

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

EMPLOYMENT, FINANCE & STRATEGY GROUP MEETING

Monday 29th April 2024

2:30pm at Parish Council Offices

Minutes

Present: Cllrs Hotson, Arger, Martin and Perry (PART)

1. Apologies for Absence Cllr Eerdeken and Riordan

In Cllrs Riordan's and Perry's absence Cllr Hotson was elected to Chair this meeting

2. Dispensations – Cllrs Hotson and Sharp – item 6 agreed could speak but not vote

3. Minutes of previous meeting - Minutes of the 12th March 2024 – agreed by majority 3 for) against and 1 abstained.

4. Agenda's – Urgent items

Advice from KALC is there should not be Urgent Items or Special Motions on the Agendas. That a small amendment to Delegation is required in the highly unlikely case that an item is raised that needs a decision within 3 days (prior to an EGM being called)

Council

Delegation amendment – For the Clerk / Deputy Clerk, in consultation with Chairman of the Council and one other Councillor, to bring forward an Urgent Item – only in the case where a decision is required within 3 days-notice – prior to an EGM of the Council being called.

The Urgent Item needs to be discussed as a “motion”, that a majority of the Council vote to agree for it to be then raised as an “item to be then discussed” and voted upon by Council to make a decision.

Planning Committee

Delegation amendment – For the Clerk / Deputy Clerk, in consultation with Chairman of Planning Committee and one other Councillor on Planning Committee, to bring forward an Urgent Item – only in the case where a decision is required within 3 days-notice – prior to an EGM of the Council being called.

The Urgent Item needs to be discussed as a “motion”, that a majority of the Planning Committee vote to agree for it to be then raised as an “item to be then discussed” and voted upon by Planning Committee to make a decision.

Cllr Perry joined the meeting

5. Council AGM

The group discussed the AGM agenda and noted

Financial report – to include the Finance Report of the Council 2023/24 and amend the reserves as follows;

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Note £29,491.60 accruals includes ordered but yet to receive an invoice such as Field Turf for the design work at the Jubilee Field 3G pitch

Allotments reduce from £10,000 – to £4,000

Reallocate £1,000 to NDP Review – to start building up a fund for future NDP Reviews

Reallocate £5,000 to General Reserves = £145,891.67

Remaining Ear Marked Reserves to stay the same

Surrenden Field Project (Pavilion) £26,500

Wimpey Field Open space - £1,000

Jubilee Field (3G) - £15,000

Youth Club Building £12,485.60

Ring Fenced Reserves

Greener Staplehurst Group (Litter picking equipment) £200

Youth Club activities £1,399.26

Note Clerk contacted the Community warden about £310 outstanding held for them

After Council meeting information can go to Annual Report

Committees

Terms of Reference the same

Try and set days and dates for Committee meetings / working groups – note if not required can cancel or rearrange but helpful if dates are set in advance.

Documents,

Stay the same, note Nolan Principles are Appendix A of Standing Orders – but just called principles. Emphasis that the Nolan Principles are Appendix A.

Add in revised Delegated Authority

Remove Parish Charter – new one about to be sent for adoption

Appointment to local Groups

Remove neighbourhood watch

Review 2023/24 subscriptions, grant and donations

RFO to check and update

Review 2024/25 subscriptions, grants and donations

RFO to check and update

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Co-option of Councillors

Need to ensure anyone who stands is aware of work load and need to engage in the work of the Council prior to coming to the Council meeting.

Additional note – place advert in Annual Report for Volunteers – Youth Club etc plus Councillors required

6. WIFI

Cllr Sharp and Hotson – declared an interest – but spoke regarding the item

Long term benefit for SCC to take over contract of line, broadband and telephone – increases access to other parts of building – guest password for community use retains Parish Council security – and reduces cost to the Council

Must ensure that the Parish Office retain the number – if in the future SCC wish to obtain a new line / number than SCC will cover the costs and Council retain the existing telephone number.

SCC cover cost of installing broadband in South Hall, North Hall and around the building

SCC would have a contract with BT, pay BT directly, send a copy of the bill and invoice for 50% to Parish Council to pay.

If any problems Parish Council officers to be “named person” to deal with issues.
As the move into digital continues Parish Office to be involved in discussions.

Risk – Parish Council communications (phone, emails IT system) will rely on a “third party contract and paying the bills”

Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Perry seconded agreed by major 3 for ,0 against and 2 abstained to recommend to Council that SCC take over the BT account subject to the following

- i. Parish Council retain telephone number 01580 891761
- ii. SCC forward copy of bill and invoice Council for 50%
- iii. Parish Council have named persons on account to contact BT directly if a problem
- iv. Confirmation from BT that the Parish Council emails / network will be secure.
- v. “Guest password” made available to Parish Council for meetings free of charge
- vi. Parish Council engaged in future “digital” broadband and phone number

(add report to AGM agenda)

7. HR matters

Councillors discussed a number of HR issues