



STAPLEHURST
PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES
17TH FEBRUARY
2025

Public Forum

A resident raised a planning issue and will attend the next Planning Committee

Kent County Councillor's Report

Cllr Parfitt-Reid raised a number of points;

- Cranbrook Rd – Incredibly frustrating and a concern that the opportunity will be missed – need to escalate the matter urgently.
- Youth Club Pilot project – appears that bureaucracy has stepped in and KCC policy is not to offer “open access youth service” If we do, we need to offer the opportunity to those who were made redundant. I will keep pushing for alternatives as we have a solution to a problem. Cllr Hotson shared Cllr Parfitt-Reid’s frustrations and was concerned we would lose the young people.
- Unitary Authority – Kent missed out due “the disparity between the size of Medway and Kent” However in next phase and need to have a draft Delivery Plan for March 2024 – firm Deli every plan for November 2024. The Main concern is lack of funding to deliver it, as phase one has £38m to help deliver change. The whole process is causing uncertainty and impacting staff, staff retention and recruitment.
- Adult Social care – major issue with increase in numbers and complexity of cases causing budget concerns. The system is struggling and KCC are challenged to meet the demand. The increase in minimum wage, lowering the threshold for NI is hitting the providers really hard and the system may be overwhelmed in the near future.

Maidstone Borough Councillor's Report (Standing Item):

Cllr Perry raised a number of points;

MBC Council meeting to set MBC budget for 2025/26 (expected 3% increase) and the MBC Corporate Plan. MBC collects Circa £28m from Council Tax and circa £30m from other sources. Some contentious issues: increase in car parking charges and limited capital for leisure Centre

As Mayor, Cllr Perry attended two excellent Charity events

Cllr Riordan raised the concerns about increase in ASB and chasing EVC

Present: Cllrs Riordan, Hotson, Perry, Farragher, Alesi, Rhodes, Pett, Arger, Ash, McLaughlin, Martin, Sharp and Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES: Cllrs Wakeford and Castro

2. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

2.1. Declarations of Lobbying - NA

2.2. Changes to the Register of Interests - NA

2.3. Interests in Items on the Agenda - NA

2.4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

3. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES: (5 minutes)

Pages 2314 – 2322 27th January 2025 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)) to be signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the minutes of the 27th January 2025 – Agreed majority 10 For, 0 against and 2 Abstained

4. FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS

4.1 SEHT Insurance

Following a debate Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Martin seconded to approve the resolution below – Agreed unanimously

Resolution: To approve a contribution of £358.12 towards SEHT insurance premium
Budget Code - SEHT

Suggested that EFS group review to cover all the cost of insurance next year.

4.2 Contracts list – see attached

Following a debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below – Agreed unanimously

Resolution – to approve the contracts below
Office Computer servicing - Arron service - £650
Hosted exchange – Arron Service Ltd – £2,713.20 – but rolling months’ notice
Bell Lane Toilet water – Business stream - £697.45
Adobe Subscription – Adobe Pro £199.68
Wimpey Field Water – Business Stream - £371.09
Surrenden Field Pavilion water – Business Stream - £100
Website silver subscription – Higo Fox £239.88
Budget codes - various

4.3 Works required at Bell Lane Toilet and Staplehurst Youth Club

Following a debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Martin seconded to approve the resolution below – Agreed majority unanimously

Resolution – To approve the recommendation of the SCEnic working group to:

- a) Undertake emergency repairs at Bell Lane Toilet, appoint Lehane Property Maintenance, £606 plus VAT

Budget code Bell Lane toilet

Undertake repairs to the Youth Club disabled toilets and appoint JM Home and Gardens plus Wetherell Plumping and Heating for a net total cost of £762.95

Budget Code Youth Club

5. CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS – attached (5 minutes)

The Clerk updated Council on a number of issues

2108/6.3 – Cranbrook Road- updated circulated today – will chase up with Cllr Parfitt-Reid

2199/5 - Girl Guides lease – The Clerk summarised the frustration as this has taken some time. Following a meeting last week with Mr G Harvey (Kingsfords) Cllr Hotson updated Council; The original aim was some minor amendments to the lease, via a Deed of Variation, a relatively simple task plus an Annual Licence Deed for the adjacent land, again a relatively simple task.

It is so frustrating that despite the Clerk chasing regularly we have not really got anywhere. The meeting was useful and the suggestion of the clause is good as it would give both parties flexibility – see proposed clause below;

Management of JUBILEE SPORTS FIELD

1.1 The Tenant shall observe all regulations made by the Landlord from time to time in accordance with the principles of good estate management of the Jubilee Sports Field and notified to the Tenant relating to the use of any Common Parts and to the management of the said Jubilee Sports Field.

1.2 Nothing in this lease shall impose or be deemed to impose any restriction by the Landlord on the use of any other part of the Jubilee Sports Field or any neighbouring property.

The Annual Licence Deed is required for priority use by the Girl Guides of the additional land.

Following an debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded the resolution below – agreed unanimously;

- a) The flexible operational changes, that do not require HM Land Registry to be notified, could be done with the additional clause (above) inserted into the amended lease. These can be actioned in the future via meetings and email confirmation between the parties.
- b) Therefore need to instruct our Solicitor to discuss with Girl Guide Solicitors immediately
- c) An Annual Licence Deed for priority use by the Girl Guides of the additional land is still required
- d) In addition, write to the Kingsford Partners to express our concerns that we have been passed from pillar to post and expected the instructions to be concluded by end of March 2025.

Jubilee Field Mower - Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve appointment of Staplehurst Mowers for the repairs at £1,267.56 inc VAT – Agreed unanimously **Budget code Jubilee Field**

2312/6.6 Jubilee Field Pavilion – Hot water tank repairs and service last week, service found that the pressure vessel, pressure gauge and pressure release valve damaged on one of the Hot water tanks – awaiting formal quote estimated cost up to £2,500
Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve the repairs up to £2,500 – Agreed majority unanimously **Budget code Jubilee Field**

2318/4.7 Office decoration – agreed in consultation with Chairman
Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Rhodes seconded to approve the extra cost of Office Decoration £158 – Agreed unanimously **Budget Code Administration**

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded a donation of £150 towards the Defib training – agreed unanimously **Budget Code Donations**

Urgent repairs to Bell Lane Toilet roof - agreed in consultation with the Chairman
Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the repairs of £580 plus VAT – Agreed unanimously **Budget code Bell Lane Toilet**

A debate emphasised the increased in ASB in the village – Jubilee Field, Wimpey Field, Toilets, generally around village – Need to emphasis to residents extra costs being occurred to repair damage and clean up mess.

6. PROPOSALS OR DISCUSSION and DECISION -

6.1 Proposed Council and Planning Committee meetings – May 2025 May 2025

Following a debate Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the resolution below – Agreed unanimously

Resolution: to approve the proposed meeting dates for May 2025 – May 2026 below;

Planning	19th May
Council	2nd June
Planning	9th June
Council	23rd June
Planning	30th June
Council	14th July
Planning	21st July
Council	4th August
Planning	11th August
Council	(Tues) 26th August

Planning	1st September
Council	15th September
Planning	22nd September
Council	6th October
Planning	13th October
Council	27th October
Planning	3rd November
Council	17th November
Planning	24th November
Council	8th December
Planning	15th December
Planning	7.00 pm 12th January 2026
Council	12th January 2026
Council	26th January 2026
Planning	2nd February 2026
Council	16th February 2026
Planning	23th February 2026
Council	9th March 2026
Planning	16th March 2026
Council	30th March 2026
Planning	(Tuesday) 7th April 2026
Council	20th April 2026
Planning	27th April 2026
Council AGM	11th May 2026

It was suggested we review the venue due to sound /internet connection in the hall.

6.2 Jubilee Field Ground Maintenance report - withdrawn

There was concern about the quantity and strength of the liquid gypsum. Therefore Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Ash to acknowledge that SMFC CIC have withdrawn the proposal and if they wish to resubmit it needs to be confirmed by Council prior to any work taking place.

Agreed by majority 11 for, 0 against and 1 abstained

6.3 Summer 2025 events

Following a debate Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve the resolution below – Agreed unanimously

- Resolution:** To consider the SCEnic recommendation to;
- a) meet up with SCEG, the Scouts and Girl Guides to agree a programme of events in Surrenden Field for the Summer 2025 and report back to Council
 - b) Not to approve a Fun Fair on Surrenden Field

6.4 VE Day Thursday 8th May 2025 – 80th Anniversary – Noted, see above**7 CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting: NA****8. Chairman's Report**

Thanked Clerk for promptly sorting out Bell Lane Toilets and Jubilee Field hot water tanks.

8.1 Committee and working group minutes - Noted

- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 3rd February 2025
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group meeting 13th January 2025
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group meeting 4th February 2025, to follow
- 8.1.4 SCEnic minutes 6th February 2025
- 8.1.5 3G Multi-Sports pitch working group meeting – to be arranged
- 8.1.6 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 16th January 2025
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group meeting 5th February 2025
- 8.5.8 Communications Group minutes 16th February 2025, to follow
- 8.5.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting - to be arranged

9. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)**10. Confidential due to commercial sensitivities**

- 10.1 A VAT report was discussed.

Closing time 9:30pm.....