



# STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2024

### **Public Forum**

A resident raised the issue that Nicholson Walk is not registered so Scouts cannot get a Post Code, therefore requested can the Parish Council register the name Nicholson Walk with MBC? Agreed Clerk would follow up.

### **Borough Councillor's Report (Standing Item):**

Cllr Perry raised a number of points:

- Mayoral duties – mainly down the River Medway such as “up swanning” which is counting the swans on the River Medway (King Charles 1 in 17<sup>th</sup> Century gave a charter to Maidstone to own the swans on the Medway between East Farleigh and Hawksford Bridge”
- Chaired MBC Council meeting – new leader, new Cabinet so interesting meeting
- Cllr Hotson asked if the national planning news would impact Maidstone Borough and Staplehurst?
- Cllr Perry felt not, Maidstone is one of the few Planning Authorities in the area with an adopted Local Plan.

Cllr Riordan raised a few issues

- The renovation of Moat Park Leisure Centre by 2030 has been put under review by the new cabinet
- Housing Policy – the cost of temporary housing is £1.2m over budget in first quarter this year – estimated £5m over budget by end of the year. This emphasises the need for the 1,000 affordable housing for rent scheme that MBC are rolling out
- Cllr Arger raised the point about Housing Associations not taking on “Affordable housing in new developments” and many sit empty. Is this the case in Maidstone? Cllr Perry felt not but agreed Cllrs Riordan and Perry would investigate and report back.

**Present** Cllrs Riordan, Perry, Hotson, Sharp, Alesi, Martin, Pett, Arger, Ash and the Clerk

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Mclaughlin and Castro
2. **COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:**  
**(5 minutes)**
  - 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: (5 minutes)**

Pages 2250– 2252 of 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](#) Proposed by Riordan and seconded by Hotson, with minor amendments – agreed by majority; 7 for 0 against, 2 abstained Duly signed by the Chairman.

Pages 2253 – 2259 of 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](#) Proposed by Riordan and seconded by Hotson, agreed by majority; 7 for 0 against, 2 abstained Duly signed by the Chairman.

**4. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS (10 minutes)**

**4.1 Payment list**

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

<b><u>Approved Payments 11th July - 25th July 2024</u></b>	<b>Amount</b>
Npower - Street Light Energy Nicholson Walk June	6.79
Homeleigh Timber - Painting Materials Youth Club Men's Shed	255.46
Homeleigh Timber - The Parade Volunteer Clean Up Paint Bollards	67.24
Homeleigh Timber - The Parade Volunteer Clean Up Broom	17.99
Homeleigh Timber - The Parade Volunteer Clean Up Weed Control	105.60
Homeleigh Timber - The Parade Volunteer Clean Up Weed Control	158.40
Bradley Hawkins - Mowing & Strimming WF June	250.00
HMRC - Tax & NI June	1,930.02
Stephen Fagg - Paint Internal Doors JF Pavilion	2,850.00
Iden Signs - Replacement Damaged Playground Sign	33.60
KCC Procurement Services - Photocopier Chgs Apr-Jun	204.77
Homeleigh Timber - Lightbulbs & Adhesive	15.26
J Birkby Plumbing - Repair to Water Pipe Bell Lane Toilet	102.00
P&F Cleaning Services - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open/Sun Jly	1,010.00
Payroll & Pension Costs July	7,212.88
Sevenoaks DC - Premises Licence Jubilee Field	180.00
KALC - Cllr. Training Event	44.40
Sainsburys - Milk Parish Office	1.50
Sainsburys - Batteries & Light Bulbs Parish Office	18.00
Sainsburys - Coffee Parish Office	11.00
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription July-Aug	19.97
Business Stream - Water Bell Lane Toilets May-June	43.33
Positive Energy - Electricity Youth Club	36.02
British Gas Lite - Electricity Jubilee Sewage Pump	18.40
Telecoms World - Virtual Phone No. SEHT June	14.39

Npower - Street Light Energy June	29.08
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection June	76.85
British Gas Lite - Electricity Surrenden Pavilion Jun-Jly	33.34
MBC - Council Tax Parish Office Room 1 August	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Parish Office Room 2-3 August	72.00
MBC - Council Tax Youth Club August	121.00
MBC - Council Tax Bell Lane Toilets August	100.00
ICO - Data Protection Fee	35.00
Lloyds Bank Charges - July	7.00
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>15,143.29</b>

**TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE** 0.00

#### **4.2 Summation and balance sheet - Noted**

#### **4.3 Finance report**

Following a debate Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To consider the recommendation of the Employment, Finance and Strategy Group to approve

1. To approve the increase in the SAGE Payroll monthly subscription from £8.00 to £10.00 per month
2. To agree to the RFO opening a 95 day notice account with Lloyds Bank
3. To accept the quote from Evolution to paint the skatepark, £7,799 plus VAT

**Budget** – Administration and Support plus Skatepark repaint

#### **4.4 Basic Councillor Allowance 2024/25 Noted and report onto website**

To note that Parish Councillors Riordan, Perry, Ash, Arger, Hotson, McLaughlin and Pett have agreed to forgo their Basic Parish Allowance  
Cllrs Alesi, Martin, Castro and Sharp are accepting their Basic Parish Allowance for 2024/25.

Cost of Basic Parish Allowance 2024/25 to be funded from General Reserves, total £2,256, note tax, national insurance etc applies.  
The report will be posted on the Council website

**Budget:** General Reserves

#### **4.5 Jubilee Field Budget Monitoring report**

Following a debate the budget monitoring report was noted.

#### **4.6 Volunteer Day – costs**

Following a debate, the increase in cost is due to extra weed suppressant needing to be purchased due to the amount of work carried out by the volunteers.

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

**Resolution:** to approve the £300 expenditure on extra weed suppressant for the Volunteers Day due to the amount of work carried out by the volunteers.

**Budget** Green, Trees and Tubs

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

The Clerk highlighted a number of points;

1. We have just received the ROSPA Inspection reports for Surrenden Field playground, Outdoor Gym and Jubilee Field skate park, nothing "red" but ask delegated authority to the RFO and Chairman to action.

Following a debate Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Martin seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** to delegated authority to the RFO and Chairman to action the ROSPA Inspections and report back to Council.

**Budget** Play equipment repairs

2. Greener Group have spent £104.01, request retrospective approval, the debate emphasised the need for the Green Group to report back to Council with their work programme before any further expenditure would be agreed

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution below

**Resolution:** to approve the expenditure of £104.01 and for the Greener Group to report to Council with a work programme for 2024/25 before any further expenditure will be approved.

**Budget:** Greens, Trees and Tubs

3. Issues on Redrow Development.

Cllr Ash updated Council on the issue of George Smith Close within the Redrow development which was to be adopted. However, it has been constructed to standards beneath Adopted Road standards and KCC will not now accept the road. This means the ongoing maintenance costs will be handed over to the residents living on the Redrow development. Reconstruction / maintenance of a road costs can be significant.

Cllr Pett – emphasised that this is not the first time Redrow have tried this – Must chase up but also must ensure all residents know and refuse to accept responsibility.

Cllr Riordan raised a similar issue is occurring on the Bovis site.

Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To write to the MP, Leader of Kent County Council and Leader of Maidstone Borough Council plus our local Councillors to raise our concerns for our residents and to seek confirmation that George Smith Close will be adopted as originally agreed

Cllr Martin noted that the Council video is to be completed.

## **6 PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION and DECISION**

### **6.1 3G Multi-Sport Working Group – standing report – noted**

Report was noted and Cllr Hotson asked about the Invitation to Tender document and contract specification - Clerk noted this was discussed initially at the last 3G Multi-Sport pitch group meeting and a draft will be brought to the next meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024

## **6.2 Co-Option of Parish Councillor Policy report**

Following a debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

### **Resolution:**

To consider the recommendation of the Employment, Finance and Strategy groups to approve

- i. the Co-Option Policy attached in **Appendix A** of this report
- ii. the revised application form attached in **Appendix B** of this report

## **6.3 Grant Application report**

Following a debate, Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To consider the recommendation of the Employment, Finance and Strategy Group to;

- i. Award a Grant of £440 to Hi Kent
- ii. Approve amended grant application form attached in **Appendix A** of the report

**Budget** Donations and Grants

## **6.4 Jubilee Field Working Group report**

Following a debate which included;

- Cllr Riordan queried why the Council is covering the cost of the relocation of the Bell in the changing rooms as it is a SCEFL league requirement – This is because Council has requested SMFC to relocate changing rooms.
- Cllr Sharp noted we have two quotes for deep cleaning.
- Cllr Riordan requested a named vote on the relocation of the Bell.
- Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed by majority; 6 For (Cllrs Arger, Alesi, Ash, Martin, Sharp and Hotson), 1 against (Cllr Riordan) and 2 abstained (Cllr Pett and Perry)

**Resolution:** Relocation of Bell in changing rooms - £80.00 plus VAT.

**Budget** Jubilee Field – Maintenance

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** Purchase of Loft pole - £15.00

**Budget** Jubilee Field – Maintenance

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed by majority; 7 For , 1 against and 1 abstained

**Resolution:** to appoint Amy and Hannah to deep clean pavilion - £1,780

**Budget** Jubilee Field cleaning

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

**Resolution:** Charity Match – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2024 – use of Tannoy and bar in line with the ground hire agreement

The JFWG action plan was noted

### **6.5 Jubilee Field Working Group – Girl Guides lease report**

Cllr Hotson introduced the report and that Deed of Variation to the existing underlease was the simplest – least costly way of proceeding. In addition a new Annual License Deed to be used for the new parcel of land the Girl Guides have requested.

Concerns were raised about two factors:

- i. Fencing off public open space – Queried is it required, and if so could it be roped off / temporary fencing rather than 6ft boarded fencing? Requested due to the locked off space is then considered “inside space” and the ratios of children to adults means the Girl Guides can do more activities. Currently use only 8 hours per week and will be locked open for public access.
- ii. Priority Car parking – is the 6 priority spaces really required? Already been used this is just to formalise arrangements.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed by majority; 7 For , 2 against and 0 abstained

**Resolution:** To approve the recommendation of the Jubilee Field Working Group to approve;

- i. amendments to Underlease via a Deed of Variation
- ii. introduce an Annual License Deed

The Clerk raised the point that the Solicitors fees were agreed back in October 2023. The Clerk has requested if they still stand but has not heard back yet. Therefore suggested that the instruction of Solicitors and Land agent are delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the motion below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** to delegate to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to instruct the Council Solicitors and Land Agent

**Budget** Professional fees

### **6.6 Jubilee Field working group - Tree report**

Following a debate Cllr Hotson raised the point about needing three quotes. Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** to seek three quotes for tree work at the pavilion

Following a debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Riordan Arger seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To delegate to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to approve appointing tree contractor to make safe the overhanging trees once the three quotes have been obtained.

**Budget** Jubilee Field maintenance

### **6.7 Jubilee Field Working Group – Ticket Booth relocation**

Following a debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To consider the recommendation of the Jubilee Field Working Group to relocate the Ticket booth by the end of August 2024, in time for the new football season, as long as it does not impact on the Girl Guides fence proposals

### **6.8 Jubilee Field Working Group – Temporary Outside bar for football matches**

Following a debate the general feeling was that not enough information was available regarding issues such as; dimensions of the temporary bar, storage of temporary bar, appears to have pumps so kegs of beer – storage / delivery of kegs, where exactly will it be located, will the kitchen continue to serve alcohol (two bars on site?) does the license cover a temporary outside bar (yes the license is for the site as a whole) and should the Council have a consideration for the temporary outside bar.

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve the resolution below – turned down by majority; 3 For , 6 against and 0 abstained

**Resolution:** To consider the Jubilee Field Working Group recommendation to approve Staplehurst Monarchs FC request for an outside bar at senior matches

Therefore the permission for a temporary outside bar is not granted.

### **6.9 RSG update report**

Following a debate which highlighted several points on the Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

- Realistically KCC Highways do not have the funding to do the we work we request in the HIP
- Hawkenbury Bridge – major project due to the historic nature of the bridge. Options are to build another bridge – considered too expensive by KCC Highways due to purchasing land as well as building a bridge or traffic lights - deemed too expensive by KCC Highways due to electrical supply. Therefore seems little point in writing to KCC again.
- Double Yellow Lines / Single Yellow lines despite or best efforts KCC will not install yellow lines around village. It has to be deemed by KCC as hazardous
- Cllr Perry felt it was a shame they led us up the garden path doing a residents survey regarding High Street, Chestnut Avenue and Cornforth Close and raising residents and our expectations
- Cranbrook Road project seems to be progressing with KCC Highways planning a feasibility planned for autumn 2024 – will report back when know more.

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

Resolution: To

- i. agree the updated HIP, attached in **appendix A** of the report
- ii. Note work of RSG, **appendix B** of this report

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to suspend Council Standing Orders and extend the meeting by 30 minutes – agreed unanimously

### **6.10 Choice Support Growing Concern report**

Following a debate which clarified if Gift Aid is viable, Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve the SCenic Group recommendation to continue the service agreement at £5,190.00 per annum for 4 years, 1.8.24 – 31.7.28 on the same contract terms

**Budget** – Greens, Trees Tubs

### **6.11 RSG – Auto Speed watch and SID report Noted**

#### **Clr Riordan closed the meeting to allow Mr Buller to speak**

Mr Buller clarified that the Auto Speed camera is managed by the Police but the Community Speed watch team can access the data, but only traffic numbers.

SID camera rotates between Bathurst Rd, Marden Rd and Headcorn Rd – locations approved by KCC Highways. Important that the batteries are changed weekly and the location rotated as agreed. Important this done by the Parish Council Staff.

**Clr Riordan re-opened the meeting and thanked Mr Buller for all his hard work on behalf of the community**

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

NA

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

#### a. Chairman's Report

Noted 4 people at Surgery mostly planning issues

#### b. Committee and working group minutes - noted

- i. Planning Committee minutes of 22nd July 2024
- ii. Road Safety Group meeting minutes 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 to follow
- iii. Jubilee Field Working Group meeting 29th July 2024 to follow
- iv. SCenic next meeting 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024
- v. 3G multi-sports pitch working group, next meeting 22nd August 2024
- vi. Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 25th July 2024
- vii. NDP review next meeting minutes 26<sup>th</sup> July 2024
- viii. Communications Group minutes 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024
- ix. Greener Staplehurst Group minutes 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 to follow

### **9. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS - NA**

### **10. Confidential**

#### 10.1 Appointment of new Groundsman at Jubilee Field

Clr Sharp proposed and Clr Arger seconded to approve the payment of £120 (including VAT) for cutting the field on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2024– agreed unanimously

Following a long debate the merits of a number of contractors were considered and Clr Arger proposed and Clr Martin seconded to appoint S Waring to cut the grass at Jubilee Field £145 per cut and for the caretaker or another mark the lines.– agreed majority 10 for, 0 against and 1 abstained.

Note the minutes are not verbatim, the decisions are accurate.

Meeting closed.....10.45pm.....