

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
South Hall, Village Centre
Monday 14th March 2022 at 7.30p.m.

PRESENT:

Councillors Buller, Castro, Clifton, Lain-Rose, Hotson, McLaughlin, McLean, McPhee, Perry, Sharp, Skinner, Perry who was in the Chair and Parish Clerk, Miss A Smith.

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Riordan for personal commitments and Councillor Bowden and Councillor Spearink for health reasons.

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the agenda:

- 2.1. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests – None declared.
- 2.2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda – None declared.
- 2.3. Requests for Dispensation. None requested.

3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

- 3.1. Pages 1979 – 1982 of 21st February 2022 available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes which were signed by Councillor Perry.

4. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS

- 4.1. Accounts for Payment – for approval.

It was RESOLVED that the listed accounts for payment were APPROVED. Expenditure for the period 16th February 2022 to 8th March 2022 totalled £16,126.19; income for the period totalled £3,996.90.

<u>Approved Payments 16th February - 8th March 2022</u>	Amount
Sapling Trees Various - GSG	63.18
HMRC Tax and NI January	1,838.50
Urban Hygiene - Anti Graffiti Coating	315.58
Amazon UK Ltd - Youth Club First Aid Items	22.75
Amazon UK Ltd - Silver Paint re Bollards The Parade WBF	33.47
Amazon UK Ltd - Black Paint re Bollards The Parade WBF	120.36
Amazon UK Ltd - Black Paint re High Street Railings	60.18
Amazon UK Ltd - Black Paint re High Street Railings	314.75
HAGS-SMP Ltd - Climbing Wall & Ramp Surrenden Play Area	3,199.20
Business Stream - Youth Club Water 12th Jan - Feb 1st	2.34
Payroll and Pension costs February	6,076.96
Skate Park Painting Final	1,500.00
Countryside Recycling - Waste Collection February	64.80
Homeleigh Timber - Caretaker Painting Accessories	8.21
Paxman Printing - Village Update Spring	850.60
Hugo Fox Ltd Silver Subscription	23.99
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Clean/Open Feb	736.84
Paxman Services (UK) Ltd - Bell Lane Toilet Sundries Feb	25.68
Adobe Ltd - Subscription February	15.17
Tricel Ltd - Electric Meter Box Door Youth Club	72.78

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Opus Energy - Electricity Surrenden Pavilion January	16.45
Opus Energy - Electricity Parish Office January	324.60
Opus Energy - Electricity Bell Lane Toilets January	23.97
Sage Global Services - Payroll March	8.40
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilet Water February	39.23
Opus Energy - Electricity Surrenden Pavilion February	17.18
Opus Energy - Electricity Parish Office February	115.96
Opus Energy - Electricity Bell Lane Toilets February	20.74
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange Services March	214.32
TOTAL CURRENT ACCOUNT EXPENDITURE	16,126.19

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

0.00

4.2. Summation of Accounts – for noting

NOTED by Councillors and published at <https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/financial-info/>.

4.3. Purchase skip hire for disposal of waste from the Youth Club building

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the hire of a 16yrd skip from Green Box Recycling at a cost of £375+ VAT to facilitate the removal of various furniture and fittings and waste materials from in and around the Youth Club building.

4.4. Refurbishment and repair of the pumping station for the Youth Club building

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the appointment of Maclin Pumps to undertake the full refurbishment and repair of the pumping station as outlined in the service report for a cost of £2,650 + VAT. Councillors raised concerns about the costs being incurred to date in getting the building to habitable use and whether the Council had sufficient funds for the project. Councillor McPhee explained about the money available in the budget and where it was sourced from. Councillor McPhee confirmed he was still awaiting the outcome from grant applications. Councillors understood that the Staplehurst Youth Group charity had funds remaining now they were closing and had indicated that they would offer some of these funds to the Council. Councillors requested that the Chair write to Trustees of the charity to request an increase in the donation, given the poor state of the building and the scale of works now known to be needed. The Clerk also confirmed that she was preparing 3 budgets; the costs to bring the building up to operational standards, the costs of maintaining the building ongoing and the costs for the proposed new Youth Club Group and confirmed that these would be brought to Council for approval in due course. It was also agreed that a standing item be added to the Finance and Strategy Group to enable them to closely monitor the situation.

4.5. Sponsored half page in the Downs Mail

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the purchase of a bi-annual half page sponsored page in the Downs Mail for one year as a trial at a cost of £400 + VAT. It was agreed that this be funded from reserves.

5. CORRESPONDENCE AND PARISH ISSUES5.1. Request for installation of memorial benches along Chestnut Avenue

Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the two requests to install memorial benches along Chestnut Avenue as set out in the papers; one from the family of a well-known family and the second from the WI for their centenary celebrations. Ownership of both benches will be donated to the Parish Council for ongoing upkeep and insurance purposes.

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6. PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS

6.1. Clerks Report

The Clerk updated Councillors that the painting work at the Skate Park was now completed and she encouraged Councillors to visit and view the work. She also advised that a press release had been prepared and agreed with MBC and would be issued later in the week, along with social media postings. The Clerk requested another Councillor become a bank signatory; Councillor Hotson volunteered. Finally, the Clerk updated Councillors on behalf of the Chair regarding a meeting he had attended the previous week with Councillors Perry and Parfitt-Reid with Arriva Bus and KCC Officers about the issues of the No5 Bus Service. The Chair had felt that the meeting had been positive and productive. He advised that the outcomes were to continue to monitor the service and pursue the outstanding issue of whether the S106 funding allocated to the service was being used. Councillors expressed concerns that the S106 funding shouldn't be used to cover the proposed cuts in service that are currently under consultation.

6.2. Written reports on Committee, Group and Project Activities

6.2.1. Communications Group – Councillors NOTED the report of 24th February

2022, published at [Communications Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/communications-group). Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the new timetable for the publication of the Village Update and Annual Report.

6.2.2. Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Councillors NOTED the report of the 16th

February 2022, published at [Neighbourhood Plan Review Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/neighbourhood-plan-review-group). The Clerk updated Councillors that unfortunately the Group had been unsuccessful in its bid to be included in the National Model Design Code Phase 2 Pilots.

6.2.3. Road Safety Working Group – Councillors NOTED the report of the 22nd

February 2022 published at [Road Safety Task and Finish Group - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/road-safety-task-and-finish-group) and the supplementary confidential internal report of the 25th February 2022.

Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the letter for residents regarding cutting back their boundary vegetation on the crossroads at Marden Road, Clapper Lane and Pagehurst Road. Councillors also RESOLVED to APPROVE the recommendations regarding the proposed traffic calming measures along the Marden Road. Councillors discussed the proposed measures at the Hawkenbury Bridge and confirmed they still had reservations that these would not have an impact in preventing accidents. Councillors commented that unfortunately not all accidents in that area were reported to the Councils Road Safety Group and they were therefore requesting that a freedom of information request regarding the costs and no of accidents at the bridge be lodged with KCC. It was agreed to investigate ways of capturing reports on the village social media pages.

6.2.4. Temporary Youth Working Group - Councillors NOTED the report of 22nd

February 2022, published at [Youth Club - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/youth-club)

Councillor McPhee updated Councillors on the positive meeting that had been held with the KCC Youth Officer and confirmed that KCC would take responsibility for the compliance requirements of the Youth Club Group and also assist with the recruitment and training of volunteers.

6.2.4.1. Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the Terms of Reference document for the group, as presented in the paper.

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6.2.4.2. Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE the installation of a computer bench in the Youth Club building, and thanked JBH Refurbishment for donating the materials and labour.

6.3. Oral Reports from Committee/Groups/Councillors

6.3.1. Chairman’s report – none

6.4. Councillor Surgery Feedback

Councillor Perry advised that queries had been raised regarding a tree in the High Street. He advised that the matter was being investigated.

7. REPORTS FROM OTHER COUNCILS, AGENCIES AND ORGANISATIONS

7.1. Borough Councillors Report – Oral reports by Councillor Perry & Councillor Brice.

Councillor Perry updated Councillors on the Boundary Commission consultation and urged them to submit responses. He stated that a parish council review was likely to be forthcoming after the review on boundaries for MBC was completed. He confirmed that MBC had set the Council Tax increase for their element at 2%. He confirmed that the new MBC constitution is to be implemented from April along with the new Cabinet based system of management. He also advised Councillors that progress was being made on the 1000 affordable homes project with 2 sites currently being identified, but not in Staplehurst.

7.2. County Councillors Report - Councillor Parfitt-Reid gave her apologies.

7.3. Police Report – Councillors noted the February report

7.4. Maidstone Area Committee of KALC – Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE that Councillor Lain-Rose would submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council to the Boundary Commission for England in respect of the proposals for Staplehurst. Councillors expressed the views that they were indeed pleased to see that there was no change being proposed for Staplehurst and that the ward would remain a two Councillor ward, with boundaries that remain aligned with those of the Parish. They felt that this accurately reflected the size of the Parish and would meet the needs of its community.

8. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

None

9. URGENT MATTERS

None.

10. SPECIAL MOTION

10.1. Councillors RESOLVED to APPROVE that the public be excluded from item 10.2 due to its confidential nature.

10.2. Temporary staffing support for the office

Councillors noted the confidential report given at the meeting. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE an initial budget of £5,000 be created from reserves to provide locum support for the office.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM

Two residents attended, one resident spoke about the increasing cases of coronavirus both nationally and in the village.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm