

# STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD

### 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

#### **Public Forum**

Unfortunately Sue King – MBC Enforcement Team Leader was delayed, but will attend the next Parish Council meeting.

A resident raised a concern about car parking, the governance and usage of the proposed 3G pitch. Who is project managing it? Who's going to manage it?

It was explained that these issues had been raised in the consultation and are feeding into the design of the site and the operational business plan. Both of which will come back to Council prior to submission of the planning application, early 2024.

The Council appointed a Bid Consultant who is overseeing the project.

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

Cllr Perry absent

#### **County Councillor's Report (Standing item):**

Cllr Riordan raised the following points;

- MBC are looking at a "private sector leasing scheme" to develop 50 affordable homes in the next 2 years.
- A resident raised concerns about leaves on Vine Road – MBC looking to clear roads in next few weeks in Staplehurst
- A resident raised concerns about "electrical appliances" not been collected – new contractor starting soon hope to see improvements.
- Attended Police cluster meeting (Staplehurst, Marden and Yalding) – note all had similar issues – parking at schools, ASB, spate of Nitroxide etc – will circulate minutes .
- Cllr Hotson asked about local KCC member as some key KCC budget decisions – asked Clerk to invite to next meeting.

**Present:** Cllrs Riordan, Ash, Pett, Farragher, Eerdeken, Martin, Arger, Alesi, Castro, McLaughlin, Hotson, Sharp and the Clerk

**1. APOLOGIES:** Cllr Perry, Cllr McClean and Cllr Ahmed

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

2.1. Declarations of Lobbying - NA

2.2. Changes to the Register of Interests - NA

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

2.3. Interests in Items on the Agenda – Cllr Alesi 6.4, Cllr Riordan 6.3 and Cllr Hotson 8.2.1 plus Clerk item 4.4

2.4. Requests for Dispensation Cllr Alesi asked to speak and vote on item 6.4 and Cllr Hotson asked to speak on item 8.2.1

Cllr Sharp proposed and Farragher seconded to give dispensation to Cllr Alesi to speak and vote on item 6.4 and Cllr Hotson to speak on item 8.2.1

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

Pages 2152 – 2157 of 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](#) Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023 by a majority; For 11, against 0, abstained 1. Duly signed by Councillor Riordan.

Pages 2158 – 2164 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](#) Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the minutes of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 by a majority; For 11, against 0, abstained 1. Duly signed by Councillor Riordan.

### **4. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS**

#### **4.1 Payment list**

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Casto seconded to approve the payment list below, agreed unanimously.

<b>Approved Payments 25th October - 14th November 2023</b>	<b>Amount</b>
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 July-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

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

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
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>10,303.45</b>

#### **4.2 Summation and Balance sheet**

The Summation was noted. A summation illustrates the approved expenditure budget and the RFO's projection of Council expenditure to the end of the year. The view of the Councillors was the need for "budget monitoring through the year" which would be more transparent to Cllrs and the public.

Cllr Eerdeken to liaise with RFO and Clerk and bring report back via Employment, Finance and Strategy Group.

#### **4.3 Budget for Churchyard 2024 /25**

Following a debate, where it was emphasised the importance of the Churchyard to the people of Staplehurst and beyond but also a need to review the grounds maintenance specification for 2025/26, Cllr McLaughlin proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed by a majority; For 11, against 0, abstained 1.

**Resolution;** approve the proposed churchyard budget for 2024/25 - £10,500 and RFO to Notify the Church (Churchyard Budget code)

#### **4.4 NALC pay award 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

The debate noted that the Council has approved the NALC pay and conditions, this is the annual pay increase for 2023/24. Cllr Eerdeken proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution, agreed unanimously.

acknowledge and agree the annual NALC pay award too all employed staff (Staff Budget code)

#### **4.5 Jubilee Field Car Park shoot bolt**

Following a debate where the need to ensure the safe use of the barrier gate and preference for a known contractor who had worked on the barrier gate previously was emphasised. Cllr Farragher proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously.

**Resolution:** approve T and S Engineering to manufacture and install a shoot bolt on the car park barrier at the Jubilee Field for a fee of £430 plus VAT (Jubilee Field Budget code)

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

#### **4.6 Bell Lane Toilet cleaning contract**

Cllr Eerdeken's proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To

- i. continue with the current cleaning contractor P &F Cleaning Services Ltd
- ii. accept an increase in the annual cleaning contract of £15 per month  
(Public Toilets budget code)

#### **4.7 Greener Group report**

Following a debate where the need for protective equipment was raised Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Eerdeken's seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution** – To approve the Greener Group request for

- i. leaf blower as follows: EGO LB5301E Blower kit with battery - £229.63 = VAT
- ii. three Dutch hoes = up to a maximum of £20 each = £60 +VAT

In addition delegate authority to the RFO, in consultation with the Chairman the purchase of protective equipment up to £100

(Greener Group Budget code)

#### **4.8 Parish Notice Board**

Following a debate which highlighted the preference for aluminium, two posts, the option of the Community Payback team installing the notice board and the desire to seek external funding Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution;** To;

- i. purchase an aluminium notice board with two posts
- ii. appoint "The Parish Notice Board Company" at £2,020 plus VAT
- iii. approve applying to Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) for funding
- iv. report back if funding is received or not.  
(Street Furniture Budget code)

#### **4.9 Bell Lane Toilet lights**

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Farragher seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** appoint Cartell Electrical Ltd for £600.52 to replace the lights / sensors in the Bell Lane Toilets  
(Public Toilets budget Code)

### **5. CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

2111/8.1 – Hawkenbury Bridge FOI circulated – Clerk liaise with RSG and bring report to next Council meeting

2000/2072/2105 – Sainsbury Shuttle Bus – still chasing

2136/4.5 – "Bollards at Surrenden Field" defer

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

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

### **6.1 Youth Club update report**

The debate highlighted the following;

Surveyors report just received some significant costs identified;

1. Urgent items - £25,000 - £35,000
2. Potential further investigation - uncosted
3. Potential "green" improvements associated with remedial work
4. Awaiting the quotes for the electrical work identified in the FRA report

MBC Building Control has visited the site and said retrospective work did not fall under Building Regulations but improvements would – we await their written comments

#### **Meeting Closed**

A resident emphasised the need for the electrical work to be completed and asked realistically when could the Youth Club re-open

Suggested not before early 2024, awaiting quotes and then get contractors on site etc.

#### **Meeting re-opened**

The Clerk informed Council the actual costs were; Surveyor £900 plus VAT and the Electrical survey was £253 plus VAT. In addition raised the point that we will need to update the insurance company by the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2023 – will contact tomorrow.

The general view was to clarify the cost of the works necessary to get the Youth Club building re-opened.

It was suggested that all Cllrs attend the SCEnic meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 as the main item is a discussion on the long term options for the Youth Club / Surrenden Field pavilion and report back to Council on the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

### **6.2 Jubilee Field management update report**

Following a debate, which highlighted the need for due diligence;

- Pavilion building – aware of some roof issues
- Felt that Council should get the building surveyed and JFMC obtain quotes for the repairs to the roof.
- Require Health and Safety files from JFMC – checks / actions
- Fire Risk Assessment files from JFMC – checks / actions
- Hot water tank services – aware of a problem – Clerk informed of a variety of options – suggested independent review of options
- Grant conditions – aim to roll over grant conditions but, what are they? Need details from JFMC
- Clarify if JFMC has any outstanding Loans
- Obtain a Key holder list
- Updated current JFMC financial position
- Undertake an audit of equipment

Cllr Farragher proposed and Cllr Pett seconded a motion "to approve the Council undertaking a survey of the Jubilee Field Pavilion up to £1,000" agreed unanimously

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

Cllr Farragher proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

Resolution: for the Council undertake a survey of the Jubilee Field Pavilion, up to £1,000 agreed unanimously  
(Jubilee Field Budget Code)

### 6.3 Consideration of MBC stage 2 complaint response

Following a debate, the general view was that;

- Not sure that we can change anything.
- "feel it is a point of principle" that we were led to believe the link road was an integral part of the planning process and therefore agreed to the insertion of the housing into the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan
- We requested words such as "must" "should deliver" for the link road but were informed by MBC that "safeguarding" would be sufficient
- That MBC planning is deciding not to enforce the planning condition – however poorly worded - and safeguarding now apparently refers to a permeant structure rather than permission

Cllr Farragher proposed and Cllr Pett seconded a motion that we should follow up on enforcement of the planning conditions and report a failure to meet planning conditions to the MBC planning enforcement team - agreed Majority 10 for, 1 against and 1 abstained.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution below agreed by a majority; For 10, against 1 abstained 1

#### Resolution:

- i. report a failure to meet planning conditions to the MBC planning enforcement team
- ii. further the complaint to the Ombudsman

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to suspending Council Standing Orders and extending the meeting by 30 minutes to complete Council business – Agreed majority For 11, against 0, abstained 1.

### 6.4 3G Multi-sport pitch update

Following a debate, which highlighted the importance of the project and that reports would be coming back to Council in early 2024 on the Business Plan and the Design prior to the submission of the planning application.

Acknowledged that the Letter of Intent related to minute 2164/3.4 and noted the pre-planning meeting, Councillor site visits and initial contract meeting.

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded a motion below;

- i. to add the 3G multi-sport pitch report as a standing item to the Council agenda
- ii. for the Clerk to continue to work with and support the 3G multi-sport working group on the project

Agreed unanimously

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded the resolution below, agreed unanimously

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

**Resolution:** that

- i. to add the 3G multi-sport pitch report as a standing item to the Council agenda
- ii. for the Clerk to continue to work with and support the 3G multi-sport working group on the project
- iii. acknowledge and approve letter of intent in **appendix A** of report

**6.5 KALC Community Awards**

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

**Resolution:** That Staplehurst Parish Council do not join the KALC Community Award Scheme.

**7 CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting: NA****8 PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS (from Committee/Groups/Office on specific issues or as regular update)****8.1 Chairman's Report**

- The Cranbrook Road "pelican pedestrian crossing" survey work has just been completed and KCC will report back in the near future.
- Four Cllrs toured three 3G pitches in Kent, felt it was very positive, YMCA well managed, only 3 spaces left so usage high, and 99 car parking spaces. Aylesford, note only 12 at site but adjacent to 2 large Pay and Display car parks
- Also attended the Under 5 playgroup meeting – very sad, challenging situation. A follow up Under 5 Playgroup meeting this week requires a Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary to step forward or the group will close.

**8.2 Committee and working group minutes - noted**

- 8.2.1 Planning Committee minutes of 6th November 2023 – Cllr Hotson asked now that the Staplehurst Community Centre has planning permission. Will the Chairman request CIL funding from the MBC Central CIL fund? – Cllr Riordan answered yes.
- 8.2.2 Road Safety Group next meeting 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – Cllr Pett asked about "hedge letters" – why are we doing this when it is KCC responsibility. Cllr Sharp explained that we have been doing this to try and facilitate hedge cutting on pavements etc. The letter includes a warning that KCC could do the work and charge the residents.
- 8.2.3 JFMC meeting minutes of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023
- 8.2.4 SCEnic meeting minutes 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023
- 8.2.5 Communications Group meeting minutes 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – raised budget issues to Employment, Finance and Strategy Group - yes
- 8.2.6 3G multi-sports pitch working group next meeting 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023
- 8.2.7 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group next meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023
- 8.2.8 NDP Review Group meeting to be confirmed
- 8.2.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting minutes 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 - raised budget issues to Employment, Finance and Strategy Group - yes

**9 REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting) - No items**

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

**10 URGENT MATTERS - None**

**11 SPECIAL MOTION & REPORT – NA**

**Public Forum** – please ensure you follow process regarding Ombudsman complaint.

**12 Confidential**

**12.1 Volunteer Awards**

Following a debate the Young Person’s Volunteer of 2023 nomination was approved.

**12.2 Contract issue**

The Council discussed a service contract issue.

*Meeting closed...10pm.....*

*These minutes are not verbatim but a summary of the discussion at the meeting.  
The decisions are accurate.*

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