

**Staple Parish Council  
Staple Village Hall  
Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024  
7.30pm**

**Minutes**

<b>01/24</b>	<b>Present:</b> Cllr Bartlett (Chair), Kirk, Martin, Loukes, Rogers-Hudson, Ewart and Davis-Marks. Also present, Cllr Chandler (KCC), the clerk and 7 members of the public. <b>Apologies</b> DDC Councillor Porter Cllr Bartlett welcomed Cllr Rogers-Hudson to the council and expressed sadness that Cllr Ewart was resigning. He thanked her for her contribution to the council and that she had agreed to stay in post until a replacement could be found,
<b>02/24</b>	<b>Minutes</b> To agree the minutes of the previous meeting. <i>Proposed: Cllr Martin. Seconded: Cllr Loukes.</i> <i>These were agreed and signed off.</i>
<b>03/24</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b> To discuss any matters arising from the minutes. The June minutes of the meeting appeared to be missing. Cllr Ewart (who had taken them) thought that they might be at the house of Cllr Bartlett. Cllr Bartlett will try and find them.
<b>04/24</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> To receive Declarations of Interest on items on the agenda and amendments to the Register of Interests Cllr Rogers-Hudson will sign these at the next meeting.

**Meeting adjourned for Public Session. (Max 15 mins)**

Potholes were discussed. A repair had been made to a section of the highway in Barnsole Road, but the Highways team had run out of materials and the repair was not complete. Cllr Chandler (KCC) agreed to chase the case number and will speak to the district manager to ask them to complete a site visit. Cllr Bartlett (DDC) will chase planning re. the restrictions placed on housing developers at the site to restore the road.

<b>5/24</b>	<b>Finance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To approve payments as presented at this meeting A cheque was signed that had already been agreed.</li> <li>• To consider cash balances and bank reconciliation. These were considered.</li> <li>• To consider Budget and Precept request for 25/26 A draft budget was examined in advance of January's precept request.</li> <li>• To consider purchase of Parish Council Accounts software ~ £9:99 per month At the moment this software is free. It was agreed that the clerk would trial it and decide before the new financial year if it represented good value for money.</li> </ul>
<b>6/24</b>	<b>To receive the Clerk's report and correspondence</b> Logins had been passed to the clerk, with the exception of the government gateway login which the clerk would have to research.  Cllr Kirk will forward the website management system logins to the clerk so she can maintain the website.

Storage of Council documents was discussed. The clerk suggested that cloud storage might be more straightforward for data transfer and less vulnerable to loss.

*Proposed: Cllr Davies-Marks. Seconded: Cllr Ewart.*

*All agreed.* The clerk will action this.

The asset register was discussed. This has been recently looked at, the clerk will search for it again.

The Council roles and responsibilities were discussed. These were agreed at the June meeting. The clerk will wait for the minutes of this meeting.

Policies were discussed. It was agreed that many were missing. The clerk will start the process of drafting policies for approval.

The Internal Audit was discussed. The clerk suggested that using an auditor who looked at the wider responsibilities of the council might be helpful. She had an auditor in mind that she could contact.

*Proposed: Cllr Martin. Seconded: Cllr Kirk.*

*All agreed.* The clerk will action this.

**7/24**

**Reports:**

- *District Councillor:* Cllr Bartlett gave the report for DDC. Staple PCC had received a grant from the Cost-of-Living Grant.
- *County Councillor* Cllr Chandler gave the report for KCC
- *Village Hall and Recreation Grounds:* Nothing at this time.
- *Highways (SID, Speedwatch, footpaths):* Recent highest speed registered by the SID on the road from Ash was 75mph. Speedwatch had received a letter of thanks from the Chief Constable Sussex Police who is lead for UK Road policing. Speed in the village has fallen since Speedwatch has been in place. Cllr Bartlett thanked the members of Speedwatch for all they do for the community. Footpaths – Nothing at this time.
- *Planning:* Cllr Davis-Marks has written to the Ombudsman re. the performance of DDC planning enforcement. They will appoint an investigator in a time frame of 8-10 weeks. Other parishes had noted SPC's actions.

Number	Date Validated	Address	Proposal	Comment
24/00365	Thu 21 Nov 2024	Wingham Country Market Roman Road Shatterling CT3 1JP	Formation of additional car/delivery parking area and associated landscaping	Broadly in favour but it was felt that better signage on the road should be requested

Cllr Davis-Marks will email a response.

- *Kent Police:* The last report for November will be sent to the Escallop. The clerk will email our PC with the times of the next meeting.
- *Update on Drains and White lining:* The drains have been cleared and appear to be running. This is not the case outside the Hollies. The white lines have been painted from Lower Road to near St James Close.

**8/24**

**Highways Improvement Plan.**

Cllr Loukes had had a meeting with Lezanne Cesar of Kent Highways. He did not feel it had been very productive. A further meeting will be arranged next year to discuss our proposed changes. Cllr Chandler reported that budgets were so tight that unless matters were of data proven safety, KCC could do little. Cllr Chandler would ask for the schedule of indicative charges to be sent to SPC for actions that could be taken. The clerk will also

	chase this. It was felt that action would have to be taken in conjunction with Ash and Wingham PCs.
<b>9/24</b>	<b>Any other Business</b> Cllr Davis-Marks reported that he had heard that the Black Pig was going to close on New Years Day. A previous plan to register the pub as an asset of community value was discussed and it was agreed to wait and see what happened in the New Year.
<b>10/24</b>	<b>Date of next SPC meeting</b> The next SPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

Sophie Gaskain (Clerk)

12/12/24

Signed as a true record: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_