention be recorded.
7. Survey of Parish Trees – Proposal to commission a follow-up inspection of trees last surveyed in 2017-18 (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Buller, seconded by Councillor Forward, it was RESOLVED to commission GRS Arboricultural Consultant to undertake a walk over condition survey of trees last surveyed in 2017-18 at a cost of £300.
8. Youth Club Gate – To approve payment for installation of gate and new post undertaken by Men's Shed (for decision). Councillors NOTED that the final cost of installing the gate and new post was £473 which exceeded the £375 previously approved (Min1757) and that the new figure reflected the additional cost and materials relating to the new post. Proposed by Councillor Forward, seconded by Councillor George, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE payment of £473.

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

1. Chapel Lane Street Lights – Discussion of Update Report and Proposal for Consultation. Councillors NOTED the Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer's report dated 17/10/19 and considered proposals for consultation with residents about the condition of the lights and the options for possible action. It was RESOLVED to invite all Chapel Lane residents to attend an open meeting with parish councillors, the invitation to be accompanied by information about the investigation work undertaken and options identified. It was further AGREED that the meeting would be for consultation only and would not make any decision. *In a brief closure of the meeting Borough Councillor Brice recommended engagement with KCC and MBC.*
2. Christmas Lights – Proposal to install Christmas lights at The Parade (for decision). Councillors NOTED that the Staplehurst Family Fireworks Group wished to fund the purchase of Christmas lights for use in a tree at the Parade, with installation to be undertaken by volunteers and power to be taken from the nearest KCC lamp column.

- Proposed by Councillor Sharp, seconded by Councillor Buller, it was RESOLVED to accept the gift of the Christmas lights and to undertake appropriate risk assessment and inspections to facilitate insurance cover.
3. Kent Association of Local Councils Annual General Meeting – Agenda and meeting papers for the KALC AGM on 30/11/19. Invitation to send to the meeting up to two voting delegates and up to two non-voting delegates. RESOLVED: Councillors Riordan and Perry will attend the meeting as voting delegates. Councillor Perry said that he would move the date of his monthly surgery to enable him to attend. *Councillor Lain-Rose left the meeting during this item.*
  4. Kent County Council 2020-21 Budget Consultation – Invitation from KCC to comment on council tax and spending priorities for 2020-21 <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/our-budget>. Councillors NOTED the consultation and encouraged individuals to respond.
  5. Kent County Council Rail Summit – Report by Mr Robin Oakley of event held 15/10/19 <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/reports-for-noting/>. Councillors NOTED the report and thanked Mr Oakley for attending the summit.
  6. Maidstone Borough Local Plan Review – Discussion of information received from Maidstone Borough Council relating to Call for Sites. Councillors NOTED the Clerk's report on the release of information about sites submitted to MBC for consideration and possible inclusion in the review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. It was RESOLVED to seek a meeting for parish councillors with MBC at the earliest opportunity to obtain information about any evaluation that MBC had undertaken and/or planned to undertake. It was further RESOLVED to undertake some initial analysis with the help of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group and to issue a statement about the action that the Parish Council was taking and some key issues it had already identified, such as the need to consider the implications of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Draft Local Plan and consequences for the A229. It was further RESOLVED that, as things stood, the Parish Council would not engage in meetings with developers. The Clerk was asked to take forward the identified actions.
  7. Maidstone Neighbourhood Watch – Invitation to attend AGM 27/11/19. Councillor Buller volunteered to attend the meeting.
  8. Saxon Mead Development – To discuss correspondence from HML regarding access to and from Wimpey Field and Woodland. Councillors NOTED the correspondence and the Clerk's report of the clarification he had sought from HML. Councillors felt it was not appropriate for the Council to agree to HML's request to send the correspondence to all parish residents.
  9. VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Correspondence from Pageantmaster relating to activities planned for the weekend of 8-10 May 2020. Councillors NOTED the correspondence. Chairman Riordan said that the Parish Council's VE Day 75 working group would be meeting soon. Councillor Spearink said he would be meeting the Rector to discuss ideas.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Clerk reported: the Parish Office had been busy with preparations for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition and Remembrance Day parade; the caretaker had installed poppies on lamp columns in the High Street, but the licence from KCC excluded some columns which are due for replacement (currently, three in the vicinity of The Parade); a letter had been received from Sainsbury's, acknowledging the Clerk's letter to the company seeking a response to previous unanswered correspondence; South East Water had commenced installation of a new water main on Marden Road, necessitating closure of the road up to 20/12/19; the Youth Club would be holding its AGM on 07/11/19; Growing Concern had replanted a planter in Marden Road following some vandalism.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
  - 2.1. General Data Protection Regulation – Review of policies: (i) Breach Notification Policy; (ii) General Privacy Notice; (iii) Internal Privacy Notice. The Clerk reported that he

had reviewed the documents and only made a few minor amendments. The Parish Council's Data Protection Officer had confirmed that he was satisfied. Proposed by Councillor Walsh, seconded by Councillor Thomas, it was RESOLVED to APPROVE the updated policies which were posted at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>.

- 2.2. Greener Staplehurst Group – Recommendations relating to: (i) Programme of sowing wildflowers and planting bulbs; (ii) Recycling proposal; (iii) Correspondence from Maidstone Climate Emergency Network. *During this item, with the meeting approaching two hours in duration, members RESOLVED to suspend standing order 3.24 to permit discussion of the remaining agenda items.* (i) It was RESOLVED to support requests to plant wildflowers in identified areas at Jubilee Field, Marden Road, High Street/Chestnut Avenue and Staplehurst library subject to agreement of the relevant landowner and highway authority where appropriate. The Clerk confirmed that enquiries had already been submitted to Kent Highways. (ii) Councillors supported the inclusion in the next Village Update of a short article to encourage bin-sharing. (iii) Councillors NOTED the correspondence from representatives of Maidstone Climate Emergency Network. They NOTED the opportunity to choose 100% renewable energy tariffs and that the Parish Council's current contracts were fixed until July 2020. Councillor Sharp said that she had shared the information with the Village Centre Management Committee. Councillors commented that the Parish Council was working with experts in the management of its land holdings. They RESOLVED to send a message to MBC to congratulate it on recognising the increase in global warming and accelerating loss of biodiversity.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.  
There were no reports.

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

1. Borough Councillor's Report – Councillor Perry commented that MBC's two current priorities remained Council Tax and the Local Plan Review. He said he had met Helen Whately MP and the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss local issues. MBC had changed the date of its next Full Council meeting to 18/12/19 due to the General Election being held on 12/12/19.

#### **REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS** (written reports for noting)

1. Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee – Councillor Perry's report of the meeting on 15/10/19 was NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/reports-for-noting/>
2. Staplehurst Patient Participation Group – The report of the AGM on 09/10/19 was NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/staplehurst-health-centre/>

#### **URGENT MATTERS** (at Chairman's discretion, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting)

None.

#### **SPECIAL MOTION & CORRESPONDENCE/REPORT:-**

1. To move that the public be excluded from item 2 due to its confidential nature. As no members of the public remained present, the motion was not moved.
2. To consider nominations for the 2019 Staplehurst Merit Award. Councillors considered a list of very deserving nominations and selected nominee number one.

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Before the meeting the Chairman of Staplehurst Horticultural Society presented to the Chairman a petition containing 100 signatures, which read: 'Sir. We congratulate the Parish Council for obtaining Six Allotment Plots near new developments but ask that in September's 2019 Parish Magazine you give us your intentions and any progress to date in providing more allotment sites for the other areas of Staplehurst during 2019/20'.

Proceedings finished at 10.00pm.