Staple Parish Council
Staple Village Hall
Wednesday 13th May 2026
7.30pm

Minutes

1.	**Apologies:** KCC Cllr Evans, Cllr Bartlett (Chair), Cllr Martin (Vice-Chair), Cllr Cornwell and DDC Cllr Porter. **Present:** Cllr Loukes, Cllr Kirk, Cllr Rogers-Hudson, Cllr Davis-Marks plus 3 members of the public and Lucy Denny the Parish Clerk.
2.	**Minutes** The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as accurate. Proposed: Cllr Davis-Marks Seconded: Cllr Kirk Agreed by all Cllrs present and signed by Cllr Davis-Marks Acting Chair.
3.	**Matters Arising** There were no matters arising from the minutes.
4.	**Declarations of Interest** There were no Declarations of Interest on items on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned for Public Session. (Max 15 mins. Notes for Information Only)

A member of the public raised concerns regarding overgrown vegetation on the footpath near Church Path. Concerns were also raised regarding overhanging trees from adjacent land.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would attempt to identify the current landowner and make contact regarding maintenance responsibilities.

Initialled: _____ Date_____

5.	**Finance** • **Internal Audit and Year End** o The Clerk updated members on progress with the internal audit and year-end accounts preparation. o Draft AGAR figures and a draft cashbook had been prepared. A current reconciliation discrepancy remained under investigation. o The Clerk advised that the AGAR and formal approval of the accounts would be deferred until the June meeting following consultation with the Internal Auditor. o VAT Reclaim - Members noted receipt of the VAT reclaim totalling £1,917.01. o Banking Arrangements - It was noted that funds held within Barclays accounts would now be consolidated into Unity Trust Bank accounts. • The following payments were considered: o Invoice from Landscapes by Nate for cleaning of street signs and fingerposts £350.00 o Invoice from Dover District Council for printing AGM invites £13.20 o Clerks Salary and expenses £448.93 Proposed: Cllr Loukes Seconded: Cllr Kirk **RESOLVED**: that the payments be approved. • Insurance Renewal o Members noted the insurance renewal quote of £583.37 o It was agreed that comparative quotes should be sought before renewal. o **RESOLVED:** delegated authority be granted to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair to obtain comparative quotations and proceed with the most suitable insurance arrangement before renewal date.
6.	**IT Policy** • The draft IT Policy was considered and approved. **RESOLVED**: that the IT Policy be adopted.

Initialled: _____ Date_____

7.	**Reserves Policy** • Members considered the draft Reserves Policy. It was agreed that approximately three months of expenditure should remain in the current account, with remaining balances transferred into interest-bearing reserves where practical. **RESOLVED**: that the amended Reserves Policy be approved and adopted.
8.	**Request for Public Benches** • Members considered correspondence requesting additional public benches within the parish. Members agreed in principle to supporting additional benches where suitable and safe locations could be identified. The locations proposed within the correspondence were not considered appropriate due to highway safety concerns. It was agreed that further suggested locations could be considered in future.
9.	**Reports** • District Councillors Report – A written report received with thanks and circulated. o The Dover Beacon - Work is nearing its completion stage at the Dover Beacon, Bench Street, just off the Market Square. Part of the building will be an Arts Education Hub for aspiring art and design students from Dover College ready for students to start their course in September. Screen South will also be tenants. They are a cultural development organisation with digital creativity at its heart. Docker Bakery, famous for its freshly baked sourdough bread, will be running a takeaway coffee service and café. This project has been made possible from the previous government's Level Up programme; we are delighted to announce that it is a project which is in budget and on time! o Live Music and Family Entertainment FREE! This is now started at weekends in Market Square, Dover and will continue until Saturday 25th July. For further details on the live entertainments go onto the Dover District Website.

Initialled: _____ Date_____

	○ Draft Affordable Housing Planning Document – have your say. This is to provide help and advice on how affordable housing should be delivered through the planning system. It aims to provide guidance on the implementation of the Local Plan policy. The consultation will end at midnight on Thursday, 14th May. For more information, or to have your say, please see the planning policy pages on the DDC website. ○ Age Concern Sandwich lunches - on Mondays and Fridays, Age Concern Sandwich are providing a two course lunch for £4.50 as part of their Meet, Eat and Heat. ○ After School Sports Sessions - All youngsters in the district, aged 5-18 can come and try something new. It's free and takes place in Pencester Gardens, Dover, 3.30-5.30pm. Sports include football, badminton, swingball, pannah football skills and more. No need to book. Come along, get active and have fun with friends. • County Councillor Report – A written report received with thanks and circulated. Members requested that future reports include more local parish-specific information where possible. • Village Hall Report ○ Grass Cutting - Members discussed concerns raised regarding access limitations for grass cutting equipment around playground areas. It was noted that additional strimming may result in increased maintenance costs. ○ InPost Locker Proposal - Members discussed a proposal regarding installation of an InPost locker at the Village Hall. It was agreed this would return as a future agenda item following further consideration and consultation with the Village Hall Committee. ○ Fence Repairs - Members noted that damaged fencing near the Village Hall/Play Area area had been partially removed for safety reasons and repairs would be arranged. • Speedwatch – 6 Speedwatch sessions had taken place. 28 vehicles exceeded the speed limit. Maximum recorded speed was 50mph

Initialled: _____ Date_____

	• Highways - A257 Petition - Members noted ongoing work regarding the A257 speed reduction campaign and upcoming petition activity. • Horse Warning Signage – Members discussed requests for horse warning signage on Lower Road. It was agreed that residents could independently install suitable advisory signage on private land if they wished. • Footpaths - Members discussed seasonal crop growth affecting public rights of way. It was acknowledged that some routes become difficult during growing periods but should improve after harvest. Concerns regarding dog fouling on footpaths were also noted. • **Planning Applications** The following planning applications were considered: • Two new applications Land Rear Of The Hollies Lower Road **RESOLVED:** the Parish Council would continue to strongly support the applications. • Garden Centre Access Application - Concerns were raised regarding visibility and highway safety relating to a proposed vehicular access near the garden centre. Cllr Davis-Marks agreed to investigate further. • Police – Members noted the police correspondence circulated prior to the meeting.
10.	**Exclusion of Press and Public** RESOLVED: under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for consideration of confidential staffing matters. **Confidential Item – Staffing Matters** Members considered the draft Clerk employment contract based on the NALC model contract and Green Book terms. **RESOLVED**: that the Clerk employment contract be adopted. Members also considered the Clerk salary review and national pay scales.

Initialled: _____ Date_____

	RESOLVED: that the Clerk be appointed to SCP 25 in accordance with the NALC pay scales.
11.	**Any other Business** No further business was raised.
12.	**Date of next SPC meeting** The next SPC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 10th June 2026 at 7:30pm.

Meeting closed at 8:37pm

Signed as a true record: _____

Date: _____

Position: _____

Initialled: _____ Date_____