

Minutes of a Meeting of Staploe Parish Council held at 7.45pm on Tuesday 21st May 2019 in the Village Hall at Wyboston

Present: Cllr. J. Ibbett (Chair), Cllr. R. Squire, Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. E. Meola (joined after the Open Forum), Cllr. D. Smith, Cllr. J. Thomson, L. Crawford (Clerk) and one member of the public.

Apologies for absence. Cllr. V. Zwetsloot and Borough Cllr. T. Wootton

2019/037. Election of Chairman

Cllr. R. Squire nominated Cllr. J. Ibbett. Cllr. J. Thomson seconded and Councillors voted unanimously in favour. **Cllr. J. Ibbett was duly elected.**

2019/038. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr. R. Squire nominated Cllr. V. Zwetsloot. Cllr. J. Thomson seconded and Councillors voted unanimously in favour. **Cllr. V. Zwetsloot was duly elected in her absence.**

2019/039. Declarations of Acceptance of Office

Councillors signed their declarations of acceptance of office and agreed that Cllr. V. Zwetsloot's declaration could be signed after the meeting and received at the next meeting of the Council.

2019/040. Declarations of Interest and Registers of Members Interests

Cllr. J. Ibbett declared an interest in matters related to verge cutting because her husband is the contractor for this and Yew Tree Cottage as she owns the land opposite.

Cllr. G. Meola and Cllr. E. Meola declared an interest in Maye Cottage because they are neighbours.

Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. E. Meola and Cllr. D. Smith declared an interest in 35 Duloe because they are close neighbours.

Cllr. D. Smith declared an interest in the trees on Duloe Common and the gravel drive in Duloe because his property is adjacent to the Common and a near neighbour to the gravel drive.

2019/041. Minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2019

Having been previously circulated these were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

2019/042. Public Open Forum

A resident asked whether community speed watch could be resurrected and asked if he could join. Speedwatch had been put on hold in the hope that the mobile speed indicator device (SID) would be sufficient deterrent to speeding motorists. Councillors agreed that it would be a good idea to reinstate Community Speedwatch to gather number plates at key times identified by the mobile SID. The Clerk will send the resident details of how to be trained and advertise for more volunteers in the next newsletter.

It was also suggested that Mark Crawford should rotate the mobile speed indicator device around the three hamlets each time it runs out of battery and attempt to find a suitable location in central Duloe near the common as well as the current location near the vehicle

activated sign. The Clerk will ask him to analyse the data to identify the best time for the Speedwatch team to catch speeders in each hamlet.

2019/043. Appointments and Responsibilities

- **Staffing committee.** Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. J. Ibbett and Cllr. R. Squire
 - **Finance committee:** Cllr. R. Squire, Cllr. V. Zwetsloot and Cllr. D. Smith
 - **A1 Working Group.** Cllr. R. Squire, Cllr. D. Smith, Cllr. J. Ibbett and Tom Tagg
 - It was agreed to merge the two village hall working groups:
 - **Village Hall rebuild working group** Cllr. E. Meola, Cllr. J. Thomson, Cllr. V. Zwetsloot, Lucy Crawford, David Netherway and Mark Potts
 - **Village Hall Management Working Group.** This is formed from the members of what was the Village Hall Management Committee: Mark Crawford, Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. J. Ibbett, Cllr. E. Meola, Sue Solomon, Cheryl Hall, and Kevin Paveley
- Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Thomson.
- Rights of Way – no longer required
 - Speedwatch: Cllr. R. Squire, Cllr. V. Zwetsloot, and Robert Browning. Nigel Cutts has expressed an interest in the past. The Clerk will check whether he has been trained.

2019/044. Standing Orders and Terms of Reference

- The standing orders for the Staffing Committee and Finance Committee are covered under “Committees” in the Parish Council’s Standing Orders.
- The Clerk will combine the terms of reference for the Village Hall Rebuild Working Group and the Village Hall Management Working Group and submit them to both working groups for approval. However, it is anticipated that the Village Hall Committee may reform soon and take over as managing trustees.
- A1 Working Group. The terms of reference were reviewed and no changes were made.

2019/045. Community Events

- Barbecue on Duloe Playing Field Sunday 15th September. Cllr. J. Thomson can no longer attend but she can prepare a flyer for the summer newsletter. Cllr. E. Meola can print an extra flyer to go out before the event. Cllr. G. Meola will deliver in Duloe. The Clerk will e-mail reminders and add to Facebook as an event. Jane Arnold will be catering at £8 per head so we need to know numbers in advance.

2019/046. Borough Cllr. T. Wootton’s Ward Report

Election Results

Elections for the Mayor of Bedford Borough and Borough Councillors took place on the 2nd May. Dave Hodgson was re-elected Mayor and the Council’s political Groups are now represented as follows:

Liberal Democrat 15, Conservative 11, Labour 11, Green 2, Independent 1

The Mayor will soon decide on appointments to his Executive.

Local Plan 2030

The Planning Inspectorate has confirmed that it will undertake the Examination of the Borough Council's Local Plan 2030 in hearings on the following dates at Borough Hall:

Wednesday 29 May 2019 – Friday 31 May 2019

Tuesday 4 June 2019 – Friday 7 June 2019

Tuesday 18 June 2019 – Friday 21 June 2019

Monday 24 June 2019 – Thursday 27 June 2019

The Examination will assess whether or not the Local Plan is legally compliant and 'sound' in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Individuals and representatives of groups who responded to the Council's consultations in 2018 may be asked to make representations, if they indicated at the time that they would like to do so. Members of the public are welcome to attend the hearings. Further details can be seen at www.bedford.gov.uk/examination

East Midlands Trains Franchise

The Department for Transport (DfT) has awarded the new East Midland Railway franchise to Abellio, which will take over from Stagecoach in August.

The East Midlands Railway is the line providing fast trains to Bedford (i.e. those travelling to and from St Pancras in under 40 minutes). Since May 2018 fast trains have not been serving Bedford in peak hours due to an upgrade to the Midland Main Line. The DfT has stated to local media that the peak hours service will return to Bedford (with 2 trains per hour) once the upgrade to the Midland Main Line has been completed towards the end of 2020.

Bedford is currently on the 'Intercity' line which runs from St Pancras to Derby and Nottingham, amongst others. Under the new franchise Bedford will be on the London – Corby line, meaning that those travelling beyond that will have to change trains at Kettering.

Relief Road Bid

At the end of March the Borough Council submitted a bid to the Government for £15m to deliver a new road to reduce congestion in the Midland Road area. If approved, the road will connect the southern end of Ashburnham Road with Commercial Road (adjacent to Prebend Street and the Post Office depot). No further details have been released at this stage.

Rough Sleeper Initiative

The Council is to receive £383k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to continue a range of services to support rough sleepers. The money will be used to provide additional units of accommodation and outreach workers.

Hospital Merger

The proposed merger between Bedford Hospital Trust and Luton & Dunstable Hospital Trust is still no further forward. In December a bid from the Trusts for around £150m to enable the merger was refused, meaning that alternative funding options are now being considered.

When the merger was announced in 2017 both Chief Executives pledged that it would see the retention of key services on both sites including maternity, paediatrics and A&E.

Policing

Knife Crime

Bedfordshire Police was awarded £1m from the Government on the 17th April to tackle violent crime. This is in addition to the successful bid for £4.571m in December 2018 for the same purpose. Further details can be seen at: <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/news-and-appeals/force-wins-home-office-awards-april19>

Chief Constable Resignation

At the beginning of April it was announced that Bedfordshire Police's Chief Constable, Jon Boutcher, is to step down from his role in July. For more information see: <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/news-and-appeals/chief-constable-stands-down>

Council Website

A feature of the Council's new website is the inclusion of 'customer journeys' which aim to make it easier to report or discuss certain issues. For example, residents can now report potholes, graffiti and noise nuisance using the website. New customer journeys are undergoing testing and are being added to the site incrementally. See www.bedford.gov.uk and click on 'Pay, report, request it'

Cllr Tom Wootton: tom.wootton@bedford.gov.uk / 07771575227

Ward Fund

Cllr. J. Thomson proposed that the Council consider installing a defibrillator in the bus shelter in Honeydon. Councillors were in favour of further research into this. The Clerk will

research requirements eg. electricity and Cllr. J. Thomson will obtain 3 quotes for the cost of the defibrillator, cabinet and training volunteers.

The Clerk suggested that one other option if a defibrillator is not suitable might be to purchase a larger dog bin for Woodhouse Lane as the current one is always overflowing by the end of the two week collection cycle.

2019/047. Finance

- The receipts and payments were examined in advance of the meeting and proposed by Cllr. J. Thomson and seconded by Cllr. R. Squire. They are listed on p6
- The bank reconciliation for 18th May was compared with the bank statements by Cllr. J. Thomson. It is listed on p7
- The reserves as of 18th May are listed on p8
- Internal audit report 29th April 2019 (Kim Webb). Having been previously circulated the internal audit report was accepted by the Council.
- Approve Annual Return for 2018/19. Having been previously circulated the Annual Return (External Audit Exemption Certificate, Annual Governance Statement, Internal Audit and Accounting Statements) was signed by Cllr. J. Ibbett and the Clerk on behalf of the Council.
- **It was resolved to start an earmarked asset replacement reserve** for replacement of eg. play equipment, Clerk's laptop and printer, street lights. Proposed by Cllr. D. Smith and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola.
- **It was resolved to transfer £1950 into the earmarked reserve for rebuilding the Village Hall as per the budget.** Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. R. Squire.
- The Clerk reported that VAT for 2018/19 had been reclaimed and amounted to £1688.81
- **It was resolved to continue direct debits for electricity, Data Protection (Information Commissioner's Office), and e-mail hosting.**

May 2019

Summary of Transactions for Staploe Parish Council for Approval at Meeting in:						May-19
Main Account Payments						
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Cheque Number	Amount
2	05/04/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Field grass cutting 1/8	Standing order		£157.50
3	05/04/2019	M Ibbett	Highways grass cutting 1/8	Standing order		£180.00
4	05/04/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Common grass cutting 1/8	Standing order		£6.08
5	08/04/2019	Opus Energy	Electricity for street lights 19th Feb to 21st March	Direct Debit		£45.88
6	10/04/2019	1&1 Internet	Domain for year & one month e-mail	Direct Debit		£17.98
10	25/04/2019	SLCC	Half the subs for Clerk	BACS		£68.00
11	25/04/2019	Bedford Borough Council	Refund of payment made in error	BACS		£10,500.00
13	03/05/2019	BATPC	Annual subs	BACS		£93.00
14	07/05/2019	Opus Energy	Electricity for street lights 22nd March to 20th April	Direct Debit		£22.49
15	07/05/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Common grass cutting 2/8	Standing order		£6.08
16	07/05/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Field grass cutting 2/8	Standing order		£157.50
17	07/05/2019	M Ibbett	Highways grass cutting 2/8	Standing order		£180.00
18	10/05/2019	1&1 Internet	One month's e-mail hosting	Direct Debit		£5.99
19	19/05/2019	PC World Business	MS office & virus check	BACS		£69.96
20	19/05/2019	Cartridgesave	Cyan ink cartridge (some credit on account)	BACS		£3.02
21	21/05/2019	Norris and Fisher	Insurance	BACS		£356.05
22	21/05/2019	Wyboston Village Hall	Hall hire for May meeting	BACS		£20.00
23	21/05/2019	L. Crawford	Clerk's expenses Mch-Apr	Cheque	100909	£32.81
24	21/05/2019	Kim Webb	Internal audit fee	BACS		£60.00
25	24/06/2019	L. Crawford	Clerk's salary Apr-Jun	Cheque	100910	£814.97
26	24/06/2019	Bedfordshire Pension Fund	Clerk's pension Apr-Jun	Cheque	100911	£235.94
27	30/06/2019	Information Commissioner's Office	Data protection fee	Direct Debit		£35.00
Total						£13,068.25
Main Account Receipts						
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount
7	15/04/2019	Bedford Borough Council	First half of precept	Credit		£5,250.00
8	15/04/2019	Bedford Borough Council	Payment made in error	Credit		£10,500.00
9	16/04/2019	Celia Woolley	Book sales from Hamlets Exchange	Credit		£25.00
Total						£15,775.00
Savings Account Receipts						
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount
1	01/04/2019	Barclays Bank	Interest	Credit		£2.82
12	01/05/2019	Barclays Bank	Interest for April	Credit		£2.73
Total						£5.55
Transfers						
Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Type of transaction	Reference	CommAcc	Savings Acc
None						
Posted balances after the above transactions clear						
Community Account 30833940				£8,482.87		
Base Rate Savings 43461580				£8,300.04		
Payments Account 13099075				Zero		

STAPLOE PARISH COUNCIL BANK RECONCILIATION 1st APRIL 2019 TO 18/05/2019							
Date of bank statement			18/05/2019	Line of cash book:		26	
Prepared by Mrs. Lucy Crawford, Parish Clerk							
				BARCLAYS			
				Community Account 30833940			
DATE				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£5,776.12				
18-May-19	Posted balance per accounts		£10,110.62	£15,775.00	£11,440.50	£0.00	<u>£10,110.62</u>
Unpresented cheques / uncleared payments:							
	None						
	Total				£0.00		
18-May-19	Balance as per bank statement		£10,110.62				
18-May-19	Posted balance - cleared balan		£-				
18-May-19	Balance cf		£10,110.62				
				BARCLAYS			
				Base Rate Savings 43461580			
				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£8,294.49				
18-May-19	Posted balance as per accounts		£8,300.04	£5.55	£0.00	£0.00	<u>£8,300.04</u>
18-May-19	Balance as per bank statement		£8,300.04				
18-May-19	Posted balance - cleared balance		£-				
18-May-19	Balance cf		£8,300.04				
Summary for all accounts				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£14,070.61				
18-May-19	Balance per accounts		£18,410.66	£15,780.55	£11,440.50	£-	<u>£18,410.66</u>
18-May-19	Balance per bank statements		£18,410.66				<u>£18,410.66</u>
18-May-19	Balance cf		£18,410.66				

May 2019

Staploe Parish Council Reserves 18th May 2019					
Earmarked Reserve	Funds Reserved 01/04/2019	Receipts to reserve to 18/05/2019	Payments from reserve to 18/05/2019	Balance close of 18/05/2019	Comment
Village Hall Rebuild Fund	£6,260.00	£1,950.00		£8,210.00	
CIL Money	£1,483.80			£1,483.80	From Topham End Farm. £120 used towards street lights. Remainder to be used for Village Hall rebuild.
Heater refund (from Ward Fund 2018)	£660.00			£660.00	Refund for Village Hall heaters. (£140 used towards bus shelter, remainder to be used to purchase items for new hall).
Election fund	£550.00			£550.00	
Transparency Code Grant	£125.50		£58.30	£67.20	Bought laptop in 2018. Use remainder for software subscriptions.
Literature & info fund	£48.41			£48.41	
Total earmarked reserves	£9,127.71	£1,950.00	£58.30	£11,019.41	
Available reserves	£4,942.90			£7,391.25	
Total funds	£14,070.61			£18,410.66	
Earmarked reserves = funds set aside for a specific purpose. These can only be allocated to another purpose if the council passes a resolution to do so.					
Available reserves = total balance in the accounts less the earmarked reserves. This should be 50-100% of our precept ie. £5250 - £10500					
Therefore £7391.25 is within the recommended range.					

2019/048. Planning

The following planning applications were considered:

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
19/00878/FUL	Full Planning Application	Single storey rear extension	35 Duloe St Neots PE19 5HP	04/06/2019	19/00878/FUL
19/00308/S73A	Retrospective application	Erection of a new single storey recreational and storage building (Development already carried out)	Yew Tree Cottage Honeydon Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 2LP	15/05/2019 extended to 22nd May	19/00308/S73A
19/00744/FUL	Full Planning Application	Extension to existing grain store	Lower Honeydon Farm	21/05/2019	19/00744/FUL
19/00618/FUL	Full Planning Application	Application for the erection a machinery and hay store	Egerton Acres Land Adjoining The Lane Staploe	15/05/2019 extended to 22nd May	19/00618/FUL
19/00604/FUL	Full Planning Application	Erection of replacement outbuilding.	Maye Cottage 53 Woodhouse Lane Duloe St Neots PE19 5HR	30/04/2019	19/00604/FUL

- 19/00878/FUL 35, Duloe. Councillors had no objections.
- 19/00308/S73A Yew Tree Cottage. Councillors objected on the grounds that it is a very large building and they are concerned that it may be put to residential use effectively creating a new dwelling in open countryside which is against saved policy H26 of Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 which states that planning permission will not be granted for housing in open countryside and none of the exceptions in this policy are relevant in this case. The Parish Council have received several objections to the development from residents.
- 19/00744/FUL Lower Honeydon Farm. Extension to existing grain store. No objection providing the barn is for agricultural use.
- 19/00618/FUL Egerton Acres. Machinery and hay store. No objection but Councillors asked for it to be landscaped with some trees either side and the barn sheeting to be a natural colour such as Juniper Green so it blends in to what was a field.
- 19/00604/FUL Maye Cottage outbuilding. Councillors did not respond to this application before the deadline but for the record they support the application.
- The Clerk reported that there were changes to National Planning Policy relating to the calculation of housing need earlier this year. These mean that Bedford Borough Council will need to build approximately 35% more houses. Initially it was believed that the transitional arrangements would enable Bedford Borough Council to judge planning applications against their emerging Local Plan 2030 assessment of housing

need i.e. the lower figure of 970 per year. However, it now appears that until the new Local Plan is approved by the government appointed inspectors and adopted by Bedford Borough Council – expected to be towards the end of 2019 - Bedford Borough Council will be required to use the new 35% higher figure of “housing need” i.e. 1,300 new homes per year. Once the Local Plan 2030 is approved by Government, Bedford Borough Council will then be able to revert to the Local Plan 2030 housing need figure of 970 per year. This means that until the Local Plan is approved Bedford Borough Council is unable to show that it has a 5 Year Housing Land Supply. It can only demonstrate a 3.7 Year Housing Land Supply which means that it is unable to defend its current or emerging Local Plan 2030 housing plans from opportunistic planning applications submitted by landowners, developers and others. The Campaign to Protect Rural England have suggested parish councils should write to MP Alistair Burt to express our concern. **It was resolved to write to Alistair Burt to express our concern.** Proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and seconded by Cllr. J. Thomson.

2019/049. Highways

- The Clerk reported that she and Cllr. J. Thomson had held a meeting with Andrew Prigmore from Bedford Borough Council Highways department and five residents of Honeydon on 3rd May. Following the meeting the Clerk raised some matters that had been reported in Upper Staploe and Duloe and his response is given here.

The issue of concern is that parishioners have experienced problems with large HGV's trying to negotiate the bend at Diary Farm and getting stuck, sometimes leaning dangerously towards the cottage when trying to mount the bank. This is particularly bad when the Bushmead Road has been closed.
- *Andrew was of the opinion that HGV's travelling through this part of Honeydon would not be doing so except for access. Residents pointed out that there were other routes they could use which were more suitable ie. to the south and that there had been 3 occasions when the Bushmead Road was closed recently and traffic had been diverted elsewhere but chose not to follow the diversion and came through Honeydon causing havoc with large HGV's reversing back down the road in tailbacks.*
- *It was agreed that:*
 - *The Highways Department will add repeat “Unsuitable for HGV” signs near the bus shelter and in Begwary beyond White House Farm*
 - *Highways will consider closing the road from the bus shelter to Begwary next time there is a road closure on the Bushmead Road (he explained that this is very expensive) whilst allowing access for residents*
 - *Changes to the speed limit were not necessary at this stage*
 - *Residents will gather evidence of accidents / photos of HGV's struggling to get round the bend*
 - *Highways will remove the black and white plastic verge markers on the bend in Begwary. These were put in at the Parish Council's request a couple of years ago because people were pulling onto the verge and causing deep ruts to form but residents would prefer that they be removed as they prevent people from pulling off the carriageway when they need to.*
 - *The Clerk should ask the Parish Council to consider writing to the landlord of the industrial site at Lower Goodwick Farm to ask him to consider letting the site to a tenant which will generate less traffic than Mervyn Lambert did and which is aware that the road is unsuitable for*

HGV's and also ask him to request that HGV's access the site from the south rather than to the north round the sharp bend at Dairy Cottage.

- *Andrew was asked to find out when the reinforcement works along the bank by East Cottage will be done. Following the meeting he explained that the scheme to replace the railings would involve excavating the road and constructing a retaining wall. The cost of this work is likely to be in excess of £300,000 and is therefore unlikely to be funded in the foreseeable future. His colleagues are therefore currently considering other options for this area and hope to advise the Parish Council in the summer months.*
- *Posts on the verge in Upper Staploe. Andrew explained that nothing should be placed on the verge as it is part of the highway but he was not unduly concerned about these posts as they are visible and not too solid and there are spaces to pull over. He explained that the Highways Department will take action if the Parish Council ask them to do so but the Parish Council should then be prepared to enforce this throughout the parish.*
- *Gravel drive in Duloe. Andrew explained that the Highways Department will be writing to the resident in Duloe with the gravel drive as they have no record that the owner has requested permission to create a driveway down to the road and he is concerned that the edging is not secure and the gravel could spill onto the road. As part of assessing any application the Highways Department will consider whether the whole of the front boundary to the highway should be an open access to his property or just a part of it (thereby leaving some parking space for others).*
- Councillors were unanimously in favour of the following proposals:
 - **It was resolved that the Clerk should inform Google maps and Tom Tom that the bend in Honeydon is not wide enough for large HGV's**
 - **It was resolved that the Clerk should request that the verge markers from Begwary be moved to Manor Farm Lane where the missing railings are.**
 - **It was resolved to write to the landlord of the site at Lower Goodwick Farm to request that he asks future tenants to avoid driving through Honeydon but to use Staploe Road following the problems residents experienced with Mervyn Lambert.**
 - **It was resolved that there was no need to request that the posts on the verge outside Chestnut Cottage and Tally Ho be removed.**
- The Clerk reported that the speed limit between Staploe and Duloe is due to be reviewed in late summer 2019

2019/050. E-mail hosting

- **It was resolved to approve an annual spend of £10 per year for hosting the "staploe.org.uk" domain name (it was free last year)**
- **It was resolved to continue using 1&1 Ionos as our e-mail host at a cost of up to £60 per year.** Their costs for e-mail hosting have increased from 99p to £4.99 per month since we came off promotion. Alternatively they have offered a new promotion of 99p per month for 6 months and £10 per month for the following 6 months (with no tie in so we can look elsewhere). Alternatives would mean setting up our mailboxes again which would be time consuming for all concerned.

2019/051. Insurance and Assets

- The land and asset registers were reviewed and approved and will be added to the website.
- The Parish Council annual insurance policy was approved for renewal. We are in a fixed deal with Norris & Fisher but there have been some changes to items insured or the value (eg. street light replacement value is now lower than it was). The premium is £356.05 (budget is for £385).
- Having been previously circulated the street light inventory was approved.

2019/052. Duloe Common

- BPHA have accepted responsibility for the ash tree adjacent to the vehicular access to number 31. It has several large dead limbs and they are due to assess it shortly.
- Boundary tree inspections. There are a number of mature trees overhanging the common and footpath 16 from the eastern boundary, some of which are ash trees with some dead branches. These are owned by Hail Weston Farms. **It was resolved that the Clerk should write to the owners and request that these be inspected and works carried out as necessary to make them safe.**

2019/053. Village Hall and Playing Field

- **It was resolved not to accept the offer of insured advice re VAT for the Village Hall demolition and rebuild from Steve Parkinson** for £75 because circumstances might change by the time we are ready to build. Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. D. Smith.
- Cllr. G. Meola offered to try to recruit a volunteer to inspect the hall, containers, and field and empty the playing field bin (replacing the Clerk) but if she cannot find anyone then she kindly offered to do it herself.
- The specification agreed with Bradgate for cutting the field was for 8 cuts from April to November (ie. an average of once per month). However, Bradgate have expressed concern that once per month is not frequent enough and the grass could get so long in a month that it might become difficult to cut requiring a lot of time and fuel to do so. They would prefer to cut every two weeks and they can only do two or four week rotations (not three weeks). **It was resolved that grass cutting should be included on the playing field inspection, that the Clerk should ask Bradgate to inform us when they cut the grass and that we should give permission for Bradgate to do two extra cuts during the season and allow them to choose when to do them.** Proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and seconded by Cllr. E. Meola. Each extra cut costs £44.08. We are paying £1051.44 ex VAT for the 8 cuts because this price includes weed and moss treatments. We have £1192 in the budget for grass cutting and treatment and hedge cutting (£55 towards cutting the hedge in 2020).
- **It was resolved to donate our regular £150 maintenance payment to the Village Hall account rather than retain it in the Village Hall rebuild earmarked reserve.** Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

2019/054. Choose Electricity Supply for Street Lights

The current fixed contract is with Opus Energy and expires on 29th December 2019. It costs £330.79 per year at the current rates (but this will increase significantly at the end of the contract). We have £300 per year in the budget.

SSE have offered a 51 month (4.25 year) fixed contract for £282.37
Haven have offered a 5 year fixed contract for £337.46

Both can hold their prices until the current contract expires. **It was resolved to accept the quote from SSE.** Proposed by Cllr. D. Smith and seconded by Cllr. J. Thomson.

2019/055. Review Code of Conduct

- **It was resolved to accept the revised Code of Conduct.** Unanimously approved. This is adapted from Bedford Borough Council's Code of Conduct – the only revisions being to change Bedford Borough Council to Staploe Parish Council throughout and to change "Chief Financial Officer" (ie. at Bedford Borough Council) to "Responsible Financial Officer"(ie. the Clerk).

2019/056. Police and Crime

- Cllr. R. Squire will attend the Annual Parish Conference Tuesday 1st October 6pm – 7.30pm. Flitwick. Cllr. E. Meola may attend if available.
- 3 Shires Community Partnership (private security firm offer to parishes in the area). **It was resolved not to request their services as there was not thought to be a need for this and it would be very expensive for a small parish such as ours.** Unanimous.

2019/057. Clerk's Contract, Salary and Pension

- Performance review. This was conducted by Cllr. R. Squire and Cllr. G. Meola on 20th May.
- Review contract. This was postponed until the July meeting.
- Review salary and pension. The Clerk's salary remained at Salary Point 25 on the NJC scale and the Clerk received a pay increase in accordance with the NJC rates of pay in April 2019 to £12.39 per hour.

2019/058. Determine eligibility for General Power of Competence

Staploe Parish Council are not eligible to use this power as the Clerk is not CILCA qualified. This power enables a Parish Council to do anything an individual may do, unless specifically prohibited. However, the Clerk explained that there are other powers available which they can use to do any of things the Parish Council are likely to want to do so the General Power of Competence is unlikely to be needed.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 16th July followed by a meeting of Duloe Playing Field Charity

The meeting closed at 10pm