

# STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**MONDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025**

**7:30PM INFANT HALL  
STAPLEHURST PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

## MINUTES

### **PUBLIC FORUM –**

A resident thanked the Parish Council for an excellent VE Day 80 Celebrations

A resident asked about the venue for Council meetings as the acoustics in this hall is not the best - note an options report is due at a Council meeting in the near future.

**Present:** Cllrs Sharp, Ash, McLaughlin, Alesi, Arger, Pett, Rhodes, Castro, Martin, Farragher, Perry and Melville plus the Clerk

Cllr Perry, Vice Chairman, chaired this section as Cllr Riordan was not present and note Cllr Riordan has decided not to stand for Chairman.

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:**

Cllr Perry asked for nominations of Chairman, Cllr McLaughlin proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded Cllr Sharp as Chairman. No other candidates were nominated. The vote was unanimous for Cllr Sharp to be Chairman.

Cllr Sharp signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman.

Cllr Sharp thanked Cllr Riordan for all that he has achieved as Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council.

### **2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:**

Cllr Sharp asked for nominations for Vice Chairman, Cllr Perry stated that he would not be standing – Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Perry seconded Cllr Martin for Vice Chairman. No other candidates were nominated. The vote was unanimous for Cllr Martin to be Vice Chairman.

Cllr Martin signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Vice Chairman.

Cllr Sharp thanked Cllr Perry for all his hard work as Vice Chairman and also as Mayor of Maidstone and that his last function as Mayor is at Staplehurst Annual Parish Meeting.

**3. APOLOGIES RECEIVED and ACCEPTED** Cllr Hotson and Riordan  
Absent Cllr Wakeford

### **4. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS** regarding items on the Agenda:

4.1. Declaration of Lobbying - NA

4.2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests - NA

4.3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda - NA

4.4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

**5. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES** Pages **2222– 2231** of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>, to be signed by Chairman.

Cllr Pett proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the minutes of the AGM 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – agreed majority; For 9 against 0 and Abstain 3

**6. Financial Reports**

6.1 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/2025 – for approval.

6.1.a The Annual Governance Statement (Form section 1) to be read out and approved Appendix A of the report

The Clerk read out points 1 – 9 and the Cllrs approved each point in turn

Cllr Pett proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve The Annual Governance Statement (Form section 1) agreed unanimously

Signed by the Clerk and Chairman.

6.1.b The Statement of Accounts (Form section 2) are approved Appendix B of the report

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve The statement of Accounts (Form section 2) agreed unanimously.

Signed by the Chairman.

6.2 The Statement of Accounts 2024/25, Appendix C

Cllr Melville proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve The statement of Accounts appendix C agreed unanimously.

6.3 Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 Appendix D

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve The Income and Expenditure appendix D agreed unanimously.

Council thanked the RFO for all her hard work.

**6.4 IT Service Contract**

Following a debate it was decided to defer the Cllr IT Equipment Disclaimer.

Cllr Castro proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve resolution below – agreed unanimously.

Resolution: To approve;

a) Changing domain to .gov.uk for £60 plus VAT per year

Budget Code – Administration

**6.5 Payment list**

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve the payment list below agreed unanimously.

<b><u>Approved Payments 1st April - 29th April 2025</u></b>	<b>Amount</b>
Staplehurst Community Centre - APM Hall Hire	66.00
Arron Services - Norton Subscription	42.00
Homeleigh Timber - Sleepers & Fixings GSG	702.18
Ecosan Services - Sanitary Unit Bell Lane Toilets	127.46
Bumbles Plant Centre - Plants & Sundries GSG	570.13
Rumwoods Ltd - Garden Plants & Bark – GSG	58.71

SMUFC - JF Pavilion Cleaning March	20.00
CSG Global Education – Stationery	20.39
Staff Reimbursement Clean Up Refreshments	2.60
Arron Services - Laptop Repairs (RG)	94.80
KCC Procurement - Photocopy Charges Dec-March	51.50
Miss C Lucas - Youth Club Cleaning April	40.00
Miss C Lucas - Jubilee Pavilion Cleaning April	40.00
HMRC - Tax & NI March	2037.96
P&F Cleaning Services - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open/Sun Apr	1010.00
Homeleigh Timber - Gloves Caretaker, Staplehurst Men's Shed	53.90
Payroll & Pension Costs – April	7912.52
KALC - Annual Subscription	2244.00
SMYFC - Pitch Hire Refund	1000.00
Cartell Electrical Ltd - Extractor Fan Repair JF Pavilion	134.40
Sainsbury's - Milk & Coffee Parish Office	4.25
Ebay - Strip Lights Jubilee Field Pavilion	35.00
Sainsbury's - Toilet Rolls Jubilee Field Pavilion	7.00
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription Apr-May	19.97
MBC - Parish Office Council Tax Room 1 April	65.75
MBC - Parish Office Council Tax Room 2-3 April	75.55
MBC - Bell Lane Toilet Council Tax April	98.00
MBC - Youth Club Council Tax April	121.08
Sage Payroll – April	12.00
Pozitive Energy - Electricity Youth Club March	180.81
Castle Water - Jubilee Pavilion Water March	90.36
Castle Water - Youth Club Water March	13.22
British Gas Lite - JF Pumping Station Electricity Jan-Apr	15.45
Canva - Annual Subscription	99.99
Telecoms World - Virtual Phone No. SEHT March	14.39
Telecoms World - Broadband Youth Club March	29.40
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection March	76.85
Lloyds - Bank Charges April	8.50
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange April	271.32
	17,467.44

**TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE**

0.00

The Clerk noted a number of payments at the Jubilee Field, agreed in consultation with the Chairman, Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Melville seconded the payments below, agreed unanimously;

New light fitting - £148.00 plus VAT – Cartell Electrics

Drainage inspection - £435.00 plus VAT – Drain Doctors

Legionella testing £225.00 plus VAT – Smartwater

In addition 3 emergency light fittings need replacing, to help progress the matter Clerk requests to set aside up to £285 plus VAT to supply and install 3 no. 200mm LED downlight emergency lights – County Fire Protection.

Budget code Jubilee Field

**7. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, groups, staff and other local authorities; delegation same as 2024/25**

The delegation arrangements remain unchanged, Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to approve resolution below agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** to approve the delegation arrangements

## **8. COMMITTEE AND GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Planning Committee and various groups Terms and Conditions remain unchanged, Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Farragher seconded to approve resolution below agreed unanimously

Resolution to approve the Terms of reference for the following committee and working groups

- Planning Committee
- Communications Group
- Neighbourhood Plan Review Group
- Employment, Finance and Strategy Group
- HR Sub group
- Greener Staplehurst Group
- Staplehurst Community Neighbourhood Enhancement Improvement Group (SCEnic)
- Road Safety Group
- Jubilee Field Working Group
- 3G Multi-Sports pitch Working Group

## **9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE & GROUP MEMBERS (DATES)**

Following a debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to approve the appointments of Cllrs Arger, Ash, Farragher, McLaughlin, Pett, Sharp and Cllr Hotson as Substitute to the Planning Committee - agreed unanimously

9.1 Planning Committee – Council elects Chairman and Vice Chairman –  
Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to approve Cllr Arger as Chairman of Planning Committee – agreed unanimously.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Farragher seconded to approve Cllr Ash as Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee - agreed unanimously.

At a Working Group's first meeting the Group members elect Chairman and Vice Chairman of that working group. Following a debate the Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to appoint following Cllrs to the following groups and each groups meeting times were agreed unanimously.

- 9.2 Communications Group – proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month – Cllr Alesi, Arger, Castro, Martin, Melville, Sharp and Riordan.
- 9.3 Staplehurst Community Neighbourhood Enhancement Improvement Group – proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month – Cllr Alesi, Castro, Martin, Melville, Pett and Sharp.
- 9.4 Jubilee Field Working Group – proposed 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month Cllrs Alesi, Arger, Hotson and Sharp
- 9.5 Employment, Finance & Strategy Group – proposed 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, 1:30pm, Cllrs Arger, Hotson, Martin, Parry, Sharp and Riordan
- 9.6 Greener Staplehurst Group – as required Cllrs Ash, Castro, Melville
- 9.7 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month – Cllrs Arger, Ash, McLaughlin, Perry and Sharp
- 9.8 Road Safety Group – proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month 10am Cllrs Alesi, McLaughlin and Melville
- 9.9 3G Multi-Sports Working Group – as required Cllrs Alesi, Arger, Sharp and Riordan

Notes Clerk is contacting residents to confirm they wish to remain on the working groups.

**10. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with Standing Order 4 and/or groups in accordance with Standing Order 27; NA**

**11. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;**

11.1 Financial Regulations -The only amendment is updated Procurement Regulations (5.4) plus remove duplication of "in accordance", Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve resolution below agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** Approve the Financial Regulations as attached and remove duplication of in accordance

The following documents remain unchanged, Cllr Alesi proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve resolution below agreed unanimously

**Resolution** – to approve the following

- Standing Orders
- Council Code of Conduct
- Civility and Respect
- Strategic Action Plan 2025-2028

**12. Review of arrangements (including legal arrangements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses;**

12.1 Parish Office lease with Staplehurst Community Centre Trust – noted unchanged.

**13. APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS**

Following a debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Ash seconded the appointments to represent the Council; agreed unanimously

- 13.1 Churchyard Liaison Committee – Cllrs Ash, Martin and Perry
- 13.3 Staplehurst Community Centre(1) – Cllrs Mclaughlin (Council nominated Trustee)
- 13.4 Staplehurst Patients Participation Group – Cllrs Alesi, Martin and Sharp
- 13.5 Staplehurst Community Events Group – Cllrs Sharp
- 13.6 Parish Police Liaison Committee – Chairman – Cllr Sharp
- 13.7 Staplehurst Emergency Help Team -Cllrs Alesi, Sharp and Castro
- 13.8 Staplehurst Remembrance Group – Cllrs Alesi, Martin and Sharp
- 13.9 River Beult Catchment Improvement Group – Cllrs Alesi, Ash, Mclaughlin and Perry
- 13.10 Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee -Cllrs Alesi, Perry and Pett
- 13.11 Sobell Cheshire Homes – Cllr Hotson
- 13.12 Staplehurst Community Speed Watch – Cllrs Alesi
- 13.13 KALC Area Committee – Chairman – Cllr Sharp
- 13.14 Staplehurst Library Users Group – Cllr Sharp
- 13.15 McCabe Day Centre – Cllr Hotson
- 13.16 Village Sports & Social Group Golf Club (2) – Cllr Ash

(1) Cllrs Sharp, Farragher and Hotson are Trustees of the Staplehurst Community Centre

(2) Cllr Riordan is a Trustee of the Village Sports and Social Club

**14. Determining the dates, time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council**

Councillors noted the already agreed meeting dates below and starting at 7:30pm, unless stated.  
Note a report on the long term venue is due.

Planning	<b>19th May</b>
Council	<b>2nd June</b>
Planning	<b>9th June</b>
Council	<b>23rd June</b>
Planning	<b>30th June</b>
Council	<b>14th July</b>
Planning	<b>21<sup>st</sup> July</b>
Council	<b>4th August</b>
Planning	<b>11th August</b>
Council	<b>(Tues) 26th August</b>
Planning	<b>1<sup>st</sup> September</b>
Council	<b>15th September</b>
Planning	<b>22nd September</b>
Council	<b>6th October</b>
Planning	<b>13th October</b>
Council	<b>27th October</b>
Planning	<b>3rd November</b>
Council	<b>17th November</b>
Planning	<b>24th November</b>
Council	<b>8th December</b>
Planning	<b>15th December</b>
Planning	<b>7.00 pm 12th January 2026</b>
Council	<b>8.00pm 12th January 2026</b>
Council	<b>26th January 2026</b>
Planning	<b>2nd February 2026</b>
Council	<b>16th February 2026</b>

Planning	<b>23<sup>th</sup> February 2026</b>
Council	<b>9<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>
Planning	<b>16<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>
Council	<b>30<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>
Planning	<b>(Tuesday) 7<sup>th</sup> April 2026</b>
Council	<b>20<sup>th</sup> April 2026</b>
Planning	<b>27<sup>th</sup> April 2026</b>
Council AGM	<b>11<sup>th</sup> May 2026</b>

## **15. Review of the Council's subscriptions, grant and donation expenditure in 2024/25; -**

### **15.1 Subscriptions in 2024/25**

Council noted the subscriptions in 2024/25.

**Resolution:** To approve the following:

Adobe systems - £199.68  
 ALCC annual membership – DJ - £50.00  
 Canva – creative software - £83.33  
 GeoXphere Ltd - £135.00  
 KALC - £1,765.00  
 Kent County Playing Field Association - £20.00  
 National Allotment Society - £70.00  
 SLCC membership - DJ - £288.00  
 SLLC membership – RG - £300.00  
 Weald Kent Protection Society - £35.00  
 Zoom - £129.90

Budget code – various

### **15.2 Donations in 2024/25**

Council noted the donation awarded in 2024/25

**Resolution:** to approve the following:

Community Centre for Debt Advice - £200.00  
 Kent Surrey, Sussex Air Ambulance - £200.00  
 Heart of Kent Hospice – £200.00  
 All Saints PCC - £200.00  
 Kenward Trust – Rehabilitation Centre - £100.00  
 Royal British legion Remembrance Day poppy wreath - £100.00  
 Wealden Community First responders First Aid - £150.00  
 Staplehurst Men's Shed - - clean up - £50.00  
 Staplehurst WI – clean up - £50.00

Budget Code - Donations

### **15.3 Grants in 2024/25**

Council noted the grants awarded in 2024/25

**Resolution:** to approve the following:

We are BEAMS - £250.00

Hi Kent – Hearing Aid Support Grant - £440.00

Staplehurst School – Garden - £1,000.00

Budget code - Grants

## **16 Review of the Council's subscriptions, donation and grants expenditure in 2025/26;**

### **16.1 Approved subscriptions for 2025/26**

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the KALC subscription of £1,870 agreed unanimously.

## **17 Committee and working group minutes - Noted**

- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group minutes 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025 to follow
- 8.1.4 SCEnic minutes 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- 8.1.5 3G Multi-Sports pitch working group meeting – to be arranged
- 8.1.6 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 - note initial thoughts on devolution and potential impact on Staplehurst Parish Council. Need to engage in the "consultation period", training and a Cllr workshop to discuss further.
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group meeting to be arranged
- 8.1.8 Communications Group meeting minutes 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – Cllr Castro thanked everyone for the work on the Annual Report
- 8.1.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting to be arranged

## **18 CORRESPONDENCE - NA**

Cllr Castro readout an email regarding KCC workman damaging a roadside bank which has rare Orchids on it.

## **Public forum**

A resident queried regarding "driver behaviour" at Sainsbury Roundabout due to the number of accidents? The Parish supports the view of the resident and regularly requests action from KCC Highways, but KCC Highways have very limited budgets.

A resident asked about working taking place on "Lodge Rd" land – Parish are not aware of an imminent planning application, but will enquire.

## **19 CONFIDENTIAL**

- 19.1 Merit Awards, were discussed and the successful nominees were approved.

Meeting closed.....8.30pm.....