



# STAPLEHURST<sup>2350</sup>

## PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES

## 2<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2025

#### **Public Forum**

No questions from residents

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

Cllr Perry – My time as Mayor of Maidstone concluded with a final visit to the Staplehurst Annual Parish Meeting and then on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025 the new Mayor was installed. As mayor helped raise in the region of £7,000 for Charity. I was invited to the Buckingham Palace Garden Party, which was lovely.

Cllr Perry thanked all who supported him – especially his wife Jan

Planning Committee – managed to get the Mathurst Solar Farm application deferred but officers are recommending approval.

Blessing of the "Tower at Staplehurst Church" was a well-received occasion.

Busy Surgery with Cllr Arger this Saturday – items such as Planning, Road signage, Neighbours and ASB raised.

Cllr Riordan raised several points; Cllr Perry has been an excellent Mayor, very well received by all and he attended in the region of 250 events and represented Maidstone and Staplehurst very well during his year as Mayor.

Cllr Riordan is also on Planning Committee plus Democratic and General Purposes Committee

#### **Kent County Councillor's Report (Standing Item)**

Cllr Brian Black introduced himself and was keen to listen to the debate.

**Present:** Cllrs Sharp, Mclaughlin, Farragher, Pett, Alesi, Rhodes, Castro, Martin, Arger, Melville, Wakeford, Riordan and Perry.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllrs Ash and Hotson

2. **COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS regarding items on the Agenda:**

2.1. Declarations of Lobbying - NA

2.2. Changes to the Register of Interests - NA

2.3. Interests in Items on the Agenda - Cllrs Sharp, Farragher, Rhodes and Mclaughlin item 6.2

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

- 2.4.** Requests for Dispensation - Cllrs Sharp, Farragher Rhodes and Mclaughlin asked to be able to stay but not speak or vote on item 6.2

Cllr Sharp proposed and Cllr Perry seconded to approve Cllrs Sharp, Farragher, Rhodes and Mclaughlin request to be able to stay but not speak or vote on item 6.2. Agreed majority for 12, Against 0 and Abstain 1.

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

Pages 2345 – 2349 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 available at [Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge \(staplehurst-pc.gov.uk\)](http://Full Council - Staplehurst Parish Council - Staplehurst Parish Council, Staplehurst, Tonbridge (staplehurst-pc.gov.uk)) to be signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Sharp asked for an amendment to 2348 - Following a debate there was a concern it might be too late for the usual June 28<sup>th</sup> date this year, but if a group were set up, they could look into a Fete / Fair later in this year or next year.

Cllr Arger proposed and Cllr Sharp seconded to agree minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 with above amendment – majority for 9, against 0 and abstain 4

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

### **4.1 Payment list, Summation and Balance sheet (5 minutes)**

<u>Approved Payments 30th April - 27th May 2025</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Trueplan Ltd - Girl Guides Lease Land Survey Plan	270.00
Four Jays Group - SF Toilet Hire VE Day Event	243.00
Amazon UK - HP Ink Cartridges DJ	26.13
Amazon UK - Councillors Lanyards	6.99
Amazon UK - Councillors Badge Holders	4.98
Amazon UK - Toilet Rolls Jubilee Pavilion	39.98
Dean Fuller - Mowing/White Lines Jubilee Field	340.00
Dean Fuller - Petrol JF Mowing	20.00
Hugofox Limited - Silver Subscription May	23.99
Bumbles Plant Centre - Plants & Bedding GSG	116.84
Cartell Electrical Ltd - Emergency Light Replacement JF Pavilion	177.60
Staff Reimbursement - Picture Frames Merit Awards	16.99
Bradley Hawkins - Mowing & Hedging Wimpey Field April	75.00
Rexaus Group Ltd - Drain Investigation Jubilee Field	522.00
Homeleigh Timber - Mortice Key Cut Youth Club	11.98
Homeleigh Timber - Cable Ties	6.98
Homeleigh Timber - Strimmer Line Caretaker	7.18
Homeleigh Timber - Weed Killer Caretaker	6.10
Cllr Reimbursement - Napkins & Cups Merit Award Event	31.39
All Saints Staplehurst PCC - Churchyard Maintenance 2/3rds	11171.33
KALC - LG Reorganisation Training	36.00
Cllr Reimbursement - Refreshments Merit Award Event	148.90
Staff Reimbursement - Coffee & Milk Parish Office	7.10
Cllr Reimbursement - Vases re Merit Awards	21.90
County Fire Protection - Fire Equipment Inspection JF Pavilion	156.00
Forestry First Ltd - YC Hedge Cut	360.00
CSG GlobalEducation Ltd - White Line Marker JF	67.15
SLCC - FILCA DJ	144.00

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

Business Stream - Waste Water Youth Club	33.55
Staff Payroll & Pension Costs – May	7242.56
Maidstone Borough Council - JF 3G Pitch Pre-planning advice	566.00
Smartwater Testing - JF Pavilion Legionella Testing Kit	270.00
Zoom - Annual Subscription	155.88
Post Office - Stamps NDP	2.61
Post Office - Stamps Annual Report 265x 2nd Class	230.55
Post Office - Merit Award Vouchers	110.00
ALCC - Annual Subscription	50.00
KALC - Annual Planning Conference x2	168.00
Adobe Systems - Monthly Subscription May-June	19.97
British Gas Lite - SF Pavilion Electricity Mar-Apr	34.84
British Gas Lite - Parish Office Electricity Mar-Apr	233.73
British Gas Lite - JF Pavilion Electricity Mar-Apr	556.19
MBC - Parish Office Council Tax Room 1 May	62.00
MBC - Parish Office Council Tax Rooms 2-3 May	72.00
MBC - Bell Lane Toilets Council Tax May	100.00
MBC - Youth Club Council Tax May	121.00
British Gas Lite - Bell Lane Toilet Electricity	31.86
Sage Payroll – May	12.00
Positive Energy - Youth Club Electricity April	133.54
Business Stream - Bell Lane Toilets Water Mar-Apr	62.59
Castle Water - Potable Water JF Pavilion	59.66
Castle Water - Potable Water Youth Club April	11.11
BT - Telephone & Broadband Apr-July	583.43
Npower - Street Light Energy Nicholson Walk Oct 24	42.89
Npower - Street Light Energy Nicholson Walk Nov 24	46.80
British Gas Lite - JF Pump Electricity Jan-May	12.96
Telecoms World - Virtual Phone No. SEHT April	14.39
Telecoms World - Broadband Youth Club April	29.40
British Gas Lite - Parish Office Electricity Mar-May	132.35
Lloyds Bank - Charges May	8.50
Arron Services Ltd - Hosted Exchange May	271.32
	25,541.19
<b>TOTAL PETTY CASH EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Cllr Riordan proposed, and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to agree payment list above – agreed unanimously.

#### 4.2 **Contracts**

##### **Staplehurst Parish Council - Forthcoming Contract Reviews/Renewals April 2025**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Annual Value 2024-25</b>	<b>Cost per annum 2025-26</b>	<b>Contract End Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Online graphic design tool	Canva Pro	£99.99	£99.99	20/04/2025	Auto-renew. Price remains the same as previous year	

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

Website SSL Cert. & Support	Hugofox Ltd	£33.33	£33.33	08/05/20 25	<b>Auto-renew</b>	
Council Tax Rooms 1 Parish Office	MBC	£623.75	£623.75	31/01/20 25	<b>Annual Auto renewal</b>	
Council Tax Rooms 2-3 Parish Office	MBC	£723.55	£723.55	01/01/20 25	<b>Annual Auto renewal</b>	
Council Tax - Youth Club	MBC	£1,210. 08	£1,210.08	01/01/20 25	<b>Annual Auto renewal</b>	
Council Tax - Bell Lane Toilets	MBC	£998.00	£998.00	01/01/20 25	<b>Annual Auto renewal</b>	
Norton Internet Security	Internet Security Software	£175.00	£35.00 x5	30/04/20 25	<b>12m on Arron Service's advice.</b>	
Sage Payroll Software	Sage	£96.00	£120.00 p.a.	31/03/20 25	<b>Annual renewal</b>	
Subscripti on Website Domain Name	123-Reg	£23.98 Bi- annual	£23.98 Bi- annual	31/05/20 25	<b>Auto-renewal</b>	Keep domain name so it can not be sold to a.n.other
Subscripti on	ZOOM Video Communicatio ns	£129.90	£129.90	04/05/20 25	<b>12m RFO for SPC Approval</b>	
SEHT Virtual Mobile No. & Youth Club Broadban d	Telecoms World	£143.88	£525.48 p.a.	30/04/20 25	<b>No Increase in virtual no. addition of £29.40 p.m. for YC Broadband</b>	
Annual tree Survey	GRS Arboricultural Consultants Ltd	£375.00	Est £400.00	31/12/20 24	<b>12m RFO for SPC Approval</b>	
Internal Audit	Iden Business Services	£400.00	£400.00	31/03/20 25	<b>12m Finance Group &amp; RFO</b>	

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

					<b>for SPC Approval</b>	
Lease of Parish Office (Rooms 1, 2, 3 & 8)	Staplehurst Community Centre Trust	£4,200.00	£4,200.00	Ongoing	<b>Lease currently being revised</b>	
Play Equipment Safety Inspection	Playsafety Ltd	£324.00	Est. £350	31/03/2025	<b>Auto annual inspection for SPC Approval</b>	
Premises Licence	Sevenoaks District Council	£70.00	70.00	31/03/2025	<b>Finance &amp; Strategy Group. SPC for Approval</b>	
Waste Water JF Pavilion	Business Stream	£397.69	Est. £477.29	31/03/2025	<b>F&amp;SG. SPC to approve</b>	Est 20% Increase
Waste Water Youth Club	Business Stream	£265.53	Est. £318.64	31/03/2025	<b>F&amp;SG. SPC to approve</b>	Est 20% Increase
Potable Water	Castle Water	£361.04	Est. £433.25	31/03/2025	<b>F&amp;SG. SPC to approve</b>	Est 20% Increase
Subscription	KALC	£1,765.00	£1,870.00	31/03/2025	<b>Annual subscription</b>	
Subscription	Parish Online Data Mapping software	£135.00	£135.00	01/05/2024	<b>Auto-renew unless major change.</b>	
Subscription	National Allotment Society	£55.00	£55.00	01/05/2024	<b>Finance &amp; Strategy Group for SPC approval</b>	
Subscription	KCPFA Kent County Playing Fields Association	£20.00	£20.00	01/05/2024	<b>Finance &amp; Strategy Group for SPC approval</b>	
Subscription	Weald of Kent Protection Society	£35.00	£35.00	01/05/2024	<b>Finance &amp; Strategy Group.SPC to agree final decision</b>	

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

Subscripti on	Association of Local Council Clerks ALCC	£100.00	£100.00	01/05/20 24	<b>Auto-renew.</b>	
Subscripti on	Society of Local Council Clerks SLCC	£500.00	£500.00	01/05/20 24	<b>Auto-renew.</b>	
Subscripti on	Survey Monkey	£320.00	£320.00	01/05/20 24	<b>F&amp;SG. SPC to approve</b>	

Cllr Arger proposed, and Cllr Pett seconded to agree the contract list above. Agreed majority For 12, against 0 and 1 abstained.

#### **4.3 Internal Audit Report**

Following a debate in which Cllrs thanked Mr Kendrick for all his hard work, Cllr Riordan raised concerns about Health and Safety and why was the Youth Club closed but other Council buildings and the Parish Office not?

It was explained that EFS group had considered this several times, with regards Council buildings:

A Fire Risk Assessment was conducted for the Youth Club, it is a temporary wooden building, built around 40 years ago and several major issues were raised that took some time to be actioned. Therefore, for insurance purposes the building was closed until the works were completed.

A Fire Risk Assessment was conducted for The Jubilee Field Pavilion, a modern building, and several minor issues were action – so no need to close.

The Parish Office ECIR was done and actions undertaken by SCCT.

Cllr Martin noted the EFS Group minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 fully explains the issue for those not at EFS Group.

It was agreed the Health and Safety is currently working well.

Cllr Perry proposed, and Cllr Arger seconded to agree the resolution below – majority for 12 against 0 and abstain 1

**Resolution:** To note the Internal Audit Report

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

Verbal Update on Devolution – This will become standing item moving forward

- Note EFS group minutes 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – item 8 early ideas for discussion.
- Asset Transfer Training - meeting on teams 16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, 10 am for an hour 2 places

Homewood School invited to opening day – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2:30pm – 4:30pm.

2081/7.1 – Railway station meeting tomorrow 1pm (Cllrs Arger, Melville, Wakeford and Riordan if available)

2108/6.3 - Cranbrook Rd follow up meeting being arranged

2338/5 - Meeting with KCC 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025 also potential new youth club provider 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025

2312/6.6 – Surrenden Pavilion meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025

2333/7.7 – NDP need more feedback – being promoted

2341/3.6 – SMFC CIC pitch hire agreements signed

IT Contract update

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

email migration in office today – email handout for Cllrs – if cannot do it – phone number at bottom of page

Security is dual verification process and Windows Defender End point in system

Issue with Sage / excel and aiming for further transition next week

Once completed will run “a Test Agenda report with links” and include local resident in test Southeast Arts Open House – includes a local Staplehurst Artist

Playscheme – Marden are restricting the first week of their Playscheme to Marden residents only. Do we wish to restrict the first week of the Staplehurst playscheme to Staplehurst residents only? Following a debate, it was decided not to restrict this year but consult with Playscheme and monitor, potential Staplehurst residents for next year.

Cllr Riordan asked about a tree at 23 Butcher Close – Clerk will chase up.

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

### **6.1 To consider dispensation guidance for Councillors at meetings**

Following a debate it was agreed to change the Trust declaration; Cllr Pett proposed, and Cllr Riordan seconded to “if a Cllr is a Trustee they should write seeking dispensation on a case by case basis declaring an interest but seeking dispensation to be able to speak / answer questions but not vote or leave the room for the item” Agreed by majority for 11 against 0 and abstain 2

Dispensation Guidance Note for Parish Councillors set out below

If a Cllr has a **Pecuniary interest** – own land, property in family, contractual interest etc – they should leave the room for the item and could offer a written statement to the Chair of the meeting to read out.

If a Cllr is a **Trustee, they should** write seeking dispensation on a case-by-case basis declaring an interest but seeking dispensation to be able to speak / answer questions and **not vote** or leave the room for the item.

If a Cllr is **named on planning application / or Trustee of the applicant-** and is a Cllr on the Planning Committee, they should leave the room for the item and could write a statement to the Chair of Planning to read out.

If a Cllr, as an **individual has already opposed an issue in writing** they should leave the room for the item and could write a statement to the Chair of the meeting to read out.

If a Cllr has a **general interest** i.e. house opposite or can be seen from your own property or know the person in the village – there is no need to declare an interest. However, for **transparency / perception** they may seek a dispensation.

If a Councillor is a **Council representative** to an outside body /group, they should declare an interest and seek dispensation.

Councillors on Parish Council Working Groups do **not** have to declare an interest.

### **6.2 To consider Venue for Parish Council meetings**

Following a debate, it was agreed that there is no perfect venue, but some residents have expressed a preference for a venue in the centre of the village.

Cllr Melville proposed, and Cllr Alesi seconded to agree the resolution below – agreed by

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

majority for 5 against 4 and abstain 4

**Resolutions:** for the Full Council and Planning Committee meetings to be held at the South Hall, Staplehurst Community Centre. - £16.50per hour  
Budget Administration

### 6.3 Cllr IT Equipment disclaimer form

Item deferred

### 6.4 Proposed Village Fair 2025

Following a debate which highlighted it was a Fair not a Carnival and that we do not have budget for this in 2025/26 so the Fair will have to raise funds via sponsorship / donations Cllr Melville proposed, and Cllr Alesi seconded to agree the resolution below – agreed unanimously

**Resolution:** To approve a Village Fair – 30<sup>th</sup> August 2025

### 6.5 Feedback from Annual Parish Meeting

Following a debate, it was highlighted that it was well received and well attended that moving forward seek to increase the numbers attending and review use of microphones - Cllr Melville proposed and Cllr Mclaughlin seconded to agree the resolution below – majority for 12 against 0 and abstain 1

**Resolution:** To note feedback from Annual Parish Meeting

### 6.6 Annual Parish Report

The debate raised concerns about the tone of the Chairman's report and that it was not about 2024/25. Cllr Riordan is entitled to his views, but the Annual Report 2024/25 was the wrong publication.

Cllr Martin asked Cllr Riordan to redact part of his report, which he declined to do.

Cllr Riordan felt it was his report and should remain unchanged or he would withdraw it.

It was raised that some positive issues were not included, such as: Unlike many Parishes we have a full cohort of 15 Parish Councillors, we have installed another Defib in the village, we upgraded the Disabled toilets in the Youth Club with a KCC Members Grant etc.

Following further debate the following amendments were agreed

Article	Amendment
Chairman's Report	Remove Highlights of the Year heading
Services and Activities	Ensure ticks are included and key is clearer
Clerks report	Amend as Ecology Report now received
3G Multi-Sport pitch report	Update
Contacts	Add in MBC / KCC and MP details
Throughout document	Various typos
Throughout document	Check QR codes and links

Cllr Arger proposed, and Cllr Riordan seconded to agree the resolution below – majority for 9 against 0 and abstain 4

**Resolution:** For Cllr Castro and Martin to update Annual Report with amendments above for printing

## 7. CORRESPONDENCE & PARISH ISSUES - Noted

Heart of Kent Hospice letter noted and a Thank You card from Shirley Wigzell was read out

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



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

Thanked you to all who participated in organising VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Commemoration, it was very well received by the community and the National Anthem was song with gusto!

### **8.1 Committee and working group minutes for noting**

- 8.1.1 Planning Committee minutes of 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- 8.1.2 Road Safety Group minutes 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- 8.1.3 Jubilee Field Working Group minutes 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025
- 8.1.4 SCEnic meeting minutes 24<sup>th</sup> April and 22nd May 2025
- 8.1.5 3G Multi-Sports pitch working group meeting – to be arranged
- 8.1.6 Employment, Finance and Strategy Group meeting minutes 17<sup>th</sup> April 6th May 2025 and 15th May 2025
- 8.1.7 NDP Review Group meeting to be arranged
- 8.1.8 Communications Group meeting minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025, note apologies from Cllr Riordan should be included
- 8.1.9 Greener Staplehurst Group meeting - to be arranged

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

Churchyard Liaison Meeting – Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## **10 Confidential - Na**

## **9. Public Forum**

Cllr Castro asked Cllr Black if he would be available for a Q and A article in the December 2025 Village Update – Cllr Black confirmed.

**These minutes are not verbatim, but the resolutions are accurate.**

Meeting closed .....9.30pm.....

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