



# STAPLEHURST

## PARISH COUNCIL

**MEETING**  
**27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2025**

## MINUTES

### **Public Forum**

A resident raised a concern about school gate at 9:30pm. Clerk to double check.

### **Borough Councillor's Report (Standing Item):**

Cllr Perry noted the move towards Unitary Authority is gathering pace Potentially to be "West Kent" (Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone?)

For Staplehurst an issue is which powers / service / budget will be transferred to Parish Council's?

We need to keep a watching brief and update Council.

MBC Budget - likely increase of 3% on Council Tax, some proposals regarding increase in parking fees and Leisure Centre to be discussed at the MBC Council meeting.

Cllr Riordan noted the potential increase in car parking is a concern and is chasing up MBC parking regarding EVC points at Bell Lane and Parade.

**Present:** Cllrs Riordan, Perry, Hotson, Alesi, Pett, Arger, Ash, Castro, Martin, Mclaughlin, Rhoades, Wakeford and the Clerk.

**1. APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Sharp and Farragher

**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:**

Pages 2307 – 2313 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.uk\)](https://www.staplehurst-pc.uk) to be signed by the Chairman. Following a discussion Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024, agreed by majority 10 for, 0 against and 2 abstained. (signed by Cllr Perry as Cllr Riordan was not present at the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 Council meeting)

Signed Chairman.....date.....

#### 4. **FINANCE REPORTS & PROPOSALS**

##### 4.1 **Proposed Council Budget 2025/2026**

Following a discussion, which clarified that Kathy Lamb electrical contribution is the contribution to the maintenance of the pump station, Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** to approve the Council budget 2025/26 as attached in **Appendix A**, precept of £300,000

##### 4.2 **Fees and Charges 2025/26**

Following a discussion which included confirming the youth club hire fees, Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve the Fees and Charges for 2025/26 as set out below

<b>Proposed Fees and Charges for 2024/25 - VAT does not apply</b>				
<b>Youth Club 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 – 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026</b>				
	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Community Group; Without membership fees such as NDPR Group, SCEG, Council working Groups	£0	£0	£0	Same as 2024/25
Community organisation / society with membership fees	£12	£12	£12	Increase from £10 from 2024/25
Commercial / private hire	£40	£40	£80	Increase from £30 in morning / afternoon and £60 in evening from 2024/25
<b>Allotments from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025</b>				
Per plot for year 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025			£120	Same as 2024/25
<b>Jubilee Field from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2026</b>				
SMFC CIC senior section - ground hire per year includes extra refreshments			£8,302.50	Monthly DD = £691.88
The cost of floodlighting for matches and training will be charged monthly at 25.99p per kwh.				
SMFC CIC youth section pitch hire per year			£7,443.06	Monthly DD = £620.26
<b>One off grass pitch hire with changing rooms</b>				
Standard pitch hire			£60	Same as 2024/25
Main grass pitch hire			£100	Same as 2024/25

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Main grass pitch hire, with lights			£150	Same as 2024/25
Ground hire – if charging entry			£250	Same as 2024/25

### 4.3 **Payment list**

Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the payment list below, agreed unanimously.

<b>Approved Payments 3rd December 2024 - 22nd January 2025</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance November	519.00
Homeleigh Timber - White Line Marker Jubilee Field	20.40
Miss C Lucas - Cleaning Jubilee Pavilion November	80.00
Miss C Lucas - Cleaning Youth Club November	60.00
Amazon UK - Cleaning Equipment Jubilee Pavilion	35.25
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription December	23.99
Staff Reimbursement - Office Sundries	7.45
Streetlights - Xmas Motif Testing	264.00
Streetlights - Xmas Motif Installation	930.00
Streetlights - New Xmas Motifs Installation	510.00
KCC Procurement - Photocopier Rental Jan-Mar	105.98
KALC - Clerks Conference	84.00
Staff Reimbursement - Picture Frames re Merit Awards	16.99
Joshua Melville - Line Marking Jubilee Field November	300.00
Homeleigh Timber - Christmas Tree Cable Ties	12.47
Holman Heating - Investigate Immersion Heaters JF Pavilion	96.00
Lehane Property - Plane Bell Lane Mens Toilet Door	50.00
P&F Cleaning Services - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/Open/Sun Dec	1,010.00
Homeleigh Timber - Wire Brush Caretaker	4.86
HMRC - Tax & NI November	2,823.82
Cam-tech Security - Annual CCTV CSL Routers x4 Sites	1,920.00
Cam-tech Security - Annual CCTV Maintenance	876.00
Worknest - HR Support	2,700.00
Payroll & Pension Costs - December	7,065.41
Staff Reimbursement - Volunteer Eve Refreshments	11.44
Forestry First Ltd - Hedge Cutting Jubilee Field	936.00
Forestry First Ltd - Hedge Cutting Inside Jubilee Field	216.00
Homeleigh Timber - Duct Tape Caretaker	8.93
Homeleigh Timber - White Line Marker Jubilee Field	20.40
Cartell Electrical Ltd - Immersion Heater Repair JF Pavilion	177.60
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription January	23.99
Joshua Melville - White Line Marking Jubilee Field	100.00
Miss C Lucas - Youth Club Cleaning December	40.00
Choice Support - Planter Maintenance December	519.00
Ormandy Rycroft - Jubilee Pavilion Hot Water System Repairs	4,164.00
Streetlights - Installation of brackets and bands to Motifs	930.00
Polybags - Caretaker Black Sacks	52.94
Homeleigh Timber - Link Chain Jubilee Field Car Park Gate	12.00

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Hags-SMP Ltd - Flanged Plug - Springer SF Play Equipment	45.36
SLCC - Annual Membership Fee	300.00
HMRC - Tax & NI December	2,037.76
Maclin Pumps Ltd - Pump Service 2/2 Youth Club	222.00
KCC Procurement Services - Photocopy Charges Sept-Dec	79.54
KCC - MVCP TAG Task Days Wimpey Field Sept-Jan	1,740.00
CSG Global Education - Stationery Parish Office	63.50
Payroll & Pension Costs - January	7280.93
Sainsburys - Refreshments Volunteer Event	98.35
Post Office - Merit Award Gift Vouchers	260.00
Sainsburys - Coffee Parish Office	10.00
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription Dec-Jan	19.97
Sainsbury's - Milk Parish office	1.40
Post Office - Stamps 2ndx327 Village Update	277.95
Sainsbury's - Tea Bags Parish Office	2.00
Sage Payroll - December	12.00
Business Stream - Water Surrenden Field Pavilion Aug-Nov	23.34
Business Stream - Water Bell Lane Toilets Oct-Nov	48.16
Business Stream - Water Wimpey Field Oct-Nov	78.10
Castle Water - JF Pavilion Potable Water November	27.28
Castle Water - Youth Club Potable Water November	10.14
British Gas Lite - JF Sewage Pump Electric Nov-Dec	17.58
Telecoms World - SEHT Virtual Phone Number	14.39
Telecoms World - Youth Club Broadband	29.40
KCC - Youth Club Lease/Purchase Dec-Mar	212.50
British Gas Lite - Electricity Parish Office Nov-Dec	272.77
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection November	76.85
British Gas Lite - Electricity JF Pavilion Nov-Dec	282.30
British Gas Lite - Electricity SF Pavilion Nov-Dec	33.99
MBC - Council Tax Parish Office Room 1 January	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Parish Office Room 2-3 January	72.00
MBC - Council Tax Bell Lane Toilets January	100.00
MBC - Council Tax Youth Club January	121.00
British Gas Lite - Electricity Bell Lane Toilets Nov-Dec	41.50
Pozitive Energy - Electricity Youth Club November	110.06
Sage Payroll - January	12.00
Business Stream - Water Bell Lane Toilets Nov-Dec	62.18
Castle Water - Potable Water JF Pavilion December	38.93
British Gas Lite - Electricity JF Sewage Pump Dec-Jan	22.09
Castle Water - Potable Water Youth Club December	33.22
Lloyds Bank - Charges December	8.50
Lloyds Bank - Charges January	8.50
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange December	271.32
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange January	271.32
	41,540.10
<b>TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>24.10</b>

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#### **4.4 Summation - Noted**

#### **4.5 Cleaning machine for Jubilee Field pavilion**

Following a discussion the Clerk advised that a potential lower figure could be obtained, Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve purchase of cleaning machine for Jubilee Field up to £289.99  
**Budget Code – Jubilee Field**

#### **4.6 Work at Jubilee Field on Pavilion Ventilation System and improve security to the football pitches**

Following a discussion which highlighted we are still awaiting three quotes Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve the recommendations of the Jubilee Field Working Group to spend up to £2,000 plus VAT to get the existing ventilation system into working order  
**Budget Code – Jubilee Field**

Following a discussion, which emphasised the need to restrict access for “trapps” due to recent damage to the Jubilee Field, Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Rhoades seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To purchase and install a drop bollard – up to £300 plus VAT  
**Budget Code – Jubilee Field**

#### **4.7 Parish Office decoration**

Following a discussion Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve the appointment of JM Home and Gardens to decorate the Parish Office – £900, plus £100 for paint.  
**Budget Code - Administration**

#### **4.8 Proposed work to 3 x junior pitches at Jubilee Field**

Following a discussion Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve to roll, spike and reline the 3 x junior pitches at the Jubilee Field – when the weather allows – appointment of Artistree Fencing and Landscaping for a fee of £300 plus VAT  
**Budget Code – Jubilee Field**

#### **4.9 Village Update and Annual Report – printing quotes**

Following a discussion Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To appoint a Simply Print Partners as new contractor to print the Village Updates and Annual Report for:  
 3 x Village Updates = £805.75 plus VAT per print run  
 1 x Annual Report = £1,185.60 plus VAT per print run  
 Total cost £3,602.85 plus VAT  
**Budget Code - Village Update and Website**

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## **5 CLERKS REPORT ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

A few points to note

£180 additional hedge cutting cost to internal hedges at Jubilee Field in December 2024- Clerk consulted with Cllr Sharp at the time. Council noted

Note 80th Anniversary of "Victory in Europe" – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 is a national celebration – Beacon lighting etc – do we wish to organise anything? Council felt that it would be good for the Village, agreed to approach SCEG.

Tractor Christmas parade – to congratulate the Young Farmers on raising around @ £6,000 from Staplehurst and Marden and @ £23,000 over all raised for local charities.

Agreed to liaise with SEHT to support the "marshalling" of the road junctions on route:

- from Pinnock Lane to the crossroads – then
- from the crossroads onto the "David Wilson Roundabout"

The Clerk note the frustration of Cllrs that the Police did not attend the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025, and is seeking to arrange another meeting.

## **6 PROPOSALS FOR DISCUSSION and DECISION -**

### **6.1 Jubilee Field 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget monitoring report**

Following a discussion which highlighted the positive operating position of the Jubilee Field budget at the moment but aware that several large costs are imminent - Noted

### **6.2 HR Sub-Group Terms of Reference**

Following a discussion Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously.

**Resolution:** To approve the HR Sub-Group Terms of Reference attached in **Appendix A** and the amended Employment, Finance and Strategy Terms of Reference – **Appendix B**

### **6.3 Update on 3G Multi-Sport pitch update**

Following a detailed discussion the main issues were the extension of car parking and the bund. Cllr Hotson highlighted the increase in costs, which would mainly fall on the Parish Council. The final figure would not be known until planning permission is obtained.

**Car parking** – an extension is required either

- a) An extension of 48 spaces (circa cost £75,000) plus a clause to restrict SMFC CIC use of the car park on a Wednesday evening
- b) An extension of 67 spaces ( Which was circulated and handed out) and no need for the clause above (circa cost £95,000)

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Martin seconded to approve the option of a car park extension of 67 spaces, agreed by majority 11 for, 0 against and 1 abstained.

**Bund** previously the Council turned down the idea of "bunds on the site" due to the loss of open space. However the option discussed would save £30,000, would be helpful for noise reduction, Bio-Diversity and potential BMX bike circuit. Therefore either

- a) Approve the bund or
- b) Decide not to have the bund

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded to approve "not to have a bund", agreed by majority 9 for, 1 against and 2 abstained.

Signed Chairman.....date.....

The Council noted that the Council capital contribution is likely to significantly exceed the approved £30,000 and that a detailed report on VAT implications for the Council as a whole will be brought to the Council meeting in February.

Then Council discussed the resolutions below:

**Resolution:**

1. All Groups that hire the Jubilee Field site should promote and detail alternate suitable parking locations, sustainable travel/car sharing on their website / social media"

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution above, agreed by majority 11 for, 0 against and 1 abstained

2. Approve the Council applying for free hedgerow from CPRE for the Jubilee Field  
Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the resolution above, agreed unanimously

3. In addition approve the legal check of the Football Foundation grant Terms and Conditions for a fee of £2,040 plus VAT

Cllr Mclaughlin proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed by majority 10 for, 1 against and 1 abstained

#### **6.4 Councillor promotional clothing**

Following a discussion which highlighted that the Clerk took advice from KALC as the £20 one off cost could be deemed as "for Cllrs and should be covered by Cllrs" or it could be considered to be promoting the Council, but Council need to vote. The general feeling was promoting the Council.

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Martin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve;

1. the design of Councillor promotional clothing – **appendix A**
2. that the Chairmans Discretionary budget is used for the one off cost of £20 to help with the ongoing promotion of the Council
3. Cllrs to order and purchase their own promotional clothing

#### **6.5 Potential Electric Vehicle Charging points in Staplehurst**

Following a discussion Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution** – To consider potential locations in Staplehurst for Electric Vehicle Charging points and feedback to Cllr Ash by the end of February 2025.

#### **6.6 Consider date for Community Clean up**

Following a discussion Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** agreed on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – 10am at Youth Club

#### **6.7 SMFC CIC request – refund and contribution to grounds maintenance**

The debate highlighted that the Ground hire agreement point 12 below

"The Club is responsible for the maintenance of the main pitch and surrounds inside the fenced area;

Signed Chairman.....date.....

- Cut grass - as required
- White lines – as required
- Repair divots / goalmouths – as required
- Put goals up and down – as required
- Raking the dead grass off pitch – as required
- Litter picking and dog mess clearing – as required
- Cut surrounds of pitch (within fence line) - as required
- Clearing entrance to blocked pitch drains – as required
- Communication with Council to help with upkeep – as required
- This would be an amendment to the existing SMFC ground hire agreement up to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025 with no change in hire fees
- Review at the end of July 2025”

In addition appendix A of the ground Hire agreement - recital 3 “SPC is responsible for .....to a standard acceptable as a public recreation ground”.  
It does not state ... “to a standard acceptable to a Semi- professional football ground.

The debate highlighted that when matches are postponed they are rearranged for later in the year – the fee is monthly – so a refund now would require and increase later in the year – say April / May. Also matches have been postponed and rearranged without a refund for years.

With regards the contribution to the liquid gypsum proposal it was felt that this was useful but it was part of SMFC CIC seeking to maintain the pitch to a semi-professional level.

Cllr Hotson proposed a contribution of £750 – there was no seconder

Cllr Mclaughlin proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve not to offer a refund or a contribution, agreed by majority 11 for, 1 against and 0 abstained.

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to suspend Council Standing Orders and extend the meeting to 10pm – Agreed majority 11 for, 0 against and 1 abstained

### **6.8 Staplehurst Awards and Social Evening**

Following a discussion, which clarified that the Parish Council AGM is the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025, this is the Annual Parish Meeting but the aim is to include the Awards and make it more of a social evening. Once agreed, the budget for the event will be finalised and reported back to Council.

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to approve the resolution below, agreed unanimously.

**Resolution:** To consider the Employment, Finance and Strategy proposal for an Annual Parish Meeting / Staplehurst Awards and Social Evening as set out below;

- Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- 7:30 – 9:30 North Hall, Staplehurst Community Centre
- Evening include
- Invite local groups to have a stall to promote their activities
- Rolling presentation of Council work during 2024/25
- Presentation of the Merit Awards

### **7 CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES for decision or noting:**

- a) Draft Letter to Cranbrook Youth FC – for a decision – in the discussion it was noted the Jubilee Field is public open space so the public can use it. However a team turning up

Signed Chairman.....date.....



should be hiring the facility via the Parish Council. In addition as the pitches were being rested due to the inclement weather it was unfortunate that Cranbrook YFC turned up to use the pitches. Suggested to amend letter to "We understand that your club turned up and had an organised training session at the Jubilee Field pitches on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, without permission."

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the amendment above - agreed unanimously.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the amended letter agreed - unanimously. Therefore Clerk send the letter

- b) Hedge Letter – Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Pett second agreed unanimously
- c) Bower Walk letter – noted, but deferred
- d) KCC Member grant offer – welcomed, SCEnic to consider 3 quotes
- e) The Clerks put forward that Council approve letters that go to a group of residents Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded that in future letters to groups of residents should be approved by Council – agreed majority 11 for, 1 against and 0 abstained

## **8. Chairman's Report**

### 8.1 Committee and working group minutes for noting

- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group minutes 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025, to follow
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 and 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- 8.1.4 SCEnic minutes 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024
- 8.1.5 3G multi-sports pitch working group meeting 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 to follow
- 8.1.6 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group next meeting to be arranged
- 8.5.8 Communications Group minutes 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024
- 8.5.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting to be arranged

## **9. REPORTS FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS (written reports for noting)**

## **10. Confidential**

- 10.1 HR update was discussed
- 10.2 IT service contract update was deferred

Closed 10.00pm

Signed Chairman.....date.....