

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

19TH DECEMBER 2022

Public comments: a resident raised concerns about the lack of a quality bus service, No 5. As it broke down this week and did not turn up. Of course, bus usage figures will be low if the buses are poor quality and do not turn up.

Reports from County and Borough Councillors

Cllr Perry update the Council on the budget developments at MBC – they are looking slightly more promising at the moment thanks to 3% rate cap rather than 2% and increased government funding such as New Homes Bonus.

Thanked Cllr Riordan for his hard work on the Penryn planning application that he had been asked to visit when MBC enforcement Officers were present which resulted in a strongly worded email to the developer from MBC. Southern Water have also visited and commented to the developers in a similar vein – that the raising of the ground level requires appropriate SUDS and links to the main drain on Station Road.

We will keep chasing this matter and thank Helen Grant MP for supporting our arguments on behalf of residents.

Note disappointment regarding the “Service Station appeal decision” but undermined by lack of comment by KCC Highways.

Cllr Hotson queried why KCC Highways ever comment or appear at Planning meetings / appeals? It was agreed that the Clerk would ask for KCC Highways to attend a meeting with the Council.

Present: Cllrs Riordan, Buller, McPhee, Castro, Davidson-Houston, Alesi, Perry, Hotson and Eerdeken.

1. APOLOGIES Cllrs McLaughlin, Cllr Farragher, Sharp, Clifton and McClean

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

2.1. Declaration of lobbying – Cllr Davidson-Houston regarding 6.3

2.2. Declarations of changes to the Register of Interests - NA

2.3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda -Cllrs Alesi, Hotson, and Perry asked for dispensation for 6.3

2.4. Requests for Dispensation -Dispensation for Cllrs Alesi, Hotson and Perry regarding 6.3 were proposed by Cllr Buller seconded by Cllr Riordan and agreed unanimously

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

3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Pages 2046 – 2050 of 28th November 2022 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))

Cllr Buller proposed, Cllr Riordan seconded and it was agreed unanimously and Cllr Riordan signed them as accurate.

4. FINANCE REPORTS

4.1. Accounts for Payment –

Cllr Buller proposed, Cllr Riordan seconded the payment list and it was approved unanimously

Bradley Hawkins - A229/Chestnut Avenue Hedge Cut	60.00
Bradley Hawkins - Mowing & Strimming Wimpey Field	75.00
NALC - Levelling Up The Nation Webinar (AS)	51.71
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription December	23.99
Khurshid Khosla - Reimbursement Edging Logs GSG (WBF)	28.00
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open Nov	736.84
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries Nov	36.40
HM Land Registry - Land Search Lodge Rd	4.00
Adobe - Subscription November	15.17
Amazon - Cordless Trio Telephone Handset Parish Office	79.00
HM Land Registry - Title Register Search Lodge Rd	3.00
HM Land Registry - Title Register Search Lodge Rd	3.00
HM Land Registry - Title Plan View Lodge Rd	3.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 December	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 December	72.00
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilets Water Oct/Nov	69.39
Opus Energy - Surrenden Pavilion Electricity Nov	15.36
Opus Energy - Parish Office Electricity Nov	88.89
Opus Energy - Bell Lane Toilets Electricity Nov	23.03
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection Nov	64.80
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange Service December	214.32
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	1,819.04

4.2. Summation – Noted

5. CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS –

Following a discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Castro would act as an online bank signature. That we are still chasing Arriva for bus usage figures, then we can consider if we want to support the retention of the bus in weekday evenings. Note Arriva are also planning to cut Sunday services, which will impact shopping in Maidstone as well as isolate Staplehurst. Other Parishes are considering joining together to support local rural bus services, Clerk to put Staplehurst forward

6. PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION and DECISION

6.1 Community Payback Policy

Following a debate, where it was agreed the Clerk would issue a quarterly report Cllr McPhee, proposed, Cllr Castro seconded and it was agreed unanimously to approve the resolution below;

To approve the updated Community Payback Policy attached in Appendix A of this report
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Signed Chairman.....Date.....

6.2 VAT report update

Following a debate, Cllr McPhee proposed and Cllr Castro seconded an amendment to; "Following the VAT consultants recommendation retain the current non-VAT registered status due to current service provision and report back if the 3g all sports pitch is going ahead" This was agreed unanimously.

Cllr McPhee proposed, Cllr Castro seconded and it was agreed unanimously to approve the resolution below

Resolution: To approve following the VAT consultant's recommendation retain the current non-VAT registered status due to current service provision and report back if the 3g all sports pitch is going ahead

6.3 Jubilee Field Report proposed

Following a debate, Cllr Davidson-Houston proposed, Cllr Riordan seconded an amendment " to take proactive action prior to 27 February 2023 Council meeting to address dog mess on the Jubilee Field – signage, extra bins and engagement with dog walking community" agreed unanimously

Following a debate Cllr Davidson-Houston proposed, Cllr Riordan seconded an amendment " Re-open the main pitch area until the Council have reviewed the situation on 27th February 2023" This was not approved with a vote 2 for 5, against and 3 abstaining.

Cllr McPhee proposed and Cllr Castro seconded the resolution below it was agreed by majority 6 for , 3 against and 0 abstaining

Resolution: To

- Take proactive action prior to 27th February 2023 Council meeting to address dog mess on the Jubilee Field – signage, extra bins and engagement with dog walking community
- Take proactive action to address vandalism on Jubilee Field – police investigation into damage, Liaison with Maidstone Community Protection Team, Youth Service Outreach work to engage with young people and come back with proposal
- Keep the main pitch area locked while the actions above are implemented and review on 27th February 2023 when a final decision will be made on whether we keep it locked or reopen

6.4 Annual Meeting of the Parish

Following a debate, Cllr Hotson proposed, Cllr Perry seconded and the resolution below was agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve the Parish Council hosting the Annual Meeting of the Parish on Wednesday 17th May 2023, 7:30pm in the North Hall, Staplehurst Community Centre.

6.5 Public Toilets

Following a debate, it was agreed it was not cost effective to reopen a disabled toilet in the Parade when others are available, but keep under review Therefore, Cllr Riordan proposed, Cllr Buller seconded against the resolution and it was agreed unanimously

Resolution: Not to reopening of the public toilet at the Parade.

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

6.6 Surrenden Field Children's Play area

Following a debate, Cllr Riordan proposed, Cllr Castro seconded the resolution below and it was agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve the appointment of HAGS/SMP contracting team to install both climbing walls at a cost of £1,350 plus VAT

6.7 Outdoor Gym at Surrenden Field Tender

Following a debate, Cllr McPhee proposed, Cllr Eerdeken seconded the resolution below and it was agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve the Outdoor Gym tender document attached in **Appendix A** and the location in **Appendix B**

7. **CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES** for noting: -

7.1 Residents comments on Planning Committee, note response helping continuous improvement.

7.2 Wimpey Field – Medway Countryside Partnership are doing a Tag day and propose doing some extra clearance work at Wimpey Field 10th January 2023 – agreed

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

8.1. Chairmans Report – Oral report by Cllr Riordan

- a) Arriva, still chasing usage data
- b) Thanked Helen Grant for her support
- c) Note Village Golf Club seeking some CIL funding in Spring 2023
- d) Social event – cancelled and aiming to rearrange in early Feb 2023
- e) Youth Club toilet – tree route damaging pipe work need to do further work
- f) Community Pay Back were very helpful putting up Christmas tree / clearing Parade. Also mention to Cllrs Castro and Davidson-Houston. The CPB team will be back regularly from Feb 2023
- g) Temporary traffic lights now down
- h) Chairman's expenses, Chairman to ask F&S for increase as all of it goes on social event
- i) Thanked everyone for their support and wished everyone a Happy Christmas and New Year.

A resident raised the issue that Cllrs Alesi and Farragher did not have photos or Bio and Cllr Davidson-Houston did not have a photo on the Council website. Residents did not know who they are

Cllr Castro proposed and Cllr McPhee seconded to suspend Standing Orders to extend the meeting – agreed unanimously

8.2. Written reports on Committee, Group and Project activities - for noting.

Planning Committee – Minutes of the 5th December 2022 were noted

SCEnic – Cllr Sharp – minutes of meeting of 1st December 2022 were noted

Finance and Strategy Group minutes of meeting 7.12.2022 were noted

Jubilee Field Management Committee – minutes of meeting 6.12.22 were noted.

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

- Cllr Hotson and Alesi were concerned that electricity bill debt had grown so high. Clerk explained funding to pay the debt has been found and an increase DD from Football Club was in hand
- Cllr Riordan asked for an amendment “that the Semi-professional club does not pay players but pays expenses” is added - agreed

Road Safety Group – Cllr Sharp – minutes to follow

Communications Group – Minutes of the meeting on 23rd November 2022 were noted

Youth Club – meeting to be arranged

Greener Group – minutes of meeting held on 31st October 2022 were noted

Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – minutes to follow

3g All sports Group meeting – minutes of meeting held 9.12.22 were noted

9. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS NA

10. URGENT MATTERS- at the discretion of the Chairman, information only items for noting or for decision at a future meeting

11. Special Motion

- 11.1. To move that the public be excluded from item 11.2 due to its confidential nature.
- 11.2. The Clerk updated Council on staffing matters
- 11.3. Ground Maintenance Contracts 2023/24 were awarded to a mix of contractors; KCC Landscapes, Forestry First and local Contractor.

Meeting closed at 10pm

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