



Staplehurst Parish Council Minutes

18th November 2024

Public Forum

No points were raised.

Borough Councillor's Report (Standing Item):

A range of Civic duties have taken place including; Remembrance Day, Diwali Celebrations and Awarding Marden Parish Council the NALC Gold Award.

MBC budgeting for 2025/26 is more challenging – potential some KCC service cuts impacting on MBC budget and some potential MBC initiatives put on hold.

Present: Cllrs Perry, Ash, Hotson, Rhodes, Arger, Farragher, McLaughlin, Castro, Pett, Martin, Sharp, Wakefield plus the Clerk.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllr Riordan and Alesi
Cllr Perry wished Cllr Riordan the best and Chaired the meeting in Cllr Riordan absence.

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 - NA
- 2.4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

3. **APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Pages 2292 – 2299 28th October 2024 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](#)

Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the minutes of the 28th October 2024. Agreed majority; 10 for, 0 against and 2 abstained. Duly signed by the Chairman.

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

4. **FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS**

4.1 **Payment list**

Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the payment list below – agreed unanimously.

<u>Approved Payments 25th October - 14th November 2023</u>	Amount
Cllr RA Travel Expenses MBC PC 19 Oct	13.15
Cllr RA Travel Expenses MBC PC 26 Oct	13.15
Homeleigh Timber - Caretaker Supplies	9.64
Youth Club Fire Risk Assessment	200.00
CSG Global Education – Stationery	35.98
P&F Cleaning Services - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open/Sun Oct	995.00
Commercial Services Trading - Surrenden Field Mowing Jly-Sep	198.34
Forestry First Ltd - Surrenden Field Hedge Cutting	1,752.00
Forestry First Ltd - Youth Club Hedge Cutting	300.00
Paxman Printing - Winter Warm Rooms Flyer x1000	39.00
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription November	23.99
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance October	410.80
Miss C Lucas - Youth Club Cleaning October	40.00
Mrs E Mitchell - Youth Club Hire Refund November	30.00
KALC - Training Cllr AM Part 1	44.40
KALC - Training Cllr AM Part 2	44.40
Amazon UK – Stationery	6.98
Staff Reimbursement Coffee & milk	13.65
KCC re Staplehurst School - Playscheme Hall Hire	955.00
Continuum Sport & Leisure Ltd - 3G Bid Consultant P1	2,415.60
Cartell Electrical Ltd - EICR Youth Club	303.60
Land Registry - Title Plan App BDWH	7.00
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription Oct-Nov	19.97
Maidstone Borough Council - Pre-planning app advice JF 3G	1,505.00
Spar - Tea Bags & Kitchen Paper	6.34
Npower - Street Light Energy	98.33
Pozitive Energy - Youth Club Energy September	78.89
Pozitive Energy - Youth Club Energy July	88.45
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection September	69.84
British Gas Lite - Bell Lane Toilets Electricity Aug-Sept	29.65
British Gas Lite - Surrenden Pavilion Electricity Sept-Oct	33.42
Maidstone Borough Council - Council Tax Room 1 November	62.00
Maidstone Borough Council - Council Tax Room 2 November	72.00
Maidstone Borough Council - Council Tax Youth Club November	121.00
Sage Payroll – November	9.60
Pozitive Energy - Youth Club Energy October	14.92
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange November	242.36
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	10,303.45

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

0.00

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

4.2 Summation and balance sheet - Noted

4.3 Contracts Report

Following a debate which highlighted that: Youth Club hedge, second cut in March 2024 needs to be approved as well as the two cuts in 2025/26 – September 2025 / March 26. Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Martin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously.

Resolution:

Staplehurst Parish Council - Forthcoming Contract Reviews/Renewals 2025-26

Contract Item	Company	Annual Value 2024-25	Annual Value 2025-26	Cost per Unit 2025-26	Current Contract End Date
Grass mowing Youth Club x8 cuts	Forestry First Ltd	£400.00	£480.00	£60.00	31/03/2025
Hedge Cutting Youth Club 1 cut in March 2024 and two cuts in 2025/26	Forestry First Ltd	£300.00	£600.00	£300.00 per cut x2	31/03/2025
Hedge cutting Surrenden Field	Forestry First Ltd	£1,460.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	31/03/2025
Mowing A229/Chestnut Avenue X8 cuts	Forestry First Ltd	£600.00	£640.00	£80	31/03/2025
Grass mowing & strimming Wimpey Field	Contrast Garden Maintenance	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£25 per hr	31/03/2025
Village Centre Rubbish Bin	Countrystyle Group	£832.52	£832.52	£16.01 per week	
Water supply Youth Club	Castle Water	£139.59	Est £240.00	£20.00 p.m.	Ongoing
Hedge Cutting Jubilee Field – 2024/25 and 2025/26	Forestry First Ltd	£780.00	£780.00	£780.00	New Contract

Budget codes – various

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

4.4 Churchyard budget 2025/26 report

Following a debate, which highlighted the need to support the Churchyard maintenance but to stay on top of costs moving forward, Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously.

Recommendation: To consider the recommendation of the Employment, Finance and Strategy Committee to budget £16,757.40 for 2025/26 to the Church to maintain the Churchyard.

Budget code – Churchyard Budget

4.5 Medway Valley Countryside Partnership – management of Wimpey Field

Following a debate Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership management fee of Wimpey Field of £3,658 for 2025/26.

Budget Code – Wimpey Field

5 CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS – attached

2267/10 - Jubilee Field maintenance – we have had to change contractor to cut the junior grass pitches – but have retained the same rate.

Therefore two cuts in October 2024 = £152 plus VAT and £152 plus VAT in November 2024 - Artistree Fencing Landscape.

The white lining needs to be redone to reset the pitch markings, so an additional £60 plus VAT and spiking the junior pitches, £120 plus VAT, again Artistree Fencing Landscape.

Note the JFMC previously employed a groundsman, the Council agreed to take on the groundsman, unfortunately they resigned and the mower is broken so we are currently employing contractors to do the work of the Groundsman. This is increasing and highlighting the maintenance costs.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve the above, agreed unanimously.

Note Youth Club – internal water pipes, lagging £15 plus VAT.

2279/4.6a - Christmas Motif lights – existing ones being tested this week, new motifs having plugs fitted this week therefore Council should know how many will work next week. Scheduled to be put up 25th November 2024.

2279/4.6c - Christmas tree – following a debate that noted the desire for using “solar Christmas lights” did not work last year therefore Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to seek a “local 6 – 8 ft” Christmas tree and use the electric lights plus delegate up to £500 (to cover costs) to the Clerk in consultation with Cllr Sharp – agreed unanimously.

2067/PF Cllr Ash updated Council on the concern that that link road (to be used for emergency vehicles) was not being developed – it is a planning condition and will continue to chase up this and other issues.

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

Cllr Wakeford is chasing up similar issues on the Bovis Site – now all properties sold and Bovis off the site - chasing up unfinished work but been sent around the “houses”

Two main points;

1. Do not sign off the developments
2. Work with the local MP to work with MBC and KCC Councillors

Council supported Cllrs Ash and Wakeford in their efforts.

Cllr Ash agreed to review / comment the “On streeting electric vehicle charging consultation”.

6 PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION and DECISION

6.1 3G Multi-Sport Working Group – standing report

Note the design and build consultants are responding to the KCC Highways holding objection – will report back as soon as know more.

6.2 3G Multi-Sport pitch – management of the Jubilee Field, if the 3G pitch is built

Following a debate which highlighted the following;

- None of the decisions have been unanimous, on the 7th October 2024 if a substantive vote had taken place the Council would already be moving forward
- KALC advice would need to be backed up with legal advice
- What other potential bidders?
- JFWG has been managing since April 2024, is working well
- Question why contractor for the “3G pitch only” would not also open / close pavilion?
- Still have questions over the business plan
- Yes we will still own the site but should not wash our hands of the management
- We live in a litigious age so we need to take the concerns raised seriously
- We will still be involved in the management via our contract specification and the contractor
- Yes Council will have some costs but not the level we would have if still managed the site , apart from the 3G pitch
- Main concern is challenge and conflict if we have a number of different managers on the site.
- We would be seen as responsible by residents for appointing a professional company to manage the site with specialist knowledge
- Splitting the site does not make commonsense
- We should provide best value for our residents
- The contractors we met keen to support the community
- Concern that the business plan does not add up, so will end up with poor quality contractor.
- Question the figures in the report
- Note the £6,000 per year on average over last ten years is the cost to the Council when Jubilee Field Management Committee were managing the site, it includes one off costs such as purchase of the Mower.
- The cost to the Council, “3g pitch” only includes managing the pavilion, skatepark and the grass pitches, but with limited income opportunities.
- If the contractor only manages the 3G pitch won't we get more income back
- If the contractor managed the whole site they will also invest in the site

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

- Why not the "3G pitch and pavilion only"? (This has not been proposed before and general feeling was not another proposal)

Cllr Perry explained that if Council approve option a) "3G pitch only" we will not vote on option b) "whole site"

Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the resolution below, the voting was; For 2, Against 10, abstained 0.

Resolution: To consider

- a) proceed with 3G pitch only by contacting the 4 bidders and asking them if they wish to proceed with the 3G pitch only option

Cllr McLaughlin proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed majority; For 10, Against 2, abstained 0.

Resolution: proceed with the originally intended whole site with the 4 bidders

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed majority; For 10, Against 1, abstained 1.

Resolution: To approve the ITT document, Appendix A

6.3 Jubilee Field Working Group – Terms of Reference

Following a debate which noted this was required as SMFC have merged the senior and youth section into SMFC CIC and therefore SMFC CIC have one vote at the JFWG. This is similar to the Girl Guides Association – one organisation, several sections.

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously.

Resolution: To approve the updated Jubilee Field Working Group Terms of Reference as shown in Appendix A

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

8. Chairman's Report

Note Cllr Riordan applied to the KCC members grant and we have been allocated just over £2,000 for work on the Youth Club disabled toilets, would need to confirm alternative funding and suggested CIL. Will liaise with Cllr Riordan.

8.1 Committee and working group minutes for noting

- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 4th November 2024
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group next meeting 25th November 2024
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group meeting 5th November 2024
- 8.1.4 SCEnic next meeting minutes of 22nd October 2024
- 8.1.5 3G multi-sports pitch working group next meeting to be arranged
- 8.1.6 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 7th November 2024
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group next meeting to be arranged – but waiting for feedback from MBC Planning Policy since September 2024 – Clerk to chase and include Cllr Perry.
- 8.5.8 Communications Group meeting minutes 7th November 2024

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

8.5.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting to be arranged

9 REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)

10 Confidential

10.1 Merit Awards

The Council discussed the nominations for the Merit Awards and agreed who should be awarded the Merit Awards in 2024.

Sponsorship agreed "Arger, Perry and Sharp" £300

Meeting closed 9pm

These minutes are Not verbatim, the decisions are accurate.

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