

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCE & STRATEGY GROUP MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 27th June 2023

Present: Cllr Riordan, Hotson and Eerdekenes

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Perry

2. Dispensations - NA

3. Minutes of previous meeting – Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Hotson seconded to approve the minutes of the last meeting – agreed majority 2 for, 0 against and 1 abstained

4. Revised Groups –Following a discussion it was agreed to recommend to Council

- Merging of Employment with Finance and Strategy Group as per attached Terms of Reference as it felt appropriate
- To dissolve SCENic and Youth Club groups and replace with Amenities Committee which should focus on the day to day work as set out in the Terms of Reference with contracts or work over £3,000 being recommended to Council - RFO to check “General Budget headings”
- And any capital projects such as new facilities or use of General Reserves, CIL or Section 106 funding should be recommended to Council for approval

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Hotson seconded to recommend the above to Council agreed unanimously

5. Revised Standard report template – Cllr Eerdekenes led a discussion and it was agreed to use the revised standard template for the August 2023 Council meeting as a trial run.

6. Communications Strategy

Following a discussion it was agreed to add in “Chairman could formally issue social media posts in emergencies” and Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Eerdekenes seconded to recommend the amended report to Council - agreed unanimously

7. Other matters for discussion

Following a discussion the following was felt worth exploring more

Youth Club / Surrenden Pavilion

- Upgrade Youth Club building and replace Surrenden pavilion with community building these projects would require @£50,000 each, is it worth doing one well or both?
- RFO to clarify the “lease costs at the Youth Club site”
- Firm up options and discuss further.

Surrenden Playground – need ongoing sinking fund to replace as required

Allotments – use earmarked reserves for fencing, best to consult 4 or 5 neighbours that directly overlook the site as well.

GSG / MVCP working together on Wimpey Field

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Community Bus Partnership with other Councils along A5 Route

Note

"The Borough Council covenants with the Owner that it shall transfer the Public Transport Contribution to Arriva to be used as a contribution **towards bus service enhancements to increase the frequency of services through Staplehurst Village** or for such other purposes for the benefit of the Development as the Owner and the Borough Council may otherwise agree in writing and not to use the Public Transport Contribution otherwise than for the purposes for which it was paid"

We have significant S106 funding (£324,167 as of 6th Sept 2022) to support bus services in Staplehurst – consider option of a community bus partnership or similar along A 5 route.

Risks

Are we setting ourselves up to fail?

The project which will be challenging – if buses made a profit the bus companies would run them.

How can we make it sustainable before S106 funding runs out?

But risk of developers taking back £324,167, without us trying

We have a verbal agreement from a meeting with MBC / KCC that we could use the funding for a community bus type scheme, need to firm up in writing

Enquiry if other Parish Council along the route are interested, if so invite to an initial meeting to discuss options

CCTV – how efficient is it

A real concern that the Council's CCTV is not working efficiently, we are not getting the service we need to help Police deal with ASB / Crime in Staplehurst.

Note as the Council takes on more activity there will be a need to review Staff pay scales.

**8. Dates of next meeting –
Fourth Tuesday of the month 2:30pm – 25th July 2023
Finance, VAT update**