

Minutes of a Meeting of Staploe Parish Council held at 7.45pm on Tuesday 17th September 2019 in the Village Hall at Colmworth Village Hall

Present: Cllr. J. Ibbett (arrived 8.40pm), Cllr. V. Zwetsloot (Chair until 8.40pm), Cllr. R. Squire, Cllr. D. Smith, Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. E. Meola, Cllr. J. Thomson, L. Crawford (Clerk), Borough Cllr. T. Wootton and two members of the public.

Apologies for absence: Cllr. J. Ibbett due to arrive late

2019/076. Declarations of interest

None

2019/077. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th July 2019

Having been previously circulated the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and Cllr. E. Meola.

2019/078. Public Open Forum

A resident of Staploe explained his preferences regarding road names in Staploe. His first preference is no name, second is Brookside or North View and the final choice would be Brewers Lane.

Another parishioner expressed a preference for no name and asked the Parish Council to chase the speed limit review between Duloe and Staploe.

Cllr. E. Meola expressed concern about suspected drug use in Woodhouse Lane. The Clerk suggested that residents call 101 and report it. Cllr. E. Meola explained that the police had not been interested in the past unless they had registration numbers and descriptions. Cllr. G. Meola explained that residents did not feel comfortable gathering registration numbers and descriptions after dark when some of the drivers could be threatening. The Clerk agreed to write to the police and explain that residents were concerned that County Lines are involved and ask the police to increase their patrols in the area. She emphasised that without calls to 101 the police would be unlikely to respond with increased patrols.

2019/079. Community Events

- Harvest supper. Saturday 5th October 2019 at 6.30pm for 7pm meal. The Clerk will print fliers for delivery soon after this meeting. Cllr. G. Meola proposed that £15 from the Parish Council social events budget be used to contribute towards the hall hire for the Harvest Supper. Councillors were unanimously in favour.

2019/080. Planning

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
19/01743/CPNQ	Prior notification for change of use. Not a planning application (permitted development).	Change of use from agricultural buildings to three dwellinghouses	Lower Goodwick Farm, Begwary, Bedfordshire MK44 2NX	04/10/2019	19/01743/CPNQ

2019/081. Ward Report

Borough Cllr. T. Wootton's report.

Local Plan 2030

The Council's Local Plan, outlining sites for housing and employment growth to the year 2030, was subject to 'Examination' by the Planning Inspectorate in June and July, with hearings taking place at Borough Hall. This process provided an assessment of the Plan's 'soundness' by reviewing its proposals and evidence base, as well as hearing submissions from Council officers and external stakeholders.

A consultation was launched on the 19th August, lasting until the 1st October, on 'main modifications' proposed by the Planning Inspectors to ensure that the Plan is sound and compliant with national policies. Amongst the main modifications is the requirement that the Plan must include an 'Early Review Policy'. This means that the Local Plan will need to be updated and re-submitted for Examination within three years. This is as a result of the decision last year to reduce the length of the Plan period from 2035 to 2030 (requiring fewer homes to be allocated). There is also the need for the Plan to consider the implications of the emerging Oxford – Cambridge Arc policy which is set to increase house building requirements in the region and lead to the development of associated infrastructure, including the East West Rail project linking Oxford – Cambridge via Bedford. For more information on the consultation and the main modification search 'Bedford Local Plan 2030'.

Council Agrees Funding for New Projects

Funding for a range of new Council projects was agreed at a meeting of all councillors on the 17th July, including funds to support the town centre. A review of the final accounts for 2018/19 yielded an underspend of £800k which has been allocated to three projects, namely; £350k for new average speed cameras; £250k for required works at the Council's depots, and; £200k for security improvements at the Willow Drift traveller site, adjacent to Meadow Lane on the A603.

Councillors also agreed around £2.3m of funding for new initiatives following a review of reserves, summarised as follows:

- *Public events and activities to support Bedford town centre*
- *A reintroduction of the Climate Change Fund, supporting local organisations with grants to reduce their carbon emissions*
- *A 'Young People Empowerment Fund' to assist voluntary organisations offering support to improve the skills of children and young people*
- *Additional funding to provide improvements to open spaces, highways and the public realm*
- *A continuation of the Council's Jobs Hub for a further four years, offering careers advice and guidance to job seekers*

Bedford Town Centre Consultation

A consultation has been launched by the Council on the future of Bedford town centre. Residents, visitors and businesses have the opportunity to set out their views on the town centre shopping area and ideas on what would attract them to come into Bedford on a more regular basis. The survey can be completed at <https://forms.bedford.gov.uk/TCS/>

Hospital Merger

The Chief Executives of Bedford Hospital and Luton & Dunstable Hospital have welcomed £99.5m of Government funding which is set to enable the merger of the Trusts. The Department for Health announced the funding would provide a new intensive care block, delivery suite and operating theatres at Luton & Dunstable. The merger, announced in autumn 2017, pledged to protect key services at Bedford Hospital including A & E, maternity and paediatrics.

Rough Sleeper Support Grants

The Council has accepted grant funding of £547k from the Government to deliver a range of support services for rough sleepers, as set out below:

- *£95k is to be available for homelessness prevention work*
- *£221k will be used to provide a 24 hour 'Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub' based at 26 Harpur Street in the town centre, providing overnight beds as well as cooking and washing facilities whilst housing needs are assessed*
- *£125k will fund 'Rough Sleeper Navigators' for a 12 month period to ensure rough sleepers have access to services, providing in particular support to those with complex needs*
- *£106k has been allocated to employ Local Lettings Officers for 12 months who will work with housing providers to provide secure accommodation for rough sleepers.*

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Support

The Council has launched a 'Local Offer' website, providing details of support and services available to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes details of health services, family support and entertainment activities. For more information see localoffer.bedford.gov.uk

Children's Mental Health Support

The Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG), the organisation responsible for organising local NHS services, and Bedford Borough Council have commissioned a new online mental health resource for children and young people. The service, called 'Kooth', offers emotional and wellbeing support to children and young people aged 11 – 19. It provides one-to-one counselling and self-help materials on issues including exam stress and anxiety for 1700 users logging in every day around the country. For more information see <https://www.kooth.com/>

Ward Fund

The Ward Fund allows councillors to support community schemes. Please do get in touch if you would like to discuss any potential projects. The following deadlines apply: highways and greenspace – 13th September; litter bins / salt bins – 22nd November, and; projects supporting external organisations – 13th December.

'Active Adults' Exercise Classes

The Council has started taking bookings for its 'Active Adults' exercise class programme. For more details search 'active adults Bedford'

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

- Ward Fund.

Supplier	Model	Defibrillator	Cabinet	Total ex VAT	Link defib	Link cabinet
Thedefibpad.co.uk	Heartsine Samaritan PAD 360P	899	389	1288	heartsine-samaritan-pad-360p	outdoor-cabinet-with-heater-light
Thedefibpad.co.uk	Physio control Lifepak	892.5	439	1331.5	physio-control-lifepak-crplus	outdoor-defibrillator-cabinet-with-lock-heater-light
Qualsafe	Community Outdoor Package			1322.5	Outdoor-Defibrillator-Package	

It was resolved to apply to the Ward Fund for option 2 the Physio Control Lifepak as it comes with a lockable cabinet and supplement the balance from the Parish Council's unearmarked reserve. Proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and seconded by Cllr. J. Thomson.

- Consider:
 - Location. An electricity source is required to heat the cabinet. The owners of the Dance Hall at Chestnuts have agreed to locate it next to noticeboard and for us to connect it to the mains.
 - Running costs. Electricity approximately £60 per year, parts approx. £135 per year. £205 total. It was resolved that the Parish Council would fund the running costs. Proposed by Cllr. V. Zwetsloot and seconded by Cllr. J. Thomson.
 - Monthly inspections. It was resolved to invite parishioners to volunteer but Cllr. J. Thomson is happy to inspect if no one volunteers. Proposed by Cllr. J. Thomson and seconded by Cllr. E. Meola.
- Ward Forum. Staploe hosting in Wyboston Village Hall on Thursday 17th October 6.30 for 7pm. Cllr. J. Ibbett cannot attend but Cllr. V. Zwetsloot agreed to host the meeting. Borough Cllr. T. Wootton will chair the meeting. Councillors requested that the Clerk arrange for antisocial behaviour and the end of the Bedsparishes websites be on the agenda for the forum.

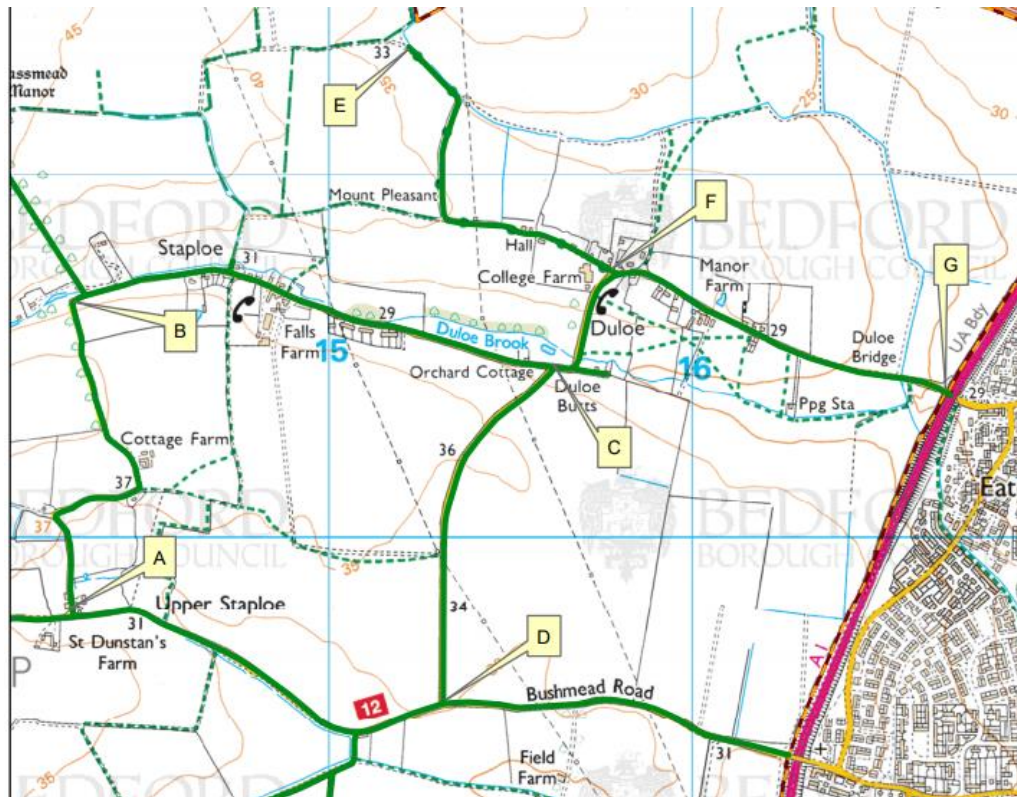
2019/082. Road names in Staploe and Duloe

The Borough named the main road through Staploe "Gypsy Lane" in error (we had requested that it remained unnamed) and have now corrected this. Gypsy Lane is a historic name for the road from just west of Bassmead drive to Bushmead Road and they are now using this road name correctly for the houses only on this stretch of road. However, the Borough Council have to have a descriptor for every road in the parish and this goes on the electoral register. Previously these were: "UC24 north from C26 Bushmead Road to C25" for Staploe and as per point 5 below for Duloe. No one other than the Borough used these descriptors. They are very keen for us to choose more user-friendly names.

At present their descriptors for Staploe and Duloe are:

1. Point A to B is known as "Gypsy Lane" Staploe

2. Point B to C is known as “UC24 from Gypsy Lane to Shakers Way” Staploe
3. Point C to D is known as “Shakers Way” Staploe
4. Point E to F is known as “Woodhouse Lane” Duloe
5. Point F to G is known as “UC24 from UC25 Duloe Butts to Bridge under A1” Duloe



- It was resolved to ask the Borough Council to name B to C “Staploe” and F to G “Duloe”. Proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and seconded by Cllr. D. Smith. Addresses would be ##, Staploe, Staploe, St. Neots etc. but people would only use ##, Staploe, St. Neots.

The Clerk reported that the postman has assured us that mail can still be addressed with no road name for Duloe and Staploe even if we do introduce road names.

Cllr. J. Thomson reported that the road name sign near East Cottage, Manor Farm Lane was blocking access to the water main. The Clerk will report this.

Cllr. R. Squire reported that the uphill road name sign for Gypsy Lane at the Bassmead end of the lane is positioned at a sharp angle. Councillors agreed that they would like it removed as one sign will suffice. The Clerk will request this.

2019/083. Tree surveys and works

The Clerk reported that Brightman Brothers had removed a damaged branch from a horse chestnut tree on the northern boundary of the playing field at a cost of £40 ex VAT and Richard Arnold has surveyed the trees on Duloe Common at a cost of £130 ex VAT.

The surveyor (Richard Arnold) would like to return to check for ash dieback (Chalara infection) in the spring (at no extra cost to the Parish Council). If present he recommends felling the ash trees. If not he recommends the dead wood be removed and the crowns lifted to improve access to the footpath.

Brightman Brothers have recommended that the trees at the playing field be surveyed next year as they are becoming quite large now and they will arrange for Richard Arnold to quote for this.

They advised that the horse chestnuts on the northern boundary be trimmed to lift the crowns to allow access for grass cutting. They have quoted £350 ex VAT for this.

Councillors agreed that the survey and recommended works should be considered in the budget for 2020-21.

2019/084. Finance

- Receipts and payments were proposed by Cllr. R. Squire and seconded by Cllr. D. Smith and are listed on p7
- The bank reconciliation was checked against the bank statement by Cllr. G. Meola and is listed on p8
- The performance against budget was reviewed and is listed on pp9-11. We are forecast to receive £86 more regular receipts than regular payments (assuming we do not contribute towards a defibrillator). Other payments are met from other income, grants or earmarked reserves. If we contribute towards the defibrillator then this would be from unearmarked reserves and so our regular payments would be likely to exceed regular receipts.

September 2019

Summary of Transactions for Staploe Parish Council for Approval at Meeting in:						Sep-19
Main Account Payments						
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Cheque Number	Amount
50	05/10/2019	Colmworth Village Hall	Security deposit for Harvest Supper	Cheque	100914	£100.00
52	25/07/2019	Morelock Signs	Mobile speed sign (second)	BACS		£2,931.60
53	25/07/2019	Wybone	Large dog bin for Woodhouse Lane	BACS		£218.00
54	05/08/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Field grass cutting 5/8	Standing order		£157.50
55	05/08/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Common grass cutting 5/8	Standing order		£6.08
56	05/08/2019	M Ibbett	Highways grass cutting 5/8	Standing order		£180.00
57	06/08/2019	Opus Energy	Electricity for street lights	Direct Debit		£19.74
58	09/08/2019	1&1 Internet	One month's e-mail hosting	Direct Debit		£2.40
59	05/09/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Common grass cutting 6/8	Standing order		£6.08
60	05/09/2019	Bradgate fencing	Duloe Field grass cutting 6/8	Standing order		£157.50
61	05/09/2019	M Ibbett	Highways grass cutting 6/8	Standing order		£180.00
62	09/09/2019	1&1 Internet	One month's e-mail hosting	Direct Debit		£2.40
63	06/09/2019	Opus Energy	Electricity for street lights	Direct Debit		£19.66
64	10/09/2019	Colmworth Village Hall	Hall hire for September PC meeting	BACS		£19.50
68	17/09/2019	Viking Direct	Stationary (paper, filing, notebooks)	BACS		£47.91
69	17/09/2019	Cartridgesave	Black ink cartridge	BACS		£80.06
70	17/09/2019	Brightman Brothers	Remove broken branches playing field	BACS		£48.00
71	17/09/2019	Brightman Brothers	Tree survey report Duloe Common	BACS		£156.00
72	24/09/2019	L. Crawford	Clerk's salary Jul - Sep	Cheque	100915	£814.97
73	24/09/2019	Bedfordshire Pension Fund	Clerk's pension Jul-Sep	Cheque	100916	£235.94
Total						£5,383.34
Main Account Receipts						
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount
51	25/07/2019	Meola Group	Donation for second mobile speed sign	Credit		£2,443.00
65	12/09/2019	Bedford Borough Council	Precept (second half)	Credit		£5,250.00
Total						£7,693.00
Savings Account Receipts						
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount
66	01/08/2019	Barclays Bank	Interest on savings account	Credit		£3.48
67	01/09/2019	Barclays Bank	Interest on savings account	Credit		£3.60
Total						£7.08
Transfers						
Ref	Date	Recipient / Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Community Account Transfer	Savings Account Transfer
None						
Posted balances after the above transactions clear						
Community Account 30833940				£10,842.44		
Payments Account 13099075				£0.00		
Base Rate Savings 43461580				£10,262.97		

STAPLOE PARISH COUNCIL BANK RECONCILIATION 1st APRIL 2019 TO 17/09/2019							
Date of bank statement			17/09/2019	Line of cash book:		74	
Prepared by Mrs. Lucy Crawford, Parish Clerk							
				BARCLAYS			
				Community Account 30833940			
DATE				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£5,776.12				
17-Sep-19	Posted balance per accounts		£12,325.32	£27,935.83	£19,436.63	-£1,950.00	<u>£12,325.32</u>
Unpresented cheques / uncleared payments:							
	None						
	Total				£0.00		
17-Sep-19	Balance as per bank statement		£12,325.32				
17-Sep-19	Posted balance - cleared balan		£-				
17-Sep-19	Balance cf		£12,325.32				
				BARCLAYS			
				Payments Account 13099075			
				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£-				
17-Sep-19	Posted balance as per accounts		£-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	<u>£0.00</u>
17-Sep-19	Balance as per bank statement		£-				
17-Sep-19	Posted balance - cleared balance		£-				
17-Sep-19	Balance cf		£-				
				BARCLAYS			
				Base Rate Savings 43461580			
				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£8,294.49				
17-Sep-19	Posted balance as per accounts		£10,262.97	£18.48	£0.00	£1,950.00	<u>£10,262.97</u>
17-Sep-19	Balance as per bank statement		£10,262.97				
17-Sep-19	Posted balance - cleared balance		£-				
17-Sep-19	Balance cf		£10,262.97				
Summary for all accounts				Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Balance
1-Apr-19	Balance bf		£14,070.61				
17-Sep-19	Balance per accounts		£22,588.29	£27,954.31	£19,436.63	£-	<u>£22,588.29</u>
17-Sep-19	Balance per bank statements		£22,588.29				<u>£22,588.29</u>
17-Sep-19	Balance cf		£22,588.29				

September 2019

Staploe Parish Council Review of Budget Sep 2019					
	Budget to Mch 2020	Actual to Sep 2019	Forecast to end March 2020	Forecast less Budget	Comment
Regular Receipts					
Precept	£10,500.00	£10,500.00	£10,500.00	£-	
Council tax support grant	£-	£-	£-	£-	Grant phased out
Interest	£20.00	£18.48	£40.08	£20.08	
Grass cutting	£1,389.51	£1,389.51	£1,389.51	£-	
Total Regular Receipts	£11,909.51	£11,907.99	£11,929.59	£20.08	
Other Receipts					
Newsletter advertising	£-	£-		£-	
Ward Fund	£-	£-		£-	
Payments received in error		£11,889.51	£11,889.51	£11,889.51	£10,500 extra precept + £1389.51 extra grass grant (both paid by BBC in error)
Solar Farm Payment			£8,700.00	£8,700.00	
Speed sign donation		£2,443.00	£2,443.00		
Other (eg. f.ball deposit, refunds, proceeds from social events / book sales)	£-	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00	£25 book sales
Total Other Receipts	£-	£14,357.51	£23,057.51	£23,057.51	
Total Receipts	£11,909.51	£26,265.50	£34,987.10	£23,077.59	Solar Farm not in budget. Interest receipts likely to be higher than budget by approx £20
Regular Payments (from precept)					
	Budget to Mch 2020	Actual to Sep 2019	Forecast to end March 2020	Forecast less Budget	Comment
Clerk's salary & pension	£3,943.75	£2,047.82	£3,987.83	£44.08	Remain on Salary Point 25 but 2% increase for all points.
Clerk's PAYE	£-	£-	£-	£-	
Clerk's employment expenses	£288.00	£91.81	£288.00	£-	Monthly mileage (£6) and Working From Home Allowance (£18)
Total staff costs	£4,231.75	£2,139.63	£4,275.83	£44.08	
Audit Fees	£65.00	£60.00	£60.00	-£5.00	Moved from two internal audits to one after year end and no external audit
Councillors Expenses	£30.00	£-	£30.00	£-	
Clerk's Other Expenses eg. postage & sundries	£60.00	£3.12	£60.00	£-	Postage and sundries
Training	£110.00	£-	£110.00	£-	£50 Clerk's training, may use £30 for 2 x Cllrs training
Highways Grass Cutting	£1,200.00	£900.00	£1,200.00	£-	Quote from Mark Ibbett
Insurance	£385.00	£356.05	£356.05	-£28.95	Norris & Fisher fixed price at £358.23 but may increase if new assets purchased.
Power to street lights	£300.00	£122.75	£330.00	£30.00	Moved to LED but elec prices due to increase from December
Elec (CCTV & containers)	£150.00	£18.50	£18.50	-£131.50	Disconnected

September 2019

Regular payments continued	Budget to Mch 2020	Actual to July 2019	Forecast to end March 2020	Forecast less Budget	Comment
Maintainance (street lights, speed signs, field, containers, play area & planters)	£450.00	£130.00	£450.00	£-	Tree survey on Duloe Common
Play Area Inspection	£68.00	£68.50	£68.50	£0.50	
Play Area Works (assets purchased)	£150.00	£-	£150.00	£-	Eg new litter bin
Play Area Works (consumables / labour)	£-	£-	£-	£-	Repairs etc.
Playing field Maintenance	£1,192.00	£827.50	£1,235.00	£43.00	Grass cutting and treatment (Bradgate £1092) 1 extra grass cut (£45) + £55 towards hedge cutting in 2020
Duloe Common grass & hedge cutting	£40.53	£30.42	£40.53	£-	Grass cutting
Subs (SLCC / BATPC)	£159.00	£161.00	£161.00	£2.00	BATPC. + share SLCC with Colmworth
Admin	£374.00	£218.25	£374.00	£-	£35 Info commissioner, stationary items and printer cartridges bought direct, prof advice, social events.
Literature & info	£-	£-	£-	£-	
Software & email subscriptions	£60.00	£27.47	£39.47	-£20.53	Staploepc.org.uk e-mail domains budgeted £5 pm in 2019 but will be £2. Software costs £44 for MS Office & £7.50 for anti virus shared with Colmworth and will be met from reserve so listed under "other payments" this year.
Other assets (eg. street furniture / tools / office equipment). Excl. playing field/ play area)	£-	£174.40	£174.40	£174.40	Wybone large dog bin funded from contingency
Village Hall Hire	£234.00	£156.50	£234.00	£-	Budget assumes 7 PC meetings, 2 committee / Playing Field meetings and £15 towards each of 3 social events. Two meetings so far.
Village Hall Works / Maintenance	£150.00	£150.00	£150.00	£-	£150 for regular VH maintenance payment.
Newsletter	£250.00	£-	£250.00	£-	£81 for 16 pages or £60 for 12. Assume 4 issues of 12 or 3 of 16. Likely to be 3 issues of 16pp. First edition due soon.
Contingency	£300.00	£-	£125.60	-£174.40	
Total regular payments	£9,959.28	£5,544.09	£9,892.88	-£66.40	Reg payments due to be £66 under budget. There were unscheduled payments of £174 for a large dog bin (but this was funded from contingency), £44 on salary, £43 for field maintenance (tree work), and £30 elec for lights & £2 subs but underspends of £131 on elec for containers, £29 insurance, £21 e-mail and £5 audit.
Regular receipts - regular payments	£1,950.23	£6,363.90	£2,036.71	£86.48	£1950 extra precept to save for hall rebuild. We are forecast to spend £66 less than reg budget and receive £20 more in reg receipts (interest).

September 2019

	Budget to Mch 2020	Actual to Sep 2019	Forecast to end March 2020	Forecast less Budget	Comment
Ward Fund assets purchased		£-	£-	£-	
Ward Fund donations		£-	£-	£-	
Other assets purchased from earmarked res		£58.30	£58.30	£58.30	Software from transparency code grant
Village Hall payments from earmarked reserve		£-	£-	£-	
Payments from other earmarked reserves		£-	£-	£-	
Elections	£225.00	£-	£200.00	-£25.00	To be paid from reserve (total reserve is £550)
Speed sign		£2,443.00	£2,443.00	£2,443.00	Funded from donation
Other payments (refunds etc.)		£11,889.51	£11,889.51	£11,889.51	Refund for mistaken precept and grass payments
Total Other Payments	£225.00	£14,390.81	£14,590.81	£14,365.81	£14366 over budget. £11890 due to refunding mistakes. £2443 due to speed sign purchased with a donation, £33 of other overspend (£58 for software purchases not in budget but a saving of £25 expected for elections).
Total Payments	£10,184.28	£19,934.90	£24,483.69	£14,299.41	
Transfers to reserves					
Village Hall rebuild savings to earmarked reserve	£1,950.00	£1,950.00	£1,950.00	£-	
Solar Farm Payment			£8,700.00	£8,700.00	To be transferred to Village Hall reserve
CIL income				£-	
Total transfers to reserves	£1,950.00	£1,950.00	£10,650.00	£8,700.00	Solar farm payment was not in budget
Total Payments & Transfers to Reserve	£12,134.28	£21,884.90	£35,133.69	£22,999.41	
Total receipts - (total payments & transfers to reserve)	-£224.77	£4,380.60	-£146.59	£78.18	We had budgeted to cover all our regular payments from regular income (precept and grass grant) and spend £225 from reserve for elections but now expect to spend £86 less than our regular receipts. Other payments are met from earmarked reserves or other income such as grants and donations.

2019/085. Highways

- The speed limit between Staploe and Duloe is now due to be reviewed in autumn 2019.
- Other highways issues.
 - The Clerk received the new mobile speed sign from Cllr. E. Meola this evening. One sign will now be kept in Staploe and one will move between Duloe and Honeydon. A resident offered to supply posts to mount the sign in different locations in the village. The Clerk will apply for an apparatus licence.
 - The Clerk has received further reports of Bridleway 27 in Woodhouse Lane, Duloe being blocked. Signs were due to be installed by the Highways Department in February, so the Clerk has chased this.

2019/086. Website (Clerk's report)

- Accessibility Regulations.
 - New regulations came into force for public sector bodies on 23 September 2018. These mean that we must make our website more accessible by making it 'perceivable, operable, understandable and robust'. The full name of the regulations is the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. Existing websites that were published before 23 September 2018 need to comply with the 2018 regulations by 23 September 2020. Making a website accessible means making sure it can be used by as many people as possible. This includes those with:
 - impaired vision
 - motor difficulties
 - cognitive impairments or learning disabilities
 - deafness or impaired hearing
 - Our website does not currently meet the regulations and Cambridge Open Systems are stopping the Bedsparishes websites anyway because they have lost a lot of clients for this system so it is no longer worth them continuing or upgrading the websites. We need to research alternatives and there will be a cost involved in opening a new website. Some other Bedfordshire parishes are investigating the options to see if we can form a consortium and there will be a meeting on 19th September which the Clerk will attend.

2019/087. Policies to be reviewed

- Standing orders. Having been previously circulated these were approved without amendment.
- Councillors checked the minute book. The pages are no longer numbered as the agenda items are consecutively numbered and the minutes are no longer held in punched pockets as Bedford Archive prefer to receive them as loose leaf pages.

2019/088. Clerk's report on the Code of Conduct Training

The training was held on 23rd July 2019 at Borough Hall and was attended by Lucy Crawford. It was delivered by Sue Lyons, Monitoring Officer. (MO)

- Her role is as one of the Council's Statutory Officers
- She has a key role in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct
- She is the lead Officer for and Clerk to the Standards Committee
- She maintains the Register of Interests – including for Parish Councils
- She administers the arrangements for dealing with complaints that Members have breached their Council's Code of Conduct, including arranging for the investigation of such complaints
- The MO must arrange for the register of interests to be available to the public and published on the Council's website. Parish Councils must also publish their Registers. Publishing a link to the registers on Bedford Borough Council's website is fine.

Lucy reported on a few key points of relevance to Parish Councils:

- We must have a code of conduct and we should publish it on the web (Staploe PC do – under Our Files – Policies)
- A complaint from a member of the public to say that eg. "my neighbour is a councillor and they were rude to me when we argued about a garden fence" is not a

breach of the code of conduct. It is nothing to do with the Councillor's duties as a Councillor. It must be related to their duties.

- Main source of breaches of the code are related to bullying of Clerks – she reminded Councillors present that they are the Clerk's employers and therefore responsible for complying with employment law. (Lucy noted that Staploe are very diligent – she has no complaints!).
- Farmers should specify each field or attach a map of the farm to their register of interests and if they own land adjacent to most planning applications then they should declare an interest and withdraw – which may mean they cannot comment on any planning applications in the parish.
- Dispensations would normally only be granted if there were so many Councillors declaring an interest in the issue to be discussed that the Council cannot conduct its business but Sue Lyons will send further clarification. Dispensations should not be agreed by the Parish Councillors but by the Clerk or Monitoring Officer. A dispensation may be granted to be involved in the discussion but not vote or to be involved in the discussion and vote.
 - Standing Orders currently state:
 - A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13e if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:
 - without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
 - granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or
 - it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- Disclosable pecuniary interests would be regarding a matter which may affect the value of your property or your employment / income / business or that of your partner. A Councillor should always leave the room when a matter relating to a disclosable pecuniary interest is discussed.
- Local interests would be regarding a matter which may affect a family member, close friend or which may impact you but not necessarily financially (for example a neighbour's planning application if it is not likely to considerably reduce the value of your property but might affect your view or increase noise etc.) Sue's advice would still be to say your piece during the open forum and then leave the room when the Councillors discuss the matter.
- A common cause of complaints against the code are related to Councillors being predisposed. Developers will pounce on this. Eg. if a Councillor says "I will NEVER accept this application". Councillors should always make it clear that they are prepared to consider all the facts. Careful what is said on social media.
- She and other Clerks recommended that Councils adopt a training and development policy and make it a requirement that Councillors attend training.

2019/089. Broadband and mobile coverage

- 5G Mobile Coverage In Rural Areas (consultation). Councillors agreed to read this and respond individually.

September 2019

- Broadband in Honeydon. There is due to be a meeting with Bedford Borough Council on 18th September. The Clerk will attend.

The next meeting will be held on 19th November at 7.45pm in Wyboston.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm