

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on
Tuesday 23rd April 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ashby, Buller, Forward, Lain-Rose, Perry, Pontet, Reardon, Silkin, Smith, Symes and Burnham who was in the Chair.
Deputy Parish Clerk: Mrs DA Jenkins

APOLOGIES: Councillors Kelly and Sharp whose reasons for apology were accepted. Cllr Manning was absent from the meeting.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – There were none.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – Councillor Perry declared an interest in the item relating to Staplehurst Youth Club as he is a trustee.

Requests for Dispensation – Councillor Perry requested and was granted dispensation to speak on Youth Club Site Gate in accordance with section 33(2)(e) of the Localism Act 2011.

APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: Minute pages 1753-1756 of 1st April 2019 were APPROVED by Councillors, signed by Chairman Burnham 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 Lain-Rose, seconded by Councillor Silkin, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 27th March to 31st March totalled £547.73; there was no income for the period.
2. Summation of Accounts – for noting. NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>. Councillor Lain-Rose commented that the summation showed a better than expected position at the year end, with final expenditure being less than the approved budget figure.
3. Annual Investment Strategy – Proposal to renew strategy for 2019-20 <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>). Councillors AGREED to the two changes proposed in the Clerk's report and APPROVED the strategy for 2019-20.
4. Data Protection Officer Services – Proposal for renewal of current contract (for approval). It was proposed by Cllr Lain-Rose, seconded by Cllr Ashby and agreed unanimously to extend the services of GDPR-info Ltd for one year for the sum of £350.00.
5. Youth Club Site Gate – Quotation for installation of replacement wooden gate on High Street boundary (for approval). The Deputy Clerk advised Councillors that as the Youth Club is in the Conservation Area a planning application would be required if the design of the gate differed to the existing. Councillors discussed the design submitted by the Men's Shed and felt that two gates worked better than the 5-bar gate in situ. Cllr Silkin advised Councillors that under the terms of the lease KCC approval would be required if the Men's Shed wished to grow and sell fruit and vegetables from the Youth Club site. Councillors noted the Clerk's report and AGREED unanimously to authorise the Men's Shed to make a new gate at a cost of £372.45 and to apply and pay for a planning application to change the design of the gate amounting to the sum of £117.00 plus planning portal fees of £20.00.

CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

1. MBC Parish Services Scheme – Correspondence seeking agreement to terms of the 2019-20 funding (for decision). The parish office was asked to clarify the land holdings with MBC as Chestnut Avenue land had been classified as a nature reserve. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that this matter was in hand. Cllr Perry agreed to speak to Mark Green at MBC.

Councillors AGREED to the terms of funding of the Parish Services Scheme and Noted that the parish office would continue to work with MBC to establish the correct calculation of SPC's land holdings.

2. Pavement Parking – Inquiry by Parliamentary Transport Committee: closing date for comments 14th May 2019 <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/news-parliament-2017/pavement-parking-launch-17-19/> (for comment). Following discussion Councillors unanimously AGREED to respond to the enquiry as pavement parking had worsened and was an issue in the village. Councillors commented that if new legislation was to be introduced this would need to be enforced. Cllr Burnham offered to write the submission on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Buller asked all Councillors to individually respond to the enquiry and Cllr Symes requested that the Primary School submit a response.

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

1. Clerk's Report – The Deputy Clerk reported: Wimpey Field pond had been installed by Medway Valley Countryside Partnership's contractor; meeting to discuss access to Wimpey Field convened by Helen Grant on 5th April had taken place: Taylor Wimpey had undertaken to produce a proposal for a new location within two weeks but Helen Grant had since notified the office that the proposal would be delayed whilst TW consulted with residents of the development's 53 properties; Redrow Homes site was visited on 11th April: Redrow are to submit a new planning application to replace 5-bedroom homes in Phase 2 with a selection of smaller homes which would result in Redrow paying CIL; Finance & Strategy Group meeting would take place on 29th April; a meeting with Shepherd Neame to discuss the application to designate the King's Head as an asset of community value would take place on 30th April; the Deputy Clerk confirmed that she had completed the 31st March 2019 year end finances; Wimpey Field burned bench had been reported to the police; the transfer of Footpath KM312 had been completed but would take 4-6 months to file with the Land Registry; the Caretaker had removed a fallen tree from Surrenden Field hedge and replaced tree stakes at Wimpey Field; there had been various enquiries from residents about voting, traffic, Wimpey Field, fallen tree branch at Poyntell Road and parking.
2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
 - 2.1 Code of Conduct – Review of Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 06/08/12, as amended 20/11/17 <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/> . Councillors considered the Clerk's report on the Code of Conduct. It was proposed by Cllr Lain-Rose, seconded by Cllr Pontet and AGREED unanimously to adopt the revised Code following the minor amendments suggested by the Clerk and the following revision, proposed by Cllr Silkin, to the wording of 11.3 '... and may not exceed a Councillor's term of office.' Cllr Silkin advised that P13 referenced 'provident society' which should now be referred to as 'society registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefits Society Act 2014'.
 - 2.2 Community Engagement Policy & Procedures – New policy for approval <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/policies--procedures/>. It was proposed by Cllr Lain-Rose, seconded by Cllr Pontet and AGREED unanimously to adopt the Community Engagement Policy and Procedures.
 - 2.3 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Minutes of meeting 27/03/19. NOTED by Councillors posted at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/neighbourhood-plan-review-group/>.
 - 2.4 Parish Council Risk Assessment 2018-19 – Risk Assessment of Parish Council Finance, Assets and Activities (for approval). Councillors thanked the parish office for their input on the assessment and requested the following items to be added under Parish Activities: Cllr Buller, Speed Watch – increase risk status to medium;

Cllr Lain Rose – include Annual Report with Village Update; Cllr Reardon – add Remembrance Day Service to the schedule. Cllr Silkin requested the defibrillator be listed in the Asset section. Subject to the amendments it was proposed by Cllr Lain-Rose, seconded by Cllr Buller and AGREED unanimously to APPROVE the Risk Assessment.

- 3 Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
 - 3.1 Annual Report – In answer to Councillor Buller’s question Councillor Reardon confirmed that he was awaiting reports from four individuals. Cllr Reardon said that the front page would be a photo of the Remembrance Day beacon. Assuming the reports are printed Cllr Buller would be counting them on 25th May ready for distribution.
 - 3.2 KALC- Maidstone Area Committee Meeting – Councillor Silkin had attended the meeting on 15th April 2019. He reported that MBC had employed a specialist legal firm to deal with prosecutions relating to illegal G&T sites; a new team leader had been appointed to MBC Planning Enforcement Department; it was suggested that MBC should offer training for councillors following the elections; it was noted that MBC are one of the few district authorities who do not charge parishes for term elections.
 - 3.3 Cllr Lain-Rose thanked all six Councillors who were retiring at the election in May and in particular noted Cllrs Burnham, Manning, Reardon and Silkin for their length of service, the work they had input on the various projects that they had been involved in and for the skills they had brought to the Council. All Councillors showed their appreciation.

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

- 1. Borough Councillor’s Report – Councillor Perry reported: Councillors Wilson, Stockell and Greer would be standing down at the Borough elections in May; the MBC committee structure had been reviewed and changed a little; the Economic Development and Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committees will combine to become Economic Development and Leisure Committee and the Urgency Committee will be dissolved and any items of urgency will be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee; in future only Ward members affected by a planning application will be able to call it in to Planning Committee; the Local Plan Review will be challenging and Cllr Perry confirmed his belief that the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan should be both updated and strengthened.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting): -

- 1. Patient Participation Group – Minutes of meeting 10/04/19. NOTED by Councillors and posted 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)

Deferred item from Planning Committee - Application 19/500399 Meadow View, Marden Road request for a Councillor to speak at MBC Planning Committee on Thursday 25th April: as no alternative Councillors came forward Cllr Buller agreed to attend.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM: After the meeting a resident offered his appreciation of the tireless work of all the Councillors and thanked those Councillors who were retiring.

Proceedings finished at 9.15pm.