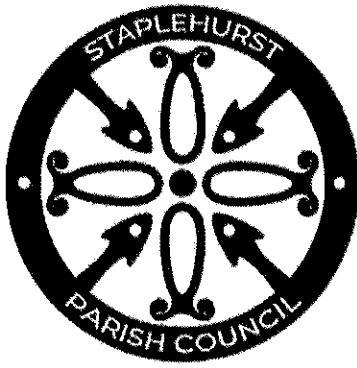


STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



MONDAY 12TH MAY 2025

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

AGENDA

PUBLIC FORUM – Comments about items on the agenda may be sent to clerk@staplehurst-pc.uk by 4.00pm on the day of the meeting. Attendees are requested to notify the Chairman of any intention to film, photograph or record during the meeting

Ensure all Councillors have received by email the full agenda pack

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:

Followed by signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:

Followed by signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Vice Chairman.

3. APOLOGIES

4. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:

- 4.1. Declaration of Lobbying
- 4.2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests.
- 4.3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda.
- 4.4. Requests for Dispensation.

5. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Pages 1996– 2001 of 13th May 2024 available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>, to be signed by Chairman.

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
- 6.1.b The Statement of Accounts (Form section 2) are approved Appendix B of the report
- 6.2 The Statement of Accounts 2024/25, Appendix C
- 6.3 Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st March 2025 Appendix D
- 6.4 IT Service Contract
- 6.5 Payment list

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

8. COMMITTEE AND GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

To note Terms of Reference for the following groups, note no changes circulated:

- 8.1 Planning Committee
- 8.2 Communications Group
- 8.3 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group
- 8.4 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group
- 8.5 HR Sub group
- 8.6 Greener Staplehurst Group
- 8.7 Staplehurst Community Neighbourhood Enhancement Improvement Group (SCEnic)
- 8.8 Road Safety Group
- 8.9 Jubilee Field Working Group
- 8.10 3G Multi-Sports pitch Working Group

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE & GROUP MEMBERS (DATES)

Annual review and appointment of members of Planning Committee and Parish Council Groups, meetings 7:30pm unless stated

- 9.1 Planning Committee – Council elects Chairman and Vice Chairman – Mondays on three week cycle following on from Council

At Groups first meeting they elect Chairman and Vice Chairman

- 9.2 Communications Group – proposed 3rd Wednesday of each month
- 9.3 Staplehurst Community Neighbourhood Enhancement Improvement Group – proposed 2nd Thursday of each month
- 9.4 Jubilee Field Working Group – proposed 1st Tuesday of each month
- 9.5 Employment, Finance & Strategy Group – proposed 3rd Thursday of each month, 1:30pm
- 9.6 Greener Staplehurst Group – as required
- 9.7 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – proposed 2nd Wednesday of each month
- 9.8 Road Safety Group – proposed 2nd Monday of each month 10am
- 9.9 3G Multi-Sports Working Group – as required

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; report attached –

- 11.1 Financial Regulations -attached for approval

Unchanged, circulated

- 11.2 Standing Orders
- 11.3 Council Code of Conduct
- 11.4 Civility and Respect
- 11.5 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 – unchanged and circulated

13. APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Annual review and appointment of councillor representatives on community groups and organisations and arrangements for reporting back;

- 13.1 Churchyard Liaison Committee
- 13.3 Staplehurst Community Centre

- 13.4 Staplehurst Patients Participation Group
- 13.5 Staplehurst Community Events Group
- 13.6 Parish Police Liaison Committee
- 13.7 Staplehurst Emergency Help Team
- 13.8 Staplehurst Remembrance Group
- 13.9 River Beult Catchment Improvement Group
- 13.10 Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee
- 13.11 Sobell Cheshire Homes
- 13.12 Staplehurst Community Speed Watch
- 13.13 KALC Area Committee
- 13.14 Staplehurst Library Users Group
- 13.15 McCabe Day Centre
- 13.16 Village Sports & Social Group – Golf 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 - attached

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

- 15.1 Subscriptions in 2024/25 – see attached
- 15.2 Donations in 2024/25 - see attached
- 15.3 Grants in 2024/25 – see attached

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

- 16.1 Approved subscriptions for 2025/26 – KALC £1,870

17 Committee and working group minutes for noting

- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 28th April 2025
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group minutes of 28th April 2025
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group minutes 29th April 2025 to follow
- 8.1.4 SCEnic minutes 24th 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 17th April 2025
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group meeting to be arranged
- 8.1.8 Communications Group meeting minutes 9th April 2025
- 8.1.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting to be arranged

18 CORRESPONDENCE - NA

19 CONFIDENTIAL

- 19.1 Merit Awards

Councillors are respectfully reminded that should they be unable to attend any Parish Council Meeting, of which this Agenda is a formal summons, they should notify the Parish Clerk with their apology and reason for non-attendance. Failure to do so for a continuous period of six months will result in automatic disqualification from the Council. Deadline for such notification to the Parish Clerk is by 4.00pm on the meeting day.

Mr R Griffiths
Parish Clerk
7/05/25

Parish Council and Borough Council Saturday Surgeries - Staplehurst Library 10.00am – 12.00pm	
Date	Councillor
31 st May 2025	Borough Councillor John Perry
28 th June 2025	Borough Councillor John Perry
26 th July 2025	Borough Councillor John Perry

Minutes & Agenda Circulation List:-

Chairman	To be elected	Vice-Chairman	To be elected	
Cllr Margaret Agar	Cllr Mel Alesi	Cllr Jose Castro	Cllr Richard Ash	Cllr Ani Martin
Cllr Eric Hotson	Cllr Bill Mclaughlin	Cllr Alan Pett	Cllr John Perry	Cllr Paddy Riordan
Cllr Adele Sharp	Cllr Mike Wakeford	Cllr Catherine Farragher	Cllr Josh Melville	
County Councillor – Cllr Brian Black		Borough Councillors – Cllrs Perry and Riordan		
STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL FUTURE MEETING DATES 2025 (Monday unless indicated)				
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE - 19:30 (7:30pm)				
2 nd June	23 rd June		14 th July	
4 th August	26 th August (Tuesday)		15 th September	
6 th October	27 th October		17 th November	
8 th December	12 th January 2026		26 th January 2026	

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

AGM

13TH MAY 2024

MINUTES

New Council

All Councillors signed their Declaration of Acceptance Forms before the meeting started - **confirmed**
All Councillors received by email the Information pack – **confirmed**

Public forum

A resident raised the issue of the Youth Club reopening – Council still chasing Insurance – all agreed very frustrating, request Clerk write a letter of complaint
Scouts – thanked everyone for their support – raised over a £1,000 for the Charity.
Also seeking a Treasurer – if anyone has a contact.

Present: Cllrs Riordan, Perry, Arger, Sharp, Castro, Mclaughlin, Ash, Hotson, Alesi, Martin and Pett

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:

Cllr Perry proposed and Cllr Castro seconded Cllr Riordan for Chairman
Cllr Mclaughlin proposed and Cllr Alesi seconded Cllr Sharp for Chairman

Following a closed vote – Cllr Riordan was elected Chairman

Cllr Riordan signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Castro seconded Cllr Perry to be Vice Chairman
Cllr Alesi proposed and Cllr Arger seconded Cllr Sharp to be Vice- Chairman

Following a closed vote, which was tied – Cllr Riordan as Chairman had the casting vote and Cllr Perry was elected Vice Chairman.

Cllr Perry signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Vice Chairman.

3. APOLOGIES

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

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

5. APPROVAL OF FULL COUNCIL MINUTES Pages 1996– 2095 of 15th May 2103 available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/full-council/>, Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the minutes of the meeting held 15th May 2023 – agreed majority: 7 For, 0 against and 4 abstained. Duly signed by Chairman.

6. Financial Reports

6.1 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/2024 and consideration of the Internal Auditors Report

Following a discussion, where the Clerk read out the items in Appendix C, which were approved by Council, Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Arger seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously.

Resolution

- 6.1.a The Annual Internal Audit Report is received and noted – **Appendix B** of the report
- 6.1.b The Annual Governance Statement (section 1) is approved - **Appendix C** of the report
- 6.1.c The Accounting Statements (section 2) are approved - **Appendix D** of the report
- 6.2 Accounts for the Annual Report 2023/24 – **Appendix E**
- 6.3 Annual CIL Report – **Appendix F**

Cllr Riordan signed the documents

7. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, groups, staff and other local authorities;

Following a discussion, the Clerk explained that KALC advised that "Urgent Items or Special motions" should not be on agendas for either Council or Planning Committee – therefore there needed to be an amendment to the Delegated Authority. In addition it was suggested that the RFO is added to the Financial Regulations delegation 4.1.

Cllr Perry noted that the Planning Committee is a statutory function of commenting on Planning matters. Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution:

To adopt the Delegation Policy as set out in the report

8. COMMITTEE AND GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Following a discussion, Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution: to adopt the Terms of Reference of the Planning Committee and following groups

- 8.1 Planning Committee – remains the same
- 8.2 Communications Group – remains the same
- 8.3 Staplehurst Community Neighbourhood Enhancement Improvement Group (SCEnic) – remains the same
- 8.4 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group – remains the same
- 8.5 Greener Staplehurst Group – remains the same
- 8.6 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – remains the same
- 8.7 Road Safety Group – remains the same

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

- 8.8 Jubilee Field Working Group – remains the same
 8.9 3G Multi-Sport Working Group – remains the same

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE & GROUP MEMBERS (DATES)

Following a discussion Cllrs were appointment of members of Planning Committee and Parish Council Groups as follows:

- 9.1 Planning Committee – Arger, Ash, McLaughlin, Pett and Sharp plus Cllr Hotson as a Substitute

Following a discussion, Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve Cllr Sharp as Chairman of Planning Committee; Agreed unanimously

Following a discussion, Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve Cllr Arger as Vice Chairman of Planning Committee; agreed unanimously.

Planning Committee meets Mondays on three week cycle following on from Council

At Working Groups first meeting they elect Chairman and Vice Chairman of their working group

- 9.2 Communications Group – Cllrs Alesi, Castro, Martin, Riordan and Sharp plus Cllr Arger Non-voting member

Meeting 3rd Wednesday of each month

- 9.3 Staplehurst Community Neighbourhood Enhancement Improvement Group – Cllrs Alesi, Castro, Martin, Pett, Sharp and Cllr Hotson as Non-Voting member plus Cllr Riordan Ex-officio

Meeting 2nd Thursday of each month

- 9.4 Jubilee Field Working Group – Cllrs Alesi, Hotson, McLaughlin, Riordan, Sharp and Cllr Arger as Non-Voting Member

Meetings Mondays on three week cycle following on from Council and Planning Committee

- 9.5 Employment, Finance & Strategy Group – Cllrs Hotson, Martin, Perry, Riordan and Sharp plus Cllr Arger Non-voting member

Meeting 3rd Tuesday of each month

- 9.6 Greener Staplehurst Group – Cllrs Ash, Castro, McLaughlin, Pett and Riordan

Meeting to be arranged

- 9.7 Neighbourhood Plan Review Group – Cllrs Arger, Ash, McLaughlin, Perry and Sharp

Meeting 2nd Wednesday of each month

- 9.8 Road Safety Group – Cllrs Alesi, McLaughlin and Sharp

Meeting 2nd Monday of each month 10am start

- 9.9 3G Multi-Sports Working Group – Cllrs Alesi, Arger, McLaughlin, Riordan and Sharp

Meeting 4th Thursday of each month

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

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

11. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future; NA

12. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;

Following a discussion, Clerk reemphasised the issue on Financial Regulations raised early in item 7 and that emphasis that the Appendix A in the Code of Conduct is the Nolan Principles of Public Life. Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Castro seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution:

12.1 **Standing Orders** – remains the same

12.2 **Financial Regulations** – minor amendment – add RFO to 4.1 – see below

There is delegation in the Council Financial Regulations (4.1) to deal with urgent works, which are then reported immediately to Council. i.e. remove a tree down in a playground.

- the Clerk / RFO in conjunction with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee or group, for any items up to and including £500.
- the Clerk / RFO for small items of expenditure up to the sum of £200

12.3 **Council Code of Conduct** – minor amendment – Highlight that Appendix A is the Nolan Principles of Public Life

12.4 **Civility and Respect** – remains the same

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

13.1 Parish Office lease with Staplehurst Community Centre - unchanged

14. APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Annual review and appointment of councillor representatives on community groups and organisations and arrangements for reporting back;

14.1 Churchyard Liaison Committee - Cllrs Ash, Martin and Perry

14.3 Staplehurst Community Centre – Cllr Mclaughlin

14.4 Staplehurst Patients Participation Group – Cllrs Alesi, Martin and Sharp – it was noted how important it is that this group is a “stand alone group” supported by the Parish Council rather than a group of the Parish Council

14.5 Staplehurst Community Events Group – Cllr Sharp

14.6 Parish Police Liaison Committee – Cllr Riordan

14.7 Staplehurst Emergency Help Team – Cllrs Alesi and Castro

14.8 Staplehurst Remembrance Group – Cllrs Alesi, Martin and Sharp

14.9 River Beult Catchment Improvement – Cllrs Alesi, Ash, Mclaughlin and Perry

14.10 Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee – Cllrs Alesi and Pett

14.11 Sobell Cheshire Homes – Cllr Hotson

14.12 Staplehurst Community Speed Watch – Cllr Alesi

14.13 KALC Area Committee – Cllr Riordan

14.14 Staplehurst Library Users Group – Cllr Sharp

14.15 McCabe Day Centre – Cllr Hotson

14.16 Village Sports & Social Group – Golf Club – Cllr Ash

Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the appointments above Agreed unanimously

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

15. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council

Following a discussion, where Cllr Riordan raised the issue of an EGM on the 3G pitch design 20th May 2024 7.00pm followed by Planning Committee at 8.00pm Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Meeting	Date
Council - AGM	13th May 2024
Annual Parish Meeting	15th May 2024
Planning	20th May 2024
Council	3rd June 2024
Planning	10th June 2024
Council	24th June 2024
Planning	1st July 2024
Council	15th July 2024
Planning	22nd July 2024
Council	5th August 2024
Planning	12th August 2024
Council (Tuesday due to Bank Holiday Monday)	27th August 2024
Planning	2nd September 2024
Council	16th September 2024
Planning	23rd September 2024
Council	7th October 2024
Planning	14th October 2024
Council	28th October 2024
Planning	4th November 2024
Council	18th November 2024
Planning	25th November 2024
Council	9th December 2024
Planning	16th December 2024
Meeting	Date

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

Council	6 th January 2025
Planning	13 th January 2025
Council	27 th January 2025
Planning	3 rd February 2025
Council	17 th February 2025
Planning	24 th February 2025
Council	10 th March 2025
Planning	17 th March 2025
Council	31 st March 2025
Planning	7 th April 2025
Council	21 st April 2025
Planning	28 th April 2025
Council AGM	12 th May 2025

16. Review of the Council's subscriptions, grant and donation expenditure in 2023/24;

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

Resolution:

16.1 Subscriptions in 2023/24

	£
Adobe systems	199.68
ALCC Annual Membership DJ	50.00
Canva – Creative solutions	83.33
Geoxsphere Ltd – Parish Online	135.00
KALC	1695.00
Kent County Playing Field Association	20.00
National Allotment Society	55.00
SLLC Annual membership fee – DJ	279.00
SLCC Annual membership fee - RG	318.00
Survey Monkey	320.00
Weald of Kent Protection Society	30.00
Zoom	119.90
Total	3,304.91

16.2 Donations in 2023/24

	£
CCDA – Annual Donation	200.00
KSSAA Annual Donation	200.00
Royal British Legion – Remembrance Day Poppy Wreath	100.00

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

Staplehurst Men's Shed – Donation re Village Clean Up	50.00
SEHT – start up grant	1,000.00
Staplehurst Scouts Donation	200.00
Staplehurst WI – Donation re Village Clean Up	50.00
Village Golf & Sports Club – CIL donation re new toilets	15,000.00
Total	16,800

And contract renewals

GDPR – Info Ltd	£350.00
Hugofox Ltd	£33.33
National Allotment Society	£55.00
Kent Playing Fields Association	£25.00
Adobe Systems software Ltd – Acrobat Pro	£151.68
Weald of Kent Protection Society	£35.00
Parish Online mapping	£144.00
Association of Local Council clerks - ALCC	£105.00
Society of Local Council Clerks - SLCC	£289.00

16.3 Grants in 2023/24 - £0

17 Review of the Council's subscriptions, donation and grants expenditure in 2024/25;

Following a discussion, where it was noted the Subscriptions were estimated as until a new subscription received we do not know the exact amount, Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution:

17.1 Approved subscriptions for 2024/25

	£
Adobe systems	199.68
ALCC Annual Membership DJ	50.00
Canva – Creative solutions	83.33
Geosphere Ltd – Parish Online	135.00
KALC	1695.00
Kent County Playing Field Association	20.00
National Allotment Society	55.00
SLLC Annual membership fee – DJ	279.00
SLCC Annual membership fee - RG	318.00
Survey Monkey	320.00
Weald of Kent Protection Society	35.00
Zoom	119.90
Total	3,309.91

17.2 Approved donations for 2024/25

	£
All Saints PCC parish magazine	200.00
Community Centre for Debt Advice	200.00
Heart of Kent Hospice	200.00
KSS Air Ambulance Trust	200.00
Kenward Trust	100.00

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

Royal British legion Poppy wrath	100.00
Staplehurst WI- Donation re Village Clean Up	50.00
Staplehurst Men's Shed – Donation re Village Clean Up	50.00
Total	1,100

17.3 Available expenditure for grants 2024/25 = **£3,200**

18. **Advertise the co-option of Councillors**

Following a discussion, which emphasised the need for promotion for Cllrs and an informal chat with potential Cllrs to explain what is required and what are their interests which can support action Cllr Riordan proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution: To advertise for the co-option of 4 Parish Councillors

19 **PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE REPORTS & ISSUES FOR DECISION**

19.1 Accounts for Payment

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

Approved Payments 1st April - 7th May 2024

Amount

Hartlake Garden Services - Parish Noticeboard Installation	320.00
Bumbles Plant Centre - Plants GSG	44.92
Reimbursement re Caretaker Boots	234.00
Hugofox Ltd - Silver Subscription April	23.99
Ecosan Services Ltd - Sanitary Unit Bell Lane Toilets	118.03
Smartwater Testing - Legionella Kit Jubilee Pavilion	315.00
Octopus Energy - Youth Club Electricity July 2023	172.80
Paul Graves - New Lock Water Pump Meter Cabinet JF	86.00
Amazon UK - Wheelie Bin	64.99
Castle Water - Youth Club Water March	7.19
HMRC - Tax & NI March	1886.86
Amazon UK - Stationery	41.38
Poyntell - Car Park Gate Padlock JF	126.91
CSG Global Ltd - White Linemarking Powder JF	62.35
Origin Amenity Solutions - Grass Seed JF	147.40
Payroll & Pension Costs - April	6959.49
Iden Signs - Youth Club Signage	43.20
P&F Cleaning Services - Bell Lane Toilets Clean/open/Sun Apr	1010.00
Origin Amenity Solutions - Topsoil JF	366.60
JBH Refurbishments - Youth Club Refurbishment Balance 2/2	5409.72
Royal Mail - Residents Survey Postage	39.48
Sevenoaks DC - Premises Licence Surrenden Field	70.00
Homeleigh Timber - Caretaker gloves & safety glasses	3.91
Hugofox Silver Subscription - May	23.99
Camilla Lucas - Youth Club Cleaning	60.00
Reimbursement re Cleaning Materials YC	9.90
All Saints PCC - Churchyard Maintenance 1/2	7000.00
Spar - Office Sundries	3.50
Sainsburys - Coffee	7.00
Canva - Creative Software Annual Subscription	99.99
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription Apr-May	19.97
ZOOM - Annual Subscription	155.88

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

MBC - Council Tax Room 1 April	65.75
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 April	75.55
MBC - Council Tax Youth Club April	121.08
Sage Payroll - April	9.60
Telecoms World - Virtual Phone No. SEHT	11.99
Npower - Street Light Energy March	55.96
Countrystyle Recycling - Waste Collection March	76.85
British Gas - Parish Office Energy Mar-Apr	198.82
British Gas Lite - Electricity Surrenden Pavilion Mar-Apr	34.10
British Gas Lite - Electricity Bell Lane Toilets Mar-Apr	32.74
MBC - Council Tax Room 1 May	62.00
MBC - Council Tax Room 2-3 May	72.00
MBC - Council Tax Youth Club 2-3 May	121.00
MBC - Council Tax Bell Lane Toilets	98.00
Sage Payroll - May	9.60
Lloyds Bank - Charges April	7.85
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange April	271.32
Arron Services - Hosted Exchange May	271.32
	26,529.98

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

4.51

Contracts

	£
GDPR -Info Ltd	350.00
Hugo Fox Ltd – website SLL / Cert & Support	33.33
National Allotment Society	55.00
Kent County Playing Field Association	25.00
Adobe systems – Acrobat Pro	151.68
Weald of Kent Protection Society	35.00
Parish Online data mapping	144.00
ALCC	105.00
SLCC	289.00

19.2 Playscheme 2024 prices

Following a discussion, Cllr Hotson proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution: to approve

- a) the dates and times of the scheme as

Monday 29th July – staff organisation & Open Morning

Tuesday 30th July – Friday 2nd August 9am – noon

Monday 5th August – Friday 9th August 9am – noon followed by noon – 3pm

Monday 12th – Friday 16th 9am – noon followed by noon – 3pm

On the last day an extra hour will be paid for the staff to clean the venue.

- b) the fees – proposed £6 for pre-booked and £7 on the day

- c) the BioBlitz proposed 14th August 2024

- d) the use of the Infant Hall

- e) the appointment of Cllr X to oversee the play scheme, working with Jean Terry, and to make regular visits during the three weeks

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

19.3 Annual Parish Meeting agenda

The Annual Parish Meeting agenda was noted

19.4 80th D-Day Celebration event

Following a discussion, Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Riordan seconded to approve the resolution below; Agreed unanimously

Resolution: to approve

- i. work with Staplehurst Community Events Group to organise the 80th D-Day Celebration – 6th June 2024
- ii. Include event in Council insurance

20. CORRESPONDENCE - NA**21. CONFIDENTIAL****21.1 Caretakers extra hours**

Following a discussion, Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to approve to increase the Caretakers hours by 3.50 hours up to 15.50 hours per week – agreed unanimously

Meeting closed.....

Signed Chairman.....Date.....

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2025**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2025**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2024/25**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2025 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

ENTER PUBLICLY www.staplehurst-pc.uk WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	191,063	237,277	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	224,317	262,247	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	92,199	47,355	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	109,165	113,988	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	161,137	164,580	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	237,277	268,311	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	235,983	268,650	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	749,965	753,650	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

06/05/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

for the year ending
31st MARCH 2025

(Subject to Audit)

Income and Expenditure Account
Balance Sheet and
Supporting Statement

Mrs DA Jenkins
Deputy Clerk & Finance Officer
Parish Office, Village Centre
High Street
Staplehurst
Kent
TN12 0BJ

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2025

2023/2024		2024/2025
	INCOME	
224,317.00	Parish Precept	262,247.00
13,671.36	MBC Parish Services Grant	14,835.62
0.00	KCC Community Projects Grant (Disabled Toilet)	1,729.00
61,329.66	MBC S106/CIL Grant (CIL Various)	2,381.47
525.00	MBC Noticeboard Grant	0.00
0.00	Allotment Rental	1,160.00
0.00	Jubilee Field Pitch Hire Rental	14,296.52
0.00	Youth Club Donations	842.00
9,904.00	Other Grants & Donations (NDP)	2,067.00
380.00	Other Income (Car Park Electricity, Merit Award, Kathie Lamb Rent, YC Ins refund)	650.21
6,389.20	Interest on investments	9,393.43
<u>316,516.22</u>	TOTAL INCOME	<u>309,602.25</u>
	EXPENDITURE	
128,997.28	General Administration (Parish Office staff, utilities, equipment, insurance, subscriptions, training, publicity & website, Village Update, stationery, postage, council tax, rent)	139,447.31
0.00	Office Equipment	0.00
16,800.00	Donations (RBL, KSSAA, CCDA, Kenward Trust, WI, Men's Shed, SEHT, Wealden FR, Parish Magazine)	2,940.00
25,350.45	Street light energy & repairs, Defibrillator parts, tree survey, planters, CCTV & Caretaker & equipment	21,887.85
1,690.77	Playscheme	2,174.33
14,305.64	Jubilee Sports Field Maintenance (Maintenance of land & building, Utilities, 3G Pitch Pre-planning Advice, Football Foundation Application)	48,940.21
16,572.28	Youth Club (Maintenance of land & building, Equipment, KCC Lease/Purchase)	11,414.91
21,492.15	Surrenden Playing Field Maintenance Repairs & CCTV	4,357.26
6,841.67	Churchyard maintenance	10,945.43
3,485.51	Christmas Lights	4,779.39
11,159.37	Professional Consultant Fees (Kingsfords Soliditors re Guides Lease & JF 3G grant review, Worknest HR support)	10,396.80
12,420.49	Public Convenience maintenance & repairs	15,453.74
6,002.04	Projects	0.00
5,094.08	Wimpey Field Maintenance (Mowing, strimming, MVCP Maintenance, Utilities)	4,040.03
0.00	Allotment Maintenance (Water trough installation)	981.46
0.00	SEHT (Virtual telephone no. & insurance costs contribution)	500.00
90.00	Third Party Expenditure (Memory Cafe)	310.00
<u>270,301.73</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>278,568.72</u>
46,214.49	Balance of Income/Expenditure	31,033.53
191,063.14	Balance brought forward from previous year	237,277.63
<u>237,277.63</u>		<u>268,311.16</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

31/03/2024

31/03/2025

LONG TERM ASSETS			
0.00	None (see supporting statement below)	0.00	
CURRENT ASSETS			
3,470.03	VAT Recoverable	3,874.20	
408.14	Prepayments	0.00	
235,983.20	Cash in Hand	268,649.52	
239,861.37			272,523.72
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accruals			
(320.00)	Installation of Noticeboard	(0.00)	
(37.88)	Outstanding invoice for plants	(628.84)	
(195.00)	Caretaker equipment	(0.00)	
(144.00)	Outstanding Electricity invoice	(0.00)	
(0.00)	Jubilee Pavilion Cleaning Invoice	(20.00)	
(0.00)	Castle Water Jubilee Field Pavilion	(90.36)	
(0.00)	Staff pay awards	(1,435.40)	
(1,886.86)	Creditors (PAYE)	(2,037.96)	
(2,583.74)			(4,212.56)
237,277.63			268,311.16
REPRESENTED BY:-			
145,891.67	GENERAL FUND		141,601.15
Ongoing Parish Project Reserves:-			
4,000.00	Allotment Fund	0.00	
26,500.00	Surrenden Playing Field Project	27,500.00	
1,000.00	Wimpey Field Open Space	2,000.00	
15,000.00	Jubilee Field	15,000.00	
200.00	Greener Staplehurst Project	200.00	
1,000.00	Neighbourhood Development Plan	2,000.00	
1,399.26	Youth Club Activities & Equipment	1,338.52	
12,485.10	Youth Club Building	13,485.10	
0.00	Community Infrastructure Levy Funds	55,551.79	
29,491.60	Balance c/fwd. for future budget	9,634.60	
91,075.96			126,710.01
RESERVES held on behalf of others			
310.00	Rural Warden Dementia Café	0.00	
0.00	SEHT Covid-19 Fund	0.00	
310.00			0.00
237,277.63			268,311.16

Supporting Statement to the accounts

LONG TERM ASSETS

Assets have been treated as an expense item at the time of purchase for accounting purposes. As at 31.03.2025 the following assets were held: -

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Jubilee Field (Freehold)	Nil
Land between west side of High Street & Chestnut Ave., Staplehurst (Freehold)	Nil
Land north east of Bell Lane, Staplehurst (Freehold)	Nil
Land south side of Marden Road opp. North Down, Staplehurst (Freehold)	1.00
Wimpey Field Open Space (Freehold)	Nil
Footpath KM312 rear of Bathurst Road (Freehold)	Nil

Lease purchase of Youth Club land from KCC	15,000.00
BUILDINGS (purchase value)	
Jubilee Pavilion	500,000.00
Youth Club Building	0
Surrenden Pavilion	6,300.00
Bell Lane Toilets (leasehold)	0
OTHER ASSETS	
As listed on the Asset Register 31.03.2025 held at the Parish Office	261,506.48

LEASES - As at 31st March 2025 the following leases were in operation: -

Lessor	Purpose	Rent	Expiry
Maidstone Borough Council	Bell Lane Toilets	Peppercorn	2028
Maidstone Borough Council	Surrenden Playing Field	Peppercorn	2144
Kent County Council	Youth Club Land Lease & Purchase	850.00	2050
Trustees of Jubilee Field	Lease of land for Guide Centre	5.00	2088

Surrenden Playing Field – The Lease from Maidstone Borough was renewed for a term of 125-years and expires on 21st April 2144.

Youth Club Land - The Lease from Kent County Council for the Youth Club Land includes an Option to Purchase at any time within the term of the Lease. Each year £850 is paid to Kent County Council of which £250 represents rent and £600 represents capital towards the purchase of the land in 2050 at the agreed purchase price of £30,000 plus adjustment for RPI. As at 31st March 2025 a total of £15,000 towards the purchase price had been paid.

Parish Office Lease – Agreement had been reached for a new lease for the rental of Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 8 at Staplehurst Village Centre for a term of 3 years from 1st November 2007 at a combined annual rent of £4,200. In early 2014 an additional room was agreed to be rented for Staplehurst Society historical work at an additional £150 per annum. Completion of the legal paperwork at 31.03.2025 remained outstanding so the existing terms of the lease run on.

EARMARKED RESERVES & ONGOING PROJECT BUDGETS

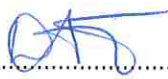
- General Fund – Parish Councils are unable to borrow money without Government approval, which can be time-consuming to obtain. The General Fund reduced by the sum of £4,290.52 making a new total of £141,601.15 to be held for any budgeted and unbudgeted or unforeseen emergencies that may require funds to be urgently applied.
- Parish Projects – The Council has set aside funding towards seven projects in the parish: maintenance of the Wimpey Field land gifted by Taylor Wimpey; works at Surrenden Playing Field to improve the facilities; enhancement of Jubilee Field to include a 3G Pitch; Neighbourhood Development Plan revisions & updates; improvements to the Youth Club building; grant for a litter project (Greener Staplehurst) and a donation towards activities and equipment at the Youth Club.
- Balance c/fwd. for future budget - The sum of £9,634.60 has been carried forward towards settling committed funds for Greener Staplehurst Group bulbs and shrubs for planting in and around the village; cleaning of the pavilion and a utility invoice at Jubilee Field Pavilion and an increase in two members of staff salaries backdated to April 2024.
- Rural Warden Dementia Cafe – A donation of £310.00 was made to the McCabe Memory Café from the Rural Community Warden’s fund. No further funds are held on behalf of the Community Warden.

SECTION 137 PAYMENTS - Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables Parish Councils to spend up to the product of £10.81 per elector for the benefit of people in the area and on activities or projects not specifically authorised by other powers. Electoral Roll stood at 5,860, thereby resulting in a limit of £63,346.60. The Council spent £1,250.00 on donations and £1,690.00 on grants.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY – The Parish Council published three Village Updates and the 2023-24 Annual Report of the Parish Council; these were distributed to every household in the parish. The total cost of these was £3,474.00 for printing, plus some additional costs for postage to outlying areas amounting to £832.15 and a small amount for stationary.

PENSIONS - The Employer’s contribution for eligible staff into a Workplace Pension Scheme (NEST) was 8% of payroll for 3 members.

Signed.....
Chairman, Staplehurst Parish Council

Signed.....
Responsible Financial Officer

Signed.....
Mr T Kendrick, Internal Auditor

Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31st March 2025

INCOME

Parish Precept	262,247.00
MBC Parish Services Grant	14,835.62
Other Income (BL electricity, Merit Award, Kathie Lamb rent, Ins refund)	650.21
KCC Community Projects Grant (YC Disabled Toilet Grant)	1,729.00
MBC S106/CIL (CIL various)	2,381.47
Allotment Rental	1,160.00
Jubilee Field Pitch Hire Rental	14,296.52
Youth Club Donations	842.00
Other Grants & Donations (NDP)	2,067.00
Interest on Investments	9,393.43
TOTAL INCOME	309,602.25

EXPENDITURE

General Administration (Parish Office staff, utilities, equipment, insurance, subscriptions, training, publicity & website, Village Update, stationery, postage, council tax, rent, bank charges, Computer Support, Auditors, Miscellaneous)	139,447.31
Donations (CCDA, KSSAA, RBL, Kenward Trust, WI, Men's Shed, SEHT, Wealden First Response, Parish Magazine)	2,940.00
Street Lighting Energy & Repairs, Defibrillator, Tree Survey, Planter Maintenance, Mowing, Plants & Accessories, CCTV, Caretaker & equipment	21,887.85
Playscheme	2,174.33
Jubilee Sports Field & Pavilion & Skatepark (Maintenance of land and buildings, Utilities, 3G Pitch Pre-planning advice, Football Foundation Application)	48,940.21
Youth Club (Land & Buildings maintenance, equipment, KCC Lease/Purchase)	11,414.91
Surrenden Playing Field Maintenance, Repairs & CCTV	4,357.26
Churchyard Maintenance	10,945.43
Christmas Lights	4,779.39
Professional Consultant Fees (Guides Lease, JF 3G Pitch & HR Support)	10,396.80
Public Convenience Maintenance, Repairs & Utilities	15,453.74
Wimpey Field (Mowing, strimming, water, Bioblitz, MVCP)	4,040.03
Allotment Maintenance (Water Trough Installation)	981.46
SEHT (Virtual Telephone No. & Insurance Contribution)	500.00
Third Party Expenditure (Community Warden Memory Café)	310.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	278,568.72

Balance of Income over Expenditure	31,033.53
Balance brought forward from previous year	237,277.63
	<u>268,311.16</u>

The above Income & Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet with Supporting Statement are (at the time of printing) subject to Council approval, internal and external audit. Iden Business Services undertake the Internal Control of Staplehurst Parish Council accounts and the Annual Audit Return is made to Mazars LLP, Chartered Accountants. In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the dates set for the period of exercise of public rights commence on Tuesday 3rd June 2025 and end on Monday 14th July 2025.

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2025

LONG TERM ASSETS

None (see supporting statement below) 0.00

CURRENT ASSETS

VAT Recoverable	3,874.20	
Prepayments	0.00	
Cash in hand	268,649.52	
		272,523.72

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accruals	(2,174.60)	
Creditors (PAYE)	(2,037.96)	
		(4,212.56)
		268,311.16

REPRESENTED BY:

General Fund		141,601.15
Ongoing Parish Project Budgets:		
Surrenden Playing Field Project	27,500.00	
Wimpey Field Open Space	2,000.00	
Jubilee Field	15,000.00	
Greener Staplehurst Project	200.00	
Neighbourhood Development Plan	2,000.00	
Youth Club Activities & Equipment	1,338.52	
Youth Club Building	13,485.10	
Community Infrastructure Levy	55,551.79	
Balance c/fwd for future budget	9,634.60	
		126,710.01
		268,311.16

Supporting Statement to the accounts

LONG TERM ASSETS

Assets have been treated as an expense item at the time of purchase for accounting purposes. As at 31.03.2025 the following assets were held:

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Jubilee Field (Freehold)	0.00
Land between west side of High Street & Chestnut Avenue (Freehold)	0.00
Land north east of Bell Lane (Freehold)	0.00
Land south side of Marden Road, opposite North Down (Freehold)	1.00
Wimpey Field Open Space (Freehold)	0.00
Footpath KM312 rear of Bathurst Road (Freehold)	0.00
Lease/purchase of Youth Club land from KCC	15,000.00

BUILDINGS (purchase value)

Sectional Building (Surrenden Pavilion)	6,300.00
Jubilee Pavilion	500,000.00
Public Convenience - Bell Lane (Leasehold)	0.00
Youth Club Building	0.00

OTHER ASSETS (purchase value)

As listed on the Asset Register 31.03.2025 held at the Parish Office

247,350.07

LEASES - As at 31st March 2024 the following leases were in operation: -

Lessor	Purpose	Rent	Expiry
Maidstone Borough Council	Bell Lane Toilets	Peppercorn	2028
Maidstone Borough Council	Surrenden Playing Field	Peppercorn	2144
Kent County Council	Youth Club Land Lease & Purchase	850.00	2050
Staplehurst Parish Council	Jubilee Field Management	5.00	2035
Trustees of Jubilee Field	Lease of land for Guide Centre	5.00	2088

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Item / Title	Item 6.4 – IT Service contract
Council, Committee, Working Group	Council
Meeting Date Time & Venue	12 th May 2025, Staplehurst Primary School, Infant hall
Report Author	Clerk
Purpose	To consider option of changing the Council domain to a .gov.uk domain and also consider the Cllrs IT Equipment Declaration form if they wish to use their own equipment for Parish Council work.
Recommendation	To consider; a) Changing domain to .gov.uk for £60 plus VAT per year b) Adopting Cllr IT Equipment Disclaimer form in Appendix A
Link to Council Strategic Action Plan	Administration - Sound policies, financial management and reporting

Background

The Parish Office IT service contract was awarded to Heliocentrix 31st March 2025, 2239/4.3.

Detail

a) Domain

The Council's current domain is -pc.uk. There is a push for all Parish Councils to move to .gov.uk, it is currently guidance but will be a requirement no doubt in due course. Heliocentrix are capable of managing this change – see below

"We are an approved .gov.uk registrar so can handle all the process of procuring and supplying a .gov.uk domain. We will need to get the domain approved by the government domains team, but this is fairly low hassle. I expect they will want you to use Staplehurst-pc.gov.uk

The domain would incur an annual cost of £60 + VAT which includes the domain renewal, our maintenance of the domain, and any DNS record amendments needed each year. We can either change to this domain as we move you to Microsoft 365, or we can switch the domain over later. As discussed, we would recommend keeping the current -pc.uk alongside for a minimum of two years. We can have emails to both domains going into every mailbox, but all outgoing emails from a certain date to be from the .gov.uk domain.

There is no one off charge and Heliocentrix would link in with Hugo Fox, our web provider, to manage the change.

b) Councillor IT equipment disclaimer

If a Cllr decides they want to use their own IT equipment – i.e. used to their own IT equipment, do not want the hassle of extra IT Equipment etc then Heliocentrix would send a document to enable Cllrs to access the Parish Council Microsoft Office 365 site and provide support if required.

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Please see attached Cllr IT equipment disclaimer form in Appenidx A, this is based on a similar disclaimer, previously discussed at Communications Group and refined with Heliocentrix.

Financial implications;

The Parish Council has set aside funding in the 2025/26 budget for IT equipment

Budget- Administration

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Appendix A

Councillor IT equipment disclaimer

I have read and understand Staplehurst Parish Council's IT Policy and this disclaimer document to allow me, and only me, to use my own IT equipment (computer, laptop, tablet or phone) for Staplehurst Parish Council business.

1. My IT Equipment is
.....
.....
2. Software packages Microsoft 365 apps and secure cloud services for Parish Council work only
3. Security, I will be the only user of the equipment for Staplehurst Parish Council business. No one else will have access to passwords or codes. I will keep security and antivirus up to date on my IT equipment
4. I will not save any Council documents on my equipment and will use MS share point
5. Maintenance of equipment; I will be responsible for the maintenance of my own IT equipment, but would allow remote access by Council IT Service contractor if necessary
6. Monitoring; from time to time the Council reserves the right to monitor the usage of the Parish Council software on my IT equipment.
7. Freedom of Information Requests – From time to time the Council receives requests for Freedom of Information. Legally the Council has to respond and therefore reserves the right to search emails and documents on my IT equipment / Council software.
8. Subject Access Review Requests; – From time to time the Council receives Subject Access Review Requests. Legally the Council has to respond and therefore reserves the right to search emails and documents on my IT equipment / Council software

Councillor

Print name.....

Signed.....Date.....

Officer of Staplehurst Parish Council

Print name.....

Signed.....Date.....

6-5.

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

<u>Approved Payments 1st April - 29th April 2025</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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 Reinbursement 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
Positive 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
	<u>17,467.44</u>

TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE

0.00

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [enter date].

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**
 - **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**

- the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £1,000; and

2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
 - ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
 - ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
 - prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
 - allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
 - identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and
 - ensure division of responsibilities.
- 2.6. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member or ex member other than the Chair shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations produced by the RFO. The member or ex member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
 - **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them with any related documents to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
 - is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - perform any operational duties for the council;

- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually between October and December for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council.
- 4.3. No later than November each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following three financial years, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward with the formal approval of the full council.
- 4.5. Each group shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the finance committee not later than the end of November each year.
- 4.6. The draft budget with any group proposals and three-year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the finance group and a recommendation made to the council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and three-year forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.

- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk or RFO shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk or RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;
- 5.9. where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk or RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases under £500, the Clerk or RFO shall seek to achieve value for money.

5.11. Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.

5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- the Clerk or RFO, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk or RFO, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT.

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute in the case of council or other auditable evidence trail.

5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council except in an emergency.

5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Lloyds Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO.
- 6.4. Personal payments including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking/cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council may authorise in advance for the year.
- 6.7. A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council for information only.
- 6.8. The Clerk and RFO in consultation with the Chairman shall have delegated authority to authorise payments only in the following circumstances:
 - i. any payments of up to £1,000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. payments of up to £2,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

- iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 6.9. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and appended to the minutes.
- 7.9. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the RFO and a member. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.
- 7.14. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members.
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.
- 8.4. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council at the next convenient meeting.

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to [the council] and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council.
- 9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and RFO and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

- 9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. All cash received must be banked intact. The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float/imprest account of £100 and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.
- a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
 - b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
 - c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on any schedule of payments presented for approval.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 11.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by the council to ensure that the correct payments have been made.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made quarterly.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk or RFO to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the

final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 15.2. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.3. The Clerk or RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.
- 17.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.

17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

18.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

18.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.

18.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18.4 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

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

Time is 7:30pm unless stated, venue Staplehurst Primary School, Infant Hall (currently being reviewed).

Planning	19th May 2025
Council	2nd June 2025
Planning	9th June 2025
Council	23rd June 2025
Planning	30th June 2025
Council	14th July 2025
Planning	21st July 2025
Council	4th August 2025
Planning	11th August 2025
Council	(Tues) 26th August 2025
Planning	1st September 2025
Council	15th September 2025
Planning	22nd September 2025
Council	6th October 2025
Planning	13th October 2025
Council	27th October 2025
Planning	3rd November 2025
Council	17th November 2025
Planning	24th November 2025
Council	8th December 2025
Planning	15th December 2025
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

Subscriptions 2024-2025

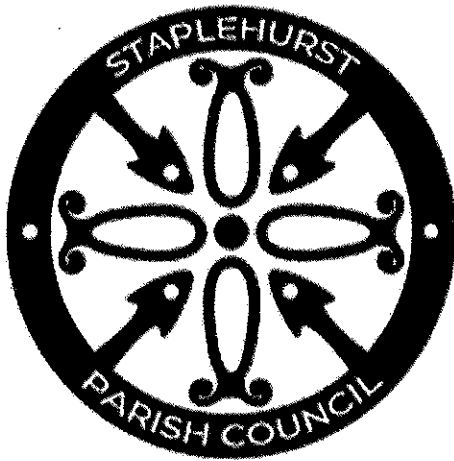
	£
Adobe Systems	199.68
ALCC - Annual Membership DJ	50.00
Canva - Creative Software	83.33
GeoXphere Ltd - Parish Online	135.00
KALC	1765.00
Kent County Playing Fields Association	20.00
National Allotment Society	70.00
SLCC - Annual Membership Fee DJ	288.00
SLCC - Annual Subscription RG	300.00
Weald of Kent Protection Society	35.00
Zoom	129.90
TOTAL	<u>£3,075.91</u>

Grants & Donations 2024-2025

In 2024-25 Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables Parish Councils to spend up to the product of £10.81 per elector for the benefit of people in the area and on activities or projects not specifically authorised by other powers. Electoral Roll stood at 5,860, thereby resulting in a limit of £63,346.60. The Council spent £1,250.00 on donations and £1,690 in grants.

	£
Community Centre for Debt Advice - local debt advice service	200.00
Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance – emergency medical service	200.00
Heart of Kent Hospice	200.00
All Saints PCC – Parish Magazine	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 – Spring Village Clean-up refreshments	50.00
Staplehurst WI – Autumn Village Clean-up	50.00
TOTAL	<u>£1,250.00</u>

We Are Beams - Grant	250.00
Hi Kent – Hearing Aid Support Grant	440.00
Staplehurst School – Garden Grant	1,000.00
TOTAL	<u>£1,690.00</u>



STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

28TH APRIL 2025

MINUTES

PUBLIC FORUM –

A resident raised a number of concerns about application 25/501387 including;

- The application is misleading – Rural Planning document does not state the historical setting
- Factual errors – not overlooking neighbours, it does overlook neighbours
- Application is incomplete – no foul drainage design
- Already changed use to resident, without permission

A resident raised a number of points regarding application 25/501282 seeking to extend property for family reasons.

Present Cllrs Ash, Farragher, McLaughlin, Pett, Arger, Sharp plus the Clerk

APOLOGIES: NA

Absent Cllr Wakeford

APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES: Minute Pages **1800P-1803P** of 7th April 2025 available at: <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/planning-committee/>

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to approve the minutes of the 7th April 2025, Agreed: unanimously.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda: -

1. Declarations of Lobbying – Cllr McLaughlin application 25/501282
2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests - NA
3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda - NA
4. Requests for Dispensation - NA

CLERK'S PLANNING REPORT: Nothing to add

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

FULL PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**25/501163 Land South of South Cottage High Street TN12 0AD**

Erection of 1(no) 4-bedroom detached dwelling with associated amenity (resubmission of 24/504756/FULL)

Following a debate which emphasised the previous points for recommending refusal still stand and that no corrections have been made

1. Car parking – main road has yellow lines and Parade parking / garage are private – not available
2. Access – there is no vehicle access to the site

The application does not meet MBC Biodiversity standards, Hedgerow planting density and the application is incomplete as no design for foul water

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Pett seconded to recommend refusal of planning application 25/501163, on the following grounds, agreed: unanimously.

Failed previous application- Inspectors comments

Councillors felt that the Inspectors comments in dismissing an appeal against a previous application (15/506419) remained valid for this application: In environmental terms the scheme would result in harm to the setting of adjoining listed buildings (North and South Cottages and Nos 1 & 2 Little Loddenden) and it would fail to either preserve or enhance the character of the Staplehurst Conservation Area. The proposals would fail to protect or enhance the historic environment; access from the highway to the former garden land would not be of a standard that met requirements of Local Plan policy

MBC Local Plan

LPRsP15 Design The application did not follow the principles of good design set out in Local Plan Councillors commented that the proposed design and materials were unsympathetic to the setting; the proposed development would adversely affect the adjacent heritage assets, in contravention of Local Plan.

LPRHOU4; Residential Garden land – reduction of residential garden land

LPRSP14 – LPRENV1 – Development affecting heritage asset – especially in a conservation area

LPRTRA4 - Councillors have submitted photographic evidence of the difference in level between the highway and the property; the absence of adequate parking provision. The A229 has double yellow lines, the parade is private parking / garages- Councillors contested the availability of rented garages;

There is **no vehicle access** to the site for construction or if completed for occupants.

Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan policy PW4; NEW DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN STAPLEHURST MUST HAVE REGARD TO THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Councillors commented that the application had not followed up the requirement for a survey of the pond area to the east of the site to identify Great Crested Newt activity, which had been set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal attached to application 15/506419;

Councillors expressed concern about the impact that construction activity would have on access to and from the centre of the village, particularly as many people with limited mobility relied on the footpath adjacent to the sites western boundary.

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

The application does not meet MBC Biodiversity standards, Hedgerow planting density and the application is incomplete as no design for foul water

Councillors **REQUEST** that the application is reported to the Planning Committee if the Planning Officer is minded to approve for the planning reasons set out above. Agreed: unanimously

25/501282 **33 Hanmer Way TN12 0NR** Erection of two-storey front extension and single storey rear extension with 3no. roof lights. Garage conversion into a habitable space. Loft conversion with full width rear dormer.

Following a debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to recommend refusal of planning application 25/501282, on the following grounds;

NPPF

124,e – should be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene – this design is **not** consistent.

MBC Local Plan

LPRHOU2 – Residential extensions, conversions, annexes, and redevelopment within a built up area –

i. The scale, height, form, appearance and siting of the proposal would fit unobtrusively with the existing building were retained and the character of the street scene and/or its context;

ii. The traditional boundary treatment of an area would be retained and, where feasible, reinforced;

iii. Adjoining residents would avoid unacceptable loss of privacy, outlook or light and would avoid unacceptable intrusion from noise or odour; and

iv. Sufficient parking would be provided within the curtilage of the dwelling without diminishing the character of the street scene.

LPRHOU4 – residential garden land - significant loss of garden, note already constructed driveway and removed lawn

LPRHOU5 - Density in a residential area – over intensification

LPRSP15 – Sustainable design – no environmental mitigation

Cllrs **REQUEST** that the application is reported to the Planning Committee if the Planning Officer is minded to approve for the planning reasons set out above, Agreed: unanimously

25/501364 **Eric House Marden Road TN12 0PD** Proposed detached garage.

Following a debate Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to recommend approval of planning application 25/501364 Agreed: unanimously

25/501434 **1 Marian Square TN12 0SQ** Conversion of the garage to a habitable space (part retrospective).

Following a debate Cllr Ash proposed and Cllr McLaughlin seconded to recommend approval of planning application 25/501434 Agreed: unanimously.

25/501387 **The Coach House Goudhurst Road OHB** Change of Use of Farm Building into residential dwelling (retrospective).

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

Following a debate which highlighted the concerns raised by the resident – inaccurate documents, factual errors etc Cllr Pett proposed and Cllr Ash seconded to recommend refusal of planning application 25/501387, on the following grounds

LPRHOU4 – Residential garden land - reduction
 LPRQD1 – Sustainable design
 LPRENV1 – Development affecting heritage assets
 LPRQD4 – Design principles in the Countryside

An incomplete application without an foul water designs in addition wish to refer to the Conservation officer and **REQUEST** the application is reported to the Planning Committee if the Planning Officer is minded to approve for the planning reasons set out above, Agreed: unanimously

SUBMISSION OF DETAILS:

25/501450/SUB **Copp William Farm Marden Road TN12 0PB** Submission of details pursuant to condition 3 - (Site Development Scheme) subject to 24/504256/FULL

Following a debate Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Arger seconded the following comments – agreed unanimously “That the lighting scheme is not in keeping with a listed building and a more appropriate lighting scheme would be welcomed”

DECISIONS: Noted

25/500440/SUB **Land Off Headcorn Road TN12 0DT** Submission of details pursuant to condition 5- (biodiversity) subject to 14/505432/FULL MBC GRANTED SPC Commented (Min 1795P)

25/500542/LAWPRO **Woodside Wilden Park Road TN12 0HL** Lawful Development Certificate Proposed - Erection of an outbuilding incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling. MBC GRANTED, SPC Commented (Min 1799P)

25/500678/LBC **Green Court High Street TN12 0AP** Listed Building Consent application for proposed works including repairs to the roof and front wall to the existing outhouse. MBC GRANTED, SPC Approved (Min 1799P)

25/500617 **17 Thatcher Road TN12 0ND** Demolition of existing garage and side conservatory. Sub-division of existing dwelling with the erection of a two-storey front infill extension and two storey rear extension to create a four-bedroom end of terrace dwelling with 2no. parking spaces. Erection of a single-story rear extension to the existing dwelling. MBC GRANTED, SPC Refused (Min 1799P)

Public Forum

The Committee waited several minutes for a resident to comment but appeared they had left the meeting, therefore closed the meeting.

Meeting closed.....8.20pm.....

These minutes are not verbatim, but the decisions are accurate

Signed by Chairman.....Date.....

Committee, group or subgroup: Road Safety Group
Meeting Date & venue: Monday 28th April 2025, 10.00am @ SPC Office
Report author: Cllr A Sharp - chairman
<p><u>Present:</u> A Sharp (AS), M. Alessi, M Buller (MB) Speedwatch Rep. and SID data expert).</p> <p><u>Apologies:</u> Chris Rhodes, Mike Wakeford, Bill McLaughlin (BM),</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u> - Monday 17th March 2025 Minutes agreed</p> <p><u>1. Clerks feedback RG:</u></p> <p>a. School & SPC & Police; Following the meeting there is a joint effort to address parking issues. Full council approved a letter to go to residents in adjoining streets - volunteers to deliver. RG will liaise with the school to see if they are being able to do what they agreed to do – communication with parents and walking bus (we have not been updated) Also with MBC to check that the parking officers will be there w/c 19th May, and police as well. Cllrs will be present too. Publicity social media and posters - Jean.</p> <p>b. A229 Cranbrook Road –RG and AS met with Greg McNichol and Amy Cartwright from Kent Highways. Amy seemed more sympathetic to a crossing than the previous crew. Conversations suggested that previous engineer (temp) had over designed the whole road scheme. Transport splay observations had been carried out. Necessity for junctions in situ where bus tops are and the garage access to be considered. The funding is from SPC not KH from our S106 funds for improvements for bus services – i.e. we desire a safe crossing to the bus stops.</p> <p>We were informed that items on our HIP basically translates to £600 = £1000 per parish a year to spend. 2025 – 26</p> <p>We discussed the 'Elderly person crossing sign' which they seemed interested to deliver.</p> <p>c. "30mph limit, not a target" sign – to go to Hurst Close to attach to anything NOT a KCC road structure. Will be there a few months then moved so doesn't become background wallpaper.</p> <p>2. Neighbourhood Watch – Facebook page. (No longer an RSG item.)</p> <p>3. <u>Gybbon Rise / Surrenden Road Primary School Drop off / pick up</u></p> <p>As per clerk's report above.</p> <p>Note - SPC have no powers regarding parking enforcement and neither does the school.</p> <p>It is legal to park on the public highway, as long as no dangerous driving or blocking of the road.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> see clerks report above.</p> <p>4. <u>Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)</u> – standing item – Kent Highways contact: Greg McNicholl & Amy Cartwright.</p> <p><i>Please note previous directive that MBC only allow us to have 2 'live' projects and our other projects / wish list are 'archived' is not accurate. We are told that ALL HIP requests should be on the HIP document, ideally in order of our preferred importance. In which case we could add Sainsburys roundabout and the crossroads again.</i></p> <p>Greg sent us the version that he has at Kent Highways for us to tweak.</p> <p>It's dated 25.9.23 1. A229 parking issues 2. A229 crossing and improve bus stops 3. School roads 20mph and is not the latest version we have sent,</p> <p>Agreed still comfortable to continue with the HIP that Full Council agreed fairly recently:-</p> <p><u>HIP 1 The Quarter - Bus stop / crossing & 30mph / elderly crossing sign</u></p> <p><u>Action:</u> re send the agreed version to Kent Highways</p> <p><u>HIP 2 Hawkenbury Bridge</u> - The bridge with no accidents – accident that closed the bridge and police attended on Thursday 24th April evening. Previous damage to bridge still not rectified as yellow plastic barrier fence still in situ</p> <p><u>Background</u> – It's a grade 2 listed bridge so can't demolish and rebuild wider.</p> <p>We would need to be gifted some land to enable the widening of the bridge.</p> <p>There is no good, easy electrical provision. (we note there are houses next to it with electricity).</p> <p>Need some way to indicate to traffic going over the railway bridge they could be about to encounter stationary traffic;</p>

with EU regulations of width and weight needs. However a house was demolished providing the extra space needed. Looking at £100,000 to £150,00 to install power.

Action: It remains on HIP and we will continue to liaise with Headcorn PC and monitor crashes.

HIP 3 Double yellow lines (DYL) on main road A229 and Chapel Lane extension, single lines (SYL) on Cornforth Close, Chestnut Avenue and Poyntell Road. Hurst Close & Newlyn Drive

Kent Highways have previously said that they will not do this as there are no current road safety issues.

Discussed that even after Churchill development is built, this remains on the HIP as there is likely to be a lot of vehicle movement around the site and we believe that there will be safety issues.

Action: remains on HIP

Headcorn Lay by – this is maintenance Kent Highways issue not HIP item.

Action: Suggested we contact Maintenance again. In the meantime the response for parishioners re this matter is:- Over the past 2 years the Parish council has been raising this issue with Kent Highways Maintenance. Its KH land, and as such we have been told not to touch it and that the public should not be parking there. We have exhausted all avenues to try and improve this area but will continue to lobby them.

5. SID – permission at Headcorn Road, Marden Road, Bathurst Road sites. Best sites Headcorn Rd and incoming Marden.

Note - the camera should ideally change every 2 weeks and should not stay in the same location longer than 3 weeks.

Batteries last 5 – 11 days depending on traffic going past i.e. drain quicker on Headcorn Rd

Headcorn Road facing east for 2 weeks (some leeway allowing up to 3 weeks subject

Headcorn Road facing west for 2 weeks to availability to turn the camera.)

Bathurst Road for 1 week (this should ideally be 1 in term time / 1 in holidays)

Marden Road facing west for 1 week

Marden Road facing east for 2 weeks

Finally came back and was put on Headcorn Rd, incoming traffic. Now on Marden Road. Data received so far below. SIDs absence seems to have been noted as on its return there seems to be an increase in speeding.

Action: monitor data

ANALYSIS OF SID DEPLOYMENTS

2024

DATE	ROAD	FACING	TRAVEL	DA YS	VOLUM E	AVERA GE	UND ER	%	OVE R	%	High speeders		per day	per site
											45-59	60+		
started	used	DIRECTI ON	TOWARDS	USE D	RECOR DED	VOLU ME	30m ph	und er	30m ph	ove r				
23/08/2024	Head corn	east	Staple hurst	6	15633	2606	9273	59.32	6360	40.68	6		3	11.5
29/08/2024	Head corn	east	Staple hurst	6	18624	3104	11396	61.19	7228	38.81	71	0	11.83	11.42
09/11/2024	Head corn	east	Staple hurst	7	18690	2670	11752	62.88	6938	37.12	55	2	8.14	
16/11/2024	Head corn	east	Staple hurst	4	9634	2409	5926	61.51	3708	38.49	31	0	7.75	7.64

fail
ed

fail
ed

ANALYSIS OF SID DEPLOYMENTS

2025

DATE started	ROAD used	FACIN G DIREC TION	TRAVE L TOWA RDS	DAYS USED	VOLUME RECORDED	AVERAGE VOLUME	UNDER 30mph	%	OVER 30mph	%	High speeders		per day	per site
											45-59	60+		
13/03/2025	Headcorn	east	Staplehurst	8	21361	2670	11481	53.75	9880	46.25	115	0	1438	
21/03/2025	Headcorn	east	Staplehurst	6	16338	2723	8688	53.18	7650	46.82	86	0	1433	
27/03/2025	Headcorn	east	Staplehurst	7	20312	2902	8984	44.23	11328	55.77	148	2	2143	16.71
	Headcorn	east	Staplehurst											

6. Speedwatch

Saturday 3rd May MB is holding a refresher training session – As previously stated, some volunteers have declined to continue. At 80 yrs old, volunteers are no longer insured via Police (they can continue at their own risk). Sadly this means we have lost some of our most experienced older cohort of volunteers.

Action: Suggested we advertise in the next update.

Auto Speed watch –

7. Accidents/incidents reported – staplehurstroadinfo@gmail.com

Verbal comment only, accident that closed the Hawkenbury bridge and police attended on Thursday 24th April evening. Previous damage to bridge still not rectified as yellow plastic barrier fence still in situ

Action: promote the accident email – Jean website and FB?

8. Hedges – Hedges letter agreed at full council – Nesting season March to August. Can report to KH if there is a dangerous hedge.

Action: – none currently.

9. AOB: none

Dates of forthcoming meetings: Next meeting 10am Monday, 26th June 2025

NOTES ON SCENIC MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24TH APRIL 2025

AGENDA

1. Present:

Cllrs. Sharp (Chair)(AHS), Melville (JM), Alessi (MA), Martin (AM) (remotely)

Visitors to discuss item on Display Boards: Cllr M. Arger (on behalf of Staplehurst Society) and Cllr C. Rhodes (on behalf of the Guides)

2. Apologies:

Cllr Castro will be late

3. Previous minutes of 19th March 2025/Matters Arising

Agreed as a true record of the meeting.

- AHS suggested that Action Plan should be displayed on noticeboard in main office, to keep everyone up to date with actions ongoing, completed and needing input.
- Youth Club roof still awaiting repairs. **ACTION: AHS to chase re costs/quotes**
- Re Youth Worker – Teams meeting arranged for 29th April 2.30 to 3pm to discuss possibility of acquiring via Kent or West Kent Youth Services. (??)

4. Display Boards (Welcome to Margaret and Chris)

Clerk has confirmed that there is £5K in budget for street furniture. Estimated cost for A1 signage is between £500 and £1K per unit. These would provide a village trail of information noticeboards.

AHS has created a document online for sharing. This project is still at the planning stage and group is requested to look at the document for collaborative work to begin asap.

It was agreed that there should be 5 boards in total, sited as follows: Railway station, All Saints' Church, Parade, Jubilee Field and Community Centre. Some members of Staplehurst Society have reservations re vandalism and cost.

Next steps are to plan what information should be included and add ideas to document. Then to look at costs and who would do the boards. JM mooted the possibility of making one himself.

Aim to report back to full council in June.

Cllr. Castro arrived at 8pm

5. Bell Lane Toilets

Repairs completed

6. Merit Awards

Having considered nominations, it was agreed unanimously that Shirley Wigzell should be recommended to SPC for the adult award.

Nominations for the young person's award will be available shortly and will be decided via email before the weekend.

Update: The group has now confirmed the choice of Elliot Cardnell.

It was noted that there had been several nominations for SEHT, however, there is no provision for a group award at the current time. Therefore -

ACTION: The group will look at the terms of reference for the merit awards at the next meeting and also for sponsorship possibilities for the future.

7. Disabled Toilet in Parade

- The building requires a surveyor's report to check the possible area of subsidence noted in last minutes. **ACTION: AHS to chase this with the Clerk and MBC**
- Toilet will then need a deep clean and some redecoration before it can be opened to radar keyholders and a decision made about the remaining unit and its possible use.

8. Christmas Lights Storage

- Lights are currently stored in the air raid shelter. AHS is concerned that their present position is a trip hazard and will result in them getting damaged.

ACTION: AHS, JC and JM will try to move the lights to a more suitable part of the shelter. AM to check notes of meeting with JT and DJ re Xmas lighting plan.

Update: it was noted at this meeting in January, that the lights might get damaged in current storage position and it was suggested that the air raid shelter was cleared out to better accommodate storage.

9. Surrenden Field Pavilion

- Plans explained for benefit of JM.
- AHS thinks a further drawing should be provided for the pre-app advice meeting being sought with MBC. **ACTION: AHS to liaise with the Clerk to arrange a pre-app meeting and acquire drawing.**

10. VE Day Event

- Need to check current electricity supply in the pavilion.
- Discussion re whether we could incorporate a small storage unit at the back
- All plans on track

11. AOB

None

12. Next Meeting Dates

Thursday 22nd May and Thursday 26th June

EMPLOYMENT, FINANCE & STRATEGY GROUP MEETING

Meeting 17th April 2025

Minutes

1. Present: Cllrs Hotson, Sharp, Arger and Clerk

(Cllr Hotson chaired meeting in Cllr Riordan's and Perry's absence)

2. Apologies for Absence Cllrs Riordan, Martin, Perry and Wakeford

3. Dispensations - NA

4. Minutes of previous meeting – 20th March 2025 – agreed by those present
Group requested Clerk to send email offering condolences to Cllr Lottie Reid

5. Action plan – discussed

3 – Youth club initial discussion with KCC HR – arranging another teams meeting .
Also chasing "West Kent Thames Gateway" youth service to buy in youth service –
generally preferred option

22- 3G pitch – still chasing planning permission

25 – Cleaner interviews this coming week – Cllr Sharp / Hotson – suggest at Council
meeting request delegate authority in consultation with the Chairman, using the
same Cleaning Service Contract otherwise Council would have to wait until 12th May
2025 Council meeting.

(Note used Indeed for Groundsman post– 20 or so applications which EFS group
reviewed)

RFO aims to give an update to the group on Year-end and the amount of Council
Reserves before going to AGM - Agreed EFS group meeting 11am 6th May 2025.

Arrange Cllr workshop late May 2025 / early June 2025 to discuss allocation of
Council Reserves / funding priorities.

**6. Organisation of Annual Parish Meeting / Staplehurst Awards and
Social evening – Friday 16th May 2025 – discuss**

- a) Promotion – Banner ordered, social media and website as an event –
therefore may get some idea of those attending

Organisation on the evening – AM – add Cllrs attending SPC stall

- b) Clarify speeches / Merit Awards presentation – sent first draft of presentation
sent to AM, onto Coms Group, asked MBC / KCC Cllrs for some key points
Merit Award Nominations sent to SCEnic

What do we want on the SPC stall?

- Report from Community Groups x 2 - JT

- 3G pitch plan – Colour A3
- Strategic Action Plan x 2
- Who does what x 2
- Previous Parish Magazine - remaining
- Request for Volunteers
- Feedback form

Agreed Logo photo Cllr ID Badges

7. Parish Council AGM – revised draft agenda discussed

Add in End of year accounts, remove appoint HR subgroup as EFS Group agree HR Subgroup from EFS Group

8. Devolution

- Verbal update – need to engage with Devolution consultation process after KCC elections

ii. Discuss potential services refer to SPC Strategic Action plan
Devolution may offer Staplehurst Parish Council the opportunity to taken on some Kent County Council or Maidstone Borough Council services, but do we want their liabilities?

Group discuss potential services against Parish Council priorities? More of an initial focus on what we **DO NOT** want to take on. Groups initial thoughts below.

Responsibility / Service	Current			Devolution		
	KCC	MBC	SPC	SPC	NO	Comment
Abandoned Vehicles		✓			N	
Advertising Banners – depending on location	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Advertising – signs		✓	C	C		
Allotments			✓	✓		
Benches		✓	✓	✓	?	Audit, budget implications
Benefits		✓			N	
Building Regulations / Enforcement		✓			N	
Bylaws – depending on area	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	
Car Parks – Bell Lane		✓	C	C	N	

Cemeteries – burial related		✓			N	Staplehurst Church manages cemetery.
Cemeteries – mowing		✓			N	Staplehurst Church manages cemetery.
Charitable Street Collections		✓			N	
Children's Play Areas (housing areas, Lime Trees)		✓			?	Audit, budget implications
Children's' Play areas / Recreation Grounds			✓	✓		
Concessionary Bus fares	✓		C	C	N	
Council Housing		✓	C	C	N	
Council Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Council Tax		✓	C	C	N	
Dog Fouling		✓	C	C	N	
Economic Development		✓	C	C	N	
Education	✓				N	
Electoral Register		✓	C	C	N	
Emergency Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	SEHT, Council supports with funding
Employment promotion		✓	C	C	N	
Environmental Health		✓			N	
Football pitches			✓	✓		
Footpaths	✓		✓	✓	?	Concern about lack of maintenance, budget implications
Graffiti removal general		✓			?	Part of an evolving community warden role?
Grass cutting – depending on area		✓	✓	✓	?	Audit, budget implications
Grass cutting – Road verges	✓				N	
Gritting and salting	✓				N	

Hackney carriages - Taxis		✓			N	
Hedges and Shrubs – responsibility of land owner – if danger to road KCC can cut and charge land owner.			✓	✓	?	Audit, budget implications
Hedges and Shrubs road side	✓				N	
Highways	✓		C	C	N	
Highway maintenance	✓		C	C	N	
Homelessness		✓			N	
House to house charity collections		✓			N	
Housing benefits		✓	C	C	N	
Housing list		✓	C	C	N	
Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority	✓				N	
Leisure centre – Cranbrook is TWBC -		✓			N	
Library	✓				?	Concerns at cost
Litter control – depends on area litter is in	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	
Markets and Fairs		✓			N	
Noise Nuisance and control		✓			N	
Parks & Open Space			✓	✓		
Parking and parking enforcements		✓			?	Audit, budget implications
Pavements	✓		C	C	N	
Pavilion			✓	✓		Surrenden Field
Planning Policy		✓	C	C	N	

Planning Applications		✓	C	C	N	
Planning enforcement of approved applications		✓			N	
Pollution – Air		✓	C	C	N	
Public Toilets			✓	✓		
Public entertainment licence		✓	C	C	N	
Public transport	✓		C	C	N	
Recreation Ground			✓	✓		
Recycling		✓	C	C	N	
Refuse collection		✓	C	C	N	
Refuse disposal		✓			N	
Social Services	✓				N	
Street cleaning / Road sweeping		✓			N	
Street entertainment licences		✓	C	C	N	
Street lighting	✓				N	
Street lighting – Nicholson Walk, Chapel Lane and 6 on Maidstone Road			✓	✓	N	Do not want street lights.
Street Trading Licences		✓	C	C	N	
Street furniture – benches, bus shelter etc	✓				N	
Tourism		✓			N	
Traffic Road Safety	✓		C	C	N	
Trees on the Highway	✓				N	

Youth Service	✓				?	Buy in service or partner with neighbouring Parish Council
Community Warden	✓				?	Audit functions, budget implications

Summary of groups discussion

- MBC / KCC may seek to off load liabilities / services they do not want – cannot afford
- Do not want assets / liabilities / services without funding
- Need to audit, clarify costs of any asset /service before any transfer
- Clarify Parish Council evolving “Powers”
- Clarify Parish Council Risk / Insurance
- Potentially evolving partnership roles with neighbouring Parish Councils; Youth Services / Community Warden etc
- “Bundle contracts” into one i.e. Open space maintenance

Agreed arrange Cllr workshop on devolution, implications for Staplehurst once we know more, September 2025.

Engage residents once proposed service / costs are known.

9. Dispensations Information

Group discussed dispensation information after some discussion at recent meetings.

(Will circulate update to all)

10. HR issues

DJ doing well, working hard at home to finish Year End. Aiming to be back in the office 6th May 2025, phased return to the office with some working from home if required.

Council Reserves in the region of £225,527 (General, earmarked and ring fenced) plus CIL of £55,925.

Appraisals dates

- RG – 23.4.25 – AM and MA
- DJ – 29.4.25 – RG and AM
- JT – 30.4.25 – RG and AM
- PN – 7.5.25 – RG and AS

a) Pay review

Cllrs may have underestimated the impact on staff.

Staff asked RG for copy of HR report to the 31st March 2025 Council meeting on Wednesday 26, Thursday 27 and Monday 31st March 2025 – RG informed staff daily he had not received a copy of HR report to the 31st March 2025 Council meeting.

Group confirmed no HR report to the 31st March 2025 Council meeting, just verbal update

b) Discussion of potential report to staff related to recently approved wage rises.

As the wages are in a contract, therefore a change in wages is a change in contract, the Chairman should write to each member of staff formally confirming the changes to their contract, a letter has been drafted.

c) Communication with staff since the wage rises were approved.

Staff asked RG for the decision as soon as he knew on Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd April 2025. Cllr Arger visited the office on the morning of Wednesday 2nd April 2025 and became aware nothing had been sent to staff.

Therefore when RG received an email from Cllr Riordan in the afternoon of Wednesday 2nd April 2025 he forward it on to Staff.

PN actually walked into the office just after RG opened email and discussed with him – asked to chat when back from holiday.

Note ongoing communication with staff will initially be through appraisal system

Group confirmed DJ can carry forward 8 days holiday from 2024/25 into 205/26.

11. Next Meeting 15th May 2025, 1:30pm Parish Office

Notes on Communications Group Meeting – 9th April 2025

Present:

Cllrs: Sharp (AHS), Castro (JC)(Chair), Melville (JM), and Martin (AM)

Apologies:

Cllrs Alessi and Riordan

Agenda:

1. **Last minutes** agreed as a true record of the meeting.
2. **Annual Report**
 - JC recommended that next year reports are amalgamated with annual report documents.
 - So far, we have reports on Health Centre/PPG, Churchyard Liaison, Communications and Community Protection Team. Awaiting report from Scouts and men's Shed plus others requested as per last year's edition.
 - Discussed financial matters page – JC will prepare graphs with data provided by Office. It was noted that a larger print/font would be better. Page layout discussed and agreed.
 - Councillors section to remain as is. PC and community groups to be chased (SEHT, WI, Monarchs and ask Cricket Club this time. Clerk has offered to write Jubilee Field WG report. SCEG to be included in August edition.
 - AHS and JC have visited new printers and are very pleased with the support offered. Printer will also collate the reports into roads for us, which will save a great deal of time for office and volunteer councillors. **ACTION: JC will liaise with Jean about this.**
3. **Booklets**
 - Postponed until later
4. **Website**
 - AM had delayed contacting possible new website providers, until we had confirmation that Heliocentrix has been appointed as new IT contractor.
 - AM will now contact Heliocentrix plus LanceFrench.com (recommended by Cllr Melville) to compare quotes.
 - It was suggested that JM and JC arrange a visit to Heliocentrix to build a rapport.
5. **PowerPoint for Annual Parish Meeting**
 - The Clerk has prepared a draft PP for discussion, which is a good starting point.
 - JC requested that the PC logo is added and it is noted that our County Councillor is now known as Lottie Parfitt.
 - It is crucial that all speeches are time limited, with key points being forwarded to RG for inclusion in the slides.

6. **AOB**

- Discussion re acoustics in the Community Centre Halls. **ACTION: JM and AHS to look at current loop system.**

7. Next meeting to be held on 21st May 2025 at 7.30pm