

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL  
held at Staplehurst Village Centre on  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 7.45 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Buller, Forward, Kelly, Manning, Reardon, Riordan, Sharp, Silkin, Smith, Symes and Burnham who was in the Chair.  
Parish Clerk: Mr MJ Westwood

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Ashby, Lain-Rose, Perry and Pontet whose reasons for apology were accepted.

**COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the Agenda:-

Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.

Interests in Items on the Agenda – none declared.

Requests for Dispensation – none requested.

**APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES** Minute pages 1729-1732 of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018 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 Silkin, seconded by Councillor Sharp, the list of accounts for payment was APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 19<sup>th</sup> October to 15<sup>th</sup> November totalled £16,720.95; income for the period totalled £9,322.42.
2. Summation of Accounts – as at 15 November 2018 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors. Published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.
3. Draft Budget 2019-20 – Finance & Strategy Group proposal for Draft Budget 2019-20 (for information and comment prior to finalisation). Chairman Burnham explained that Finance & Strategy Group had drawn up a draft budget that was prudent and balanced in its approach to the 2019-20 spending requirement. It proposed funding the expenditure from a combination of a 3% increase in the precept (equivalent to 3p per week for a Band D property), MBC Parish Services grant and other income, plus some funding to be drawn from reserves. He said that the final budget would be put before Full Council for approval in January; in the meantime, Councillors were invited to submit any comments to the Group.

**CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:**

1. Jubilee Field Car Park – Request from Magnetic Shields to make temporary use of the car park during construction works (PR) (for decision). RESOLVED: that Magnetic Shields be given permission to use the car park.
2. Jubilee Field Changing Room – Request from Jubilee Field Management Committee to fund replacement of shutter door (PR) (for decision). Proposed by Councillor Kelly, seconded by Councillor Riordan, it was RESOLVED to spend £765.45 on the necessary repair of the shutter door.
3. Keep Staplehurst Safe – Request from Cllr Symes to hold an event 23/02/19 (for decision). Councillor Symes explained that her proposal was to organise an event at the Village Centre for the whole community and involve representatives of relevant groups and services. Councillors commended the proposal and RESOLVED to give in principle approval. Councillor Symes will investigate planned financing of the event and report back.

4. Kent Highways Parish Seminar – Cllr Burnham’s report of event held 02/11/18 (for noting). NOTED by Councillors and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/reports-for-noting/>.
5. Library, Registration & Archives Services – KCC’s draft strategy proposals including revised library opening hours and public consultation [www.kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy](http://www.kent.gov.uk/lrastrategy). Proposed public consultation 21/11/18 – 29/01/19. Councillors NOTED: the public consultation had been launched; the proposals were set in a context of KCC’s need to reduce costs; the proposed new tiering model for libraries was based on analysis of library performance data; the consequence for Staplehurst library would be a reduction in weekly opening hours from 42 to 23; the model would be reviewed every two years. Councillors considered that the model undervalued Staplehurst library and that it should be designated as ‘Community Plus’ rather than ‘Community’ level. RESOLVED: respond to the consultation and write separately to KCC to comment on the allocated tiering and to highlight the community use of the library, the expected growth in population due to new housing developments and Neighbourhood Plan Policy C1.
6. Maidstone Playing Pitches and Sports Facilities – Local responses to MBC consultation (Min1730-1731) (for noting). Councillors NOTED the responses written by the Cricket & Tennis Club, Jubilee Field Management Committee and Parish Office. Consultants working for MBC would be incorporating the comments into their report.
7. Neighbourhood Plans – Consultations
  - a. Goudhurst Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 14 Draft <http://ndp.goudhurst.co.uk/>. *Meeting temporarily closed: the Chair of Neighbourhood Plan Review Group commented that the draft plan made no mention of Staplehurst.*
  - b. Loose Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 Draft <https://www.maidstone.gov.uk/home/news-and-events/loose-neighbourhood-development-plan> (closing date 14/12/18). Councillors Buller and Smith said they would review the document and discuss with the Neighbourhood Plan Review Group.
8. Parish Council Surgery – Oral report on surgery 24/11/18 (JB). Councillor Buller said the surgery had been very busy. Subjects raised included: mud and parking problems connected to the Hen & Duckhurst Farm site construction works; number 5 bus service delays; inconsiderate parking at road junctions; poor lighting between the Health Centre and rear of The Parade; unauthorised signage on parish council land.
9. Redrow Homes – Report of site meeting 08/11/18 (for noting). Councillors NOTED that the first two units were now occupied. Councillors and staff who had visited the site thought that the works were well-organised.
10. Remembrance Day – Letter of thanks (for noting). A letter of thanks from Mr Holdaway who had lit the beacon was NOTED. Chairman Burnham thanked Councillors Reardon and Manning for their work on the day’s events and said that he had written to thank Mr Sivyer and the Community Choir. Councillor Reardon thanked the caretaker and Paxman Services for the cleaning they undertook on the day.
11. Staplehurst Family Fireworks – Cllr Riordan’s report of event held 03/11/18 (for noting). Councillor Riordan gave an oral report about the event: it had been very successful and attracted around 2,500 people; the scouts had built an impressive bonfire; the community payback team had helped with fencing; the organisers had experienced delays in the processing of their road closure application.

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

1. Clerk’s Report – The Clerk reported: arrangements were well under way for the Parish Council’s Christmas social event; most of the Village Updates had been collected by the volunteer distributors; the Office was in contact with the developers and MBC about the problems arising from the construction works at Hen & Duckhurst Farm; the Office was chasing up KCC to obtain clearance for installation of the Christmas lights.

2. Written Reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for decision or noting
  - a. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Request from NPRG to approve the proposed amendment to Neighbourhood Plan Objective 6 for submission to MBC (for decision). Councillors AGREED to defer consideration of the proposed amendment until the next meeting when it would be considered with proposed amendments relating to the rest of the plan. Minutes of meeting 31/10/18 were NOTED and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/neighbourhood-plan-review-group/>.
  - b. Parish Council Committee and Group Memberships – Proposals for additional members of Planning Committee, Community Enhancement Group and Communications Group. RESOLVED: Councillor Forward to join Communications Group; Councillor Pontet to join Community Enhancement Group and Planning Committee. It was NOTED that Community Enhancement Group now had twelve councillor members and that at a suitable time, possibly the Council’s annual meeting, some consideration should be given to the optimum size of the Group.
3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors – for information only.
  - a. Dharma Gym for All – Oral report of meeting held to discuss the organisation’s search for land/building for a new Centre for Sporting Diversity (Min1730). Councillor Riordan reported that he had held a meeting with the Head Coach of the Gym, which had led to her short presentation in the public forum. He said he would be discussing ideas with the Jubilee Field Management Committee and would report back to Full Council.
  - b. Staplehurst Merit Award – Update (PR). Councillor Riordan reported that the recipient of the 2018 award had been chosen and was being invited to a presentation of the award at the Council’s Christmas social event.

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

1. Borough Councillor’s Report – No report.

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

1. Patient Participation Group – Minutes of AGM 24/10/18. Noted and published at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/staplehurst-health-centre/>. Councillors commented on the unfortunately high level of non-attendance at appointments.

**URGENT MATTERS** (at Chairman’s discretion, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting)

No items.

Chairman.....

**PUBLIC FORUM:** Before the meeting the Head Coach of Dharma Gym for All addressed the Council about the Gym’s search for a permanent base and discussed how the Gym sought to support disadvantaged members of the community and to cater for interests in minority sports. A resident spoke about the library tiering model in KCC’s consultation on Libraries, Registration and Archives services (Staplehurst ranks below Marden) and about the urgent need to make safe the footpath outside Vine House where railings had been damaged and removed. After the meeting a resident commented on the desirability of ensuring a full debate in council meetings of recommendations by Community Enhancement Group.

The meeting finished at 9.45pm.