

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 26TH JUNE 2023

Public Forum

A resident raised concerns about the potholes in Offen Drive, they are a significant danger. In addition, the request for a "goal post style" bike stand for electric bikes at the Parade.

Cllr Riordan stated that both Cllr Perry and himself will listen to the public debate regarding planning application 23/502352 hybrid; but will leave the Council meeting when the item is discussed and the Parish Council make a recommendation to MBC as they both sit on the MBC Planning Committee.

Presentation by Ilke Homes regarding Planning Application Land West of Lodge Road, Staplehurst Kent TN12 0RQ ref no 23/502352 hybrid;

An Ilke Homes representative read out the following statement

"On Tuesday 20th June ilke Homes filed a Notice of Intention to appoint administrators. This is a protective measure in the best interests of all parties based on the financial position of the company. ilke Homes continues to progress conversations with investors regarding securing the company's future and further updates will follow as we have them. To be clear and for the avoidance of any doubt we are not in administration"

The main points of the presentation:

- Fundamentally the same as last presentation – playground now a larger LEAP not a LAP. (equipped)
- 88 housing units, 1,000 sqm of commercial space 2 large areas of open space including retaining the existing pond.
- Each unit 2 car parking spaces, Air Source heating all electric 40% affordable housing
- Meets accessibility standard
- 26 visitor car parking spaces
- Bio diversity net gain 21% on the site
- Added Ragstone to designs
- Link road – Ilke Homes have facilitated the link road all the way to their boundary, they cannot provide the link road on land they do not own but have facilitated the link road for future installation from other side of boundary.

Resident questions

1. Can any car access at north – no, only pedestrian
2. Commercial only outline – yes sell to a commercial operator to finalise and deliver
3. Why no solar panels – houses will be set up for this to be fitted – potentially by Ilke Homes or house owner.
4. How will the builders access the site – Via A229, Station Approach, Lodge Road
5. When complete how will the residents access the site – Via A229, Station Approach and Lodge Road
6. Will these roads cope – Transport Assessment in consultation with KCC Highways indicates they will

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

7. Why can't you deliver link road – We can only deliver the link road on our land – which we are doing. We cannot deliver the link road on some one less land
8. Concerns about lack of community infrastructure – water supply, sewage, medical provision, educational provision, pharmacist services, bus route being reduced, trains being reduced and yet still called a "service centre" We can't cope with the existing housing let alone anymore.
9. Air Source heating, any noise pollution – Used on other sites without problems
10. Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan representative emphasised that the focus was to link roads so that we had no cul-de-sacs. (If problems at roundabout on Marden Road residents will be stuck without emergency access) and to reduce pressure on Crossroads.
11. Kent Police have raised concerns about single paths on roads – KCC Highways involved in consultation
12. How will pedestrians access the area- via open space – Even in winter? – option of extra Pedestrian links
13. How will you deliver units to the site – Module movement specialist includes Police escort paid for by Ilke Homes. There will be less vehicle movements than traditional building methods and also quicker build time.

Borough Councillor's Report (Standing Item):

Cllr Perry stated that MBC are already reviewing the 2024/25 budget. The Archbishops Palace project is being reviewed; it is of a historical interest.

The adopted Local Plan Stage II hearing has finished. The Planning Inspector is considering all the evidence and we await his opinion – likely to be Autumn 2023.

The affordable homes project is rolling forward and there is a very timely "water management" report going forward

Cllr Riordan stated he is gradually learning his Borough Councillor role and is being supported by Cllr Perry plus the MBC staff

He is dealing with a variety of resident issues – water supply, re housing Ukraine's etc We were unsuccessful with the CIL bids to MBC central CIL pot, but can reapply when we have planning permission.

Have submitted a bid for a grant to support the Youth Club.

County Councillor's Report (Standing item): Absent

Cllr Hotson requested if the Clerk could write to Cllr Parfitt-Reid to clarify the funding for Community Warden - agreed

Consideration of Co-option of Councillors

Mr Ash, Mr Pett, Mrs Mclean and Mrs Martin spoke eloquently giving the reasons why they wished to be co-opted on to the Parish Council. Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Perry seconded that all four are co-opted onto the Council – agreed unanimously.

They then joined the meeting but abstained from all votes at this meeting as they did not have all the reports that other Councillors had.

Present: Cllrs Riordan, Perry, Alesi, Castro, Eerdeken, Farragher, Hotson, McLaughlin, Sharp, Ash, Pett, Mclean and Martin.

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

1. Apologies

Cllr Arger

Note Cllr McPhee has stepped down and the Council will need to advertise for one new Councillor.

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

- 2.1. Declarations of Lobbying – all regarding item 4
- 2.2. Changes to the Register of Interests - NA
- 2.3. Interests in Items on the Agenda: Item 4 Cllr Perry and Riordan declared an interest as they are MBC Councillors and sit on the MBC Planning Committee.
Cllr Eerdeken's has submitted written objections as a resident prior to becoming a Parish Councillor.
JFMC item 7.3 Cllr Perry as a Trustee of the Jubilee Field
- 2.4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES:

Pages 2104 – 2110 of 5th June 2023 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](http://Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge (staplehurst-pc.uk)) to be signed by Councillor Riordan

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Hotson seconded to approve the minutes of the meeting with a correction to the spelling of Cllr Castro agreed unanimously. Cllr Riordan signed the minutes.

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Hotson seconded for Cllr Sharp to Chair the meeting for item 4 – agreed unanimously

Cllrs Perry, Eerdeken's and Riordan left the meeting for item 4.

4. Planning Application Land West Of Lodge Road Staplehurst Kent TN12 0RQ Ref. No 23/502352/ hybrid

Hybrid Planning Application consisting of: Full application for the erection of 88no. residential dwellings, ancillary structures, new access road from Lodge Road, internal roads, car parking, landscaping and public open space, drainage features, and associated works. Outline application for the erection of a commercial unit of up to 1000sqm and associated access and parking (All matters reserved except Access).

Cllr Sharp closed the meeting to allow Mrs Buller to speak as she was coopted onto the Planning Committee but not Council. Mrs Buller raised a number of planning policy points to consider for the Land at Lodge Road (23/502352)

- a) Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan (SNP)
 - Objective 3 Layout for new development sites
 - Policy H3 a range of tenures and sizes
 - Policy H4 Hen & Duckhurst Farm sections 1&2 refer to link road
 - Policy H6 site area section 3 link road
- b) Building for Life 12
 - Sections 1 to 4 integrating into the neighbourhood

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- Section 5 character
 - Page 7 details connections in full and mentions avoiding ransom strips
- c) Maidstone Local Plan
- DM1 Principles of good design
- d) Parish Council's comments to the Inspector December 2021 re. the Lodge Road Allocation in the Local Plan Review

Land East of Lodge Road 066

This site has allocation for commercial use. SNP Policy H6 states that mixed use on this site could provide more employment with residential units. The parish council wishes to see 'live/work' units as rural courtyard employment areas with living accommodation above. SPC was represented at the Inspection of the 2017 MBC Local Plan and put a strong case for this to be accepted. Sadly, the Inspector chose to support MBC's allocation as a purely business site. SPC supports MBC's proposal of a mixed-use allocation. However, we want this development to be more imaginative and innovative in its a mix of housing and business use as per the suggestions in our Neighbourhood Plan policy H6. SPC is also disappointed to see that most of this site is now allocated for housing (3.8ha) with only 0.3 allocated for employment.

SPC supports the policy stating that vehicular access shall be provided to both Lodge Road and the adjacent residential development (Dicken's Gate).

It should be noted that SPC only supports this allocation if the Lodge Road 'vehicle link' to the adjacent site (Dicken's Gate) is built (SNP Policy H6). **This is considered a critical point.** SPC maintains that there is a benefit to the community through providing an alternative route for light traffic which is supported in our Neighbourhood Plan. SPC does not want to provide access along this road for heavy goods vehicles and is pleased to see that the developer needs to work with Kent Highways to manage the traffic in ways that will protect current and future residents.

The SNP Objective 3 is to avoid any more cul-de-sac estates.

SPC would expect all new buildings on this site to be 'carbon neutral'.

SPC would like to suggest that this site is built-out with smaller units (1/2 bed) both in the market and affordable housing allocations. Staplehurst already has a large proportion of larger, expensive dwellings and smaller units on this site would help our younger people get onto the housing ladder and give opportunities for older people to downsize. This suggestion could increase the housing density on the Lodge Road site.

- e) Condition for Hen & Duckhurst site to provide a vehicular link to Lodge Road
- 23) No dwelling shall be occupied until highway works agreed under section 278 of the 1980 Highway Act have been implemented in full to the satisfaction of the Local Planning and Highways Authorities. These works comprise:
 - (i) Pedestrian and cycle links to be provided to the existing residential development to the east of the application site via Further Field and Marlfield.
 - (ii) A link for vehicular traffic through the development site towards Lodge Road is to be safeguarded.**
 - (iii) (iii) Bus boarders are to be provided at two relevant bus stops.
 - (iv) (iv) Parking provision is to be provided in accordance with IGN3
 - (v) (v) Traffic calming is to be provided along Marden Road and the 30 mph speed limit is extended.

- (vi) (vi) A pedestrian and cycle crossing to be provided on Marden Road to ensure safe access to the village centre from the site.
Reason: In the interests of highway safety and amenity.

The Parish Council may wish to consider the junction of Lodge Road with Station Approach because of the conflict with traffic and pedestrians.

Mrs Buller points were welcomed and noted and the meeting re-opened.

Cllr Hotson was concerned about the link road. Either BDW Homes are not delivering the terms of the planning permission or MBC planning conditions are not tight enough – either way MBC appear to have “dropped the ball”

Cllr Sharp read out Cllr Eerdeken's statement

Planning proposal

- The documents that are provided on the planning portal seem to be primarily marketing leaflets rather than actual planning documents.
- The statement of community involvement indicates primarily lobbying with MBC and planning officers, which is not community involvement at all. Although it has opened up a dedicated websites and provided leaflets, from people I know who have submitted anything, there have been a total amount of 0 responses from Ilke Homes.
- Ilke Homes itself is for sale and is in financial trouble. Modular house builders have been in trouble for the last years with leader L&G (giant builder) shutting down production due to lack of profitability. Its accounts are still listed as overdue which is likely due to a statutory auditor refusing to sign off due to lack of accounting standards or calculated metrics and cashflows not being realistic.

Plan / Site Layout

- The plan shows no provision for starter homes / 1 bedroom properties. When Ilke came to present to us it said there is no demand for it, and it cannot be built using modular housing. We know there is a demand, Ilke Homes just don't want to build it.
- Ilke stated it would not build anything on the space reserved for commercial area however this is not acceptable as likely it will be marketed at an unattractive price so there are no takers, and then will be requested for additional housing. Hence if the planning officer is minded to approve there needs to be a condition preventing this.
- Planning wise, in the Maidstone Local plan, the allocation for this site is an estimate of 78 houses, 88 is more than a 10 percent increase on the site which is an overdevelopment.
- The look and feel of the development will have an adverse effect as the provided house types are too limited and aesthetically not in line with the surrounding area. The layout itself is not mixed so this will result in streets of exactly the same house type rather than diversifying to bring at least some character.

Transport

- Despite having been asked multiple times, Ilke homes has not commented on how it intends to get a huge number of modules to the destination site, navigating relatively narrow roads with articulated trailers. To give people an idea of the number of modules to be moved we can easily make an estimate given each storey of the

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house + the roof is a module. 88 Houses with a mix of 2 and 3 storey houses is roughly 305 modules (based on the site layout). Each will be transported under police escort to the site and likely to travel down through Maidstone, Linton, into Staplehurst along the A229. Even at night, this will be terrible for the people near it or people trying to go anywhere. I would also add in that this is a giant waste of already stretched police resources and we have seen how much police resources are on the ground.

- The transport plan sees Staplehurst as a transport hub however we only have a train station but no reliable connecting public transport (bus) or even a taxi company having a presence here anymore.
- Based on communication from Richard Timms, we need to treat this with the thought of no connecting road between this site and Dickens Gate. As we are aware, there is a ransom strip in between Dickens gate and this site. The strip itself is mandatory / legally obliged to be sold by DWH to the resident's association, and while it is not yet handed over, it is not even possible to sell. To give an idea to people, the price of a ransom strip is approximately 30 % of the value of the developed site (50M +) based on legal precedents. A mandatory purchase by KCC could be enforced but this is a process that is legally difficult and taken multiple years. Also noting KCC has no benefit whatsoever in doing it. Also noting to Mr. Buller's point of DWH being in contempt, it is not in contempt as the provision in the planning for Dickens Gate was to safeguard a future passage and all this means is you cannot build on it. The assumption that the land was to be connected, was based on here say, no legal / planning background whatsoever.
- The same issue still remains that Lodge road itself is not suitable for additional traffic (comment from one of the sites on portal) and it being a long straight road prone to speeding. The key issue however is the vicinity of the station and poor road layout there. The crossroads of Lodge road to station approach is dangerous and has no pedestrian crossing at all. May I remind everyone of the high amount of school children using this every day. The situation is already dangerous and will only become worse. In addition, the crossroads of Station Approach and Station Road is dangerous (no sight to the left towards the bridge) and at capacity at peak times.

Impact on the village

- Local amenities are stretched as it is, with healthcare, sewerage, water provisions, ... and other services being neigh on impossible to cater for the growing village population.

Following a lengthy debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to recommend refusal of the planning application (23/502352) on the grounds of;

Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan

- Objective 3 Layout for new development sites - avoidance of cul-de-sacs
- Policy H1 – local character – proposals not in tune with the character of the local area
- Policy H3 a range of tenures and sizes - no smaller homes
- Policy H4 Hen & Duckhurst Farm sections 1&2 refer to link road - the failure to deliver a link road is crucial in avoiding cul-de-sacs but also reducing traffic pressure on the crossroads
- Policy H6 – Ilke homes site area section 3 link road – no link road

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Building for Life 12

- Sections 1 to 4 integrating into the neighbourhood – lack of a link road
- Section 5 character – limited links to the character of Staplehurst
- Page 7 details connections in full and mentions avoiding ransom strips

Maidstone Local Plan

- **DM1** Principles of good design – failure to under pin the principles of good design.
- **SP19** Housing mix: The site has 2 - 4 bed housing. The 4 bed homes are three storey homes out of keeping with local housing. There are no starter 1 bed homes/flats or bungalows. The inclusion of some ragstone boundary walls does not fulfil DM1. The access on the design around the housing has roads ending in pedestrian only access making long routes for bin collection and residents, and a reduced choice of routes around the site. Hen & Duckhurst Farm sections 1&2 refer to link road - the failure to deliver a link road is crucial in avoiding cul-de-sacs but also reducing traffic pressure on the crossroads.
- **SP21** MBC Local Plan for economic development not residential. This application is almost purely residential with a space 'reserved for commercial use' to be built if someone expresses an interest.
- The allocation for this site in the Local Plan is an estimate of 78 houses, 88 is a 12 1/2 percent increase on the site which is an over-development. SP10 + SP5 of the Local Plan refers to about 710 houses and we have already had 800+, we don't have the infrastructure for more currently.
- **DM20** community facilities are currently already under pressure. We are referred to as a transport hub as we have a train station, yet we have limited service, increasingly reduced bus service and not even a taxi service. The local chemist, medical centre and education cover is straining at the seams and new parishioners having to access services elsewhere.
- **DM3** Natural Environment - We are not convinced that there is a net biodiversity gain as the site is currently a biodiverse site. Efforts to encourage Ilke to include allotments and not adding an orchard that will need maintaining, have been ignored. The site will rely completely on heat pumps; there will be no gas or solar panels. SPC have repeatedly pushed this point and Ilke have said their houses have the capacity to have solar panels but they have no plans to install any.
- **DM21** refers to transport impact and we would urge there to be much more investigation into the commuter traffic to the train station. The increased flow of traffic from the 88 new dwellings indicated will impact on the local roads.
- Lodge Road is already a busy road with cars parked, lorries coming and going and commuter traffic.
- Also there would be a knock-on impact to the already at capacity crossroads and Sainsbury roundabout.

The Parish Council also support the comments from the Kent Police regarding safety and the lack of footpaths on both side of the proposed roads. In addition, we are concerned about the lack of a pedestrian crossing at Lodge Road / Station Approach.

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

The Parish Council are concerned about the lack of "community infrastructure" particularly serious water supply issues and increased flooding due to Climate Change, plus ongoing foul drainage issues.

If the Planning Officer is minded to approve the planning application, Staplehurst Parish Council request that the application be referred to MBC Planning Committee.

The vote was a majority vote in favour of recommending refusal; 6 for, 0 against, 4 abstain

In addition the Council recognised that Ilke Homes were prepared to deliver the link road on their land and Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to ask the Clerk to write to MBC seeking clarity on the "link road" and request MBC to take "Counsel's legal opinion" on either the failure of BDW Homes to deliver the planning conditions or the failure of MBC to ensure the appropriate planning conditions were in place to deliver the link road.

This would clarify the current position and help ensure a similar situation did not for occur again in the future.

The vote was a major vote in favour of the above; 5 for, 0 against, 5 abstain

5. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS

Cllrs Perry, Riordan and Eerdekenes returned to the meeting, Cllr Riordan re-taking the Chair of the meeting.

5.1 Payment list

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the payment list below – agreed majority 9 for, 0 against and 4 abstained

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

<u>Approved Payments 1st June - 15th June 2023</u>	Amount
Amazon UK - Water Butt GSG	62.99
Sevenoaks DC - Premises Licence Jubilee Field	180.00
SLCC - Annual Membership Fee	279.00
KALC - Dynamic Cllr Training	60.00
Reimbursement WF Memory Card Reader	7.99
P&F Cleaning - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open/Sundries May	750.00
Choice Support - Village Planter Maintenance May	410.80
GDPR-info Ltd - DPO Support Services	350.00
Bumbles Plant Centre - Plants GSG	105.50
Hugofox Limited - Silver Subscription June	23.99
Bradley Hawkins - Strimming & Mowing Wimpey Field	150.00
KCC MVCP - Bioblitz Spring	420.00
Barriers Direct - Cycle Rack The Parade	275.68
Hartlake Garden Services - Installation of Benches & Bins SF	995.00
Hartlake Garden Services - Installation of Bin WF	275.00
KCS - Photocopier Rental - July-Sept	105.98
Homeleigh Timber - Bicycle Rack Accessories The Parade	21.41

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Amazon - Yellow Paint Jubilee Car Park Lines	75.50
PPL PRS Ltd - Music Licence Youth Club	357.52
Travel Claim	13.05
HMRC - TAX & NI May	1851.29
Payroll & Pension Costs - June	6736.16
123 Reg - Website Domain Renewal 2yr	28.78
Green Box Recycling - Skip re Community Payback	420.00
Sainsbury's - Toilet Rolls Youth Club	7.00
Maidstone Borough Council - Council Tax Room 1 June	62.00
Maidstone Borough Council - Council Tax Room 2-3 June	72.00
Maidstone Borough Council - Council Tax Youth Club June	121.00
Sage Payroll - June	8.40
Opus Energy - Surrneden Pavilion June	31.46
Opus Energy - Electricity Parish Office June	118.05
Opus Energy - Electricity Bell Lane Toilets June	22.31
Telecoms World - Winter Warm Rooms Mobile Phone Line June	11.99
npower - Street Light Energy May	73.89
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection May	69.84
Lloyds Bank Charges - June	7.00
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange June	242.36
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	14,802.94

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

0.00

5.2 Summation and Balance sheet

These were noted, Cllr Perry to contact the RFO to clarify a point before the next Council meeting.

5.3 Youth Club electricity supply

Following a debate Cllr Hotson proposed and Eerdekenes seconded to appoint Positize Electric on a three year deal - agreed 9 for and 4 abstain

5.4 Appointment of VAT consultant

Following a debate Eerdekenes proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve the resolution below by majority – agreed 9 for and 4 abstain

Resolution: To approve the appointment of Parkinson Partnership LLP (the KALC VAT expert) for the fee of £1,400 plus VAT

6. CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS - attached

Sainsbury Shuttle bus – a meeting next week to finalise, hopefully.

We are working our way through the Health and Safety at the Youth club.

Still waiting for Insurance Certificates from fitness instructors

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

We are chasing KCC highways about the various Yellow lines.

Note the Bell Lane Public toilet; the gent door lock is broken and we are trying to get it fixed. Will inform Council at the next meeting of the cost

Note that the Skip hire was £350 not £340 as previously agreed at Council but Staplehurst Community Trust are donating £175 towards the skip hire

7. PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION and DECISION

7.1 Allotments update report

Cllr Mclaughlin led a discussion, Cllr Pett raised concerns that the fencing was too high and "Stock fencing" maybe more appropriate in that location. The Clerk raised the point that planning permission would be required. At the conclusion of the debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded the resolution below which was agreed by majority 8 for , 1 against, 4 abstained

Resolution: to approve the perimeter security fencing specification below;

- 2.6m high by 160m long secure green wire mesh fencing around perimeter of allotments
- 3m reinforced concrete / steel fence post or similar
- A secure footpath gate on to the site

7.2 Greener Group work programme 2023

Cllr Castro led a discussion and following a debate Cllr Castro proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded the resolution below which was agreed by majority 9 for, 0 against and 4 abstained.

Resolution: To approve the work programme below

- a) QE II Remembrance Tree – up to £700 significant tree – **report back to Council on species of tree and location**
- b) Replant 17 Planters – up to £1,000 –
- c) Chestnut Avenue Bed – up to £250 – variety of bulbs
- d) Replacement Shrubs – up to £70
- e) 2 x large bags of compost up to £100 – general use
- f) Bio blitz £500 – working with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership – summer event
- g) Additional water butt for Library / Parade area – up to £100

It was noted that the next meeting will have a CIL report, the Clerk will request the trees from the Community Payback Team and renaming of Wimpey Field will be deferred until the new year.

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Hotson seconded to suspend Standing Orders and extend the meeting for 15 minutes to allow completion of the remaining business of the Council. – agreed majority 9 for, 0 against and 4 abstained.

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

7.3 Jubilee Field Management Committee Report

Cllr McLaughlin led a discussion and following a debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded the resolution below which was agreed majority 8 for, 0 against and 5 abstained

Resolution: To approve that age appropriate teams (u15 and above) would be able to play a minimum of 2 games next season on the main pitch.

7.4 Naming of Churchill Homes Development

Cllr Riordan led a discussion and following a debate Cllr Alesi proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded the resolution below which was agreed majority 8 for, 1 against and 4 abstained;

Resolution: To put forward Bakers House for the Churchill Homes apartment block and Bakers Cottages for the Churchill cottages

7.5 Parish Basic Allowances

The Clerk noted the attached report and confirmed the information below

that Parish Councillors Cllrs Riordan, Perry, Alesi, Arger, Castro, Eerdekenes, Farragher, Hotson, McLaughlin, McPhee and Sharp have agreed to **forgo** their Basic Parish Allowance

The report will be placed on the Council website.

8. CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:

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

9.1. Chairman's Report

Cllr Riordan updated the Council on the following:

He has received correspondence from Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council, which he will share, about seeking the re-opening of the High Weald Academy. This has caused a lot of disruption over the years. Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council are seeking a meeting with neighbouring Parish Council reps. – it was agreed that all should feedback comments to Cllr Riordan and that Cllr Riordan, Sharp and Martin would attend on behalf of Staplehurst Parish Council.

Potholes – seeking a meeting with KCC Highways to agree an action plan to sort out the potholes in Staplehurst can come forward and be delivered.

Further work this Saturday morning by the Greener Group and Community Payback at the Parade – all welcome

Good news about the Outdoor Gym plus the playground markings being done.
The Communications Group need a meeting in the near future.

Cllrs Riordan, Alesi and McLaughlin enjoyed an excellent celebration of 150 years of the Primary School.

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

Stuart McPhee has resigned as a Parish Councillor as he is moving away. We wish to record our thanks to Stuart McPhee for all his hard work as a Parish Councillor especially setting up and helping to run the Youth Club plus the Greener Group. He will be missed but we wish him all the best for the future.

9.2. Committee and working group minutes - noted

- 9.2.1. Planning Committee minutes of 12th June 2023.
- 9.2.2. Road Safety Group meeting, minutes to follow.
- 9.2.3. JFMC meeting, minutes to follow
- 9.2.4. SCEnic meeting , minutes to follow
- 9.2.5. 3G all-sports pitch working group meeting, minutes to follow
- 9.2.6. Finance and Strategy Group, next meeting 27th May 2023
- 9.2.7. NDP Review next meeting to follow
- 9.2.8. Greener Staplehurst Group 15th June 2023

10. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)
- No items

11. URGENT MATTERS

12. SPECIAL MOTION & REPORT - NA

Public Forum

A resident claimed that the "ransom strip" was around the whole of the BDW Homes estate so no option of extra pedestrian links.

Meeting closed...9.45pm.....

The minutes are not verbatim, but are an accurate reflection of the meeting

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