Staple Parish Council
Staple Village Hall
Wednesday 14th October 2026
7.30pm

Minutes

1.	**Apologies:** Cllr Bartlett (Chair), Cllr Cornwell, KCC Cllr Evans and DDC Cllr Porter. **Resolved:** To accept the apologies received. **Present:** Cllr Martin (Vice-Chair), Cllr Loukes, Cllr Kirk, Cllr Rogers-Hudson, Cllr Davis-Marks, and Lucy Denny (Parish Clerk).
2.	**Minutes** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th September 2026 were agreed as accurate. Proposed: Cllr Rogers-Hudson Seconded: Cllr Davis-Marks Agreed by all Cllrs present and signed by Cllr Kirk who had attended the September meeting.
3.	**Declarations of Interest** Cllr Kirk declared an interest in Agenda Item 5, Staple Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee – Grant Request, in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee. Cllr Kirk did not participate in the discussion.

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

Two members of the public were present.

A resident expressed disappointment regarding Dover District Council's refusal of a planning application and advised that a revised application was not possible, meaning a new planning application would need to be submitted. The resident sought the Parish Council's support for any future application.

The resident emphasised the importance of supporting local businesses and promoting employment and tourism opportunities within the district, noting that they had engaged with Dover District Council's employment and tourism departments.

The comments were noted.

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4.	**Finance** • Cash Balances and Bank Reconciliation - The Clerk reported that the Council's cash balance as at 30 September 2026 was £19,235.76 and presented the bank reconciliation information available at the meeting. • Budget Monitoring - The Clerk reported on the Finance and Budget Monitoring Report for April to September 2026, previously circulated to Councillors. Members were advised of budget variances, including overspending on software, churchyard maintenance and staff costs, together with expenditure against unbudgeted headings. The Clerk highlighted that staff costs were projected to exceed the original annual allocation, which would need to be considered when preparing the 2027/28 budget. The report was noted. • Internal Audit 2026/27 - The Clerk confirmed that Deborah O'Brien was available to undertake the Council's 2026/27 Internal Audit at a fee of £160. **Resolved:** To reappoint Deborah O'Brien as Internal Auditor for the 2026/27 financial year at a fee of £160. **Action:** Clerk to include the Letter of Engagement on the November agenda for signature by the Chairman. • Clerk's Salary and Expenses - The Clerk presented the October 2026 salary and expenses, including the NJC Pay Award 2026/27 and retrospective arrears effective from 1 April 2026, in accordance with the Clerk's employment contract. **Resolved:** To approve payment of £534.39 to the Clerk, comprising net salary and expenses, and the associated HMRC PAYE payment of £137.26. • HMRC PAYE Late Filing Penalty – The Clerk reported that HMRC had issued a £100 penalty for the late submission of the June 2026 PAYE return. Although payroll and the associated HMRC payment had been completed on time, the final submission through HMRC Basic PAYE Tools had inadvertently not been completed. The outstanding return has since been submitted. The penalty was paid between Council meetings to avoid further charges. The matter was reported for transparency, and the Clerk confirmed that additional checks would be introduced to prevent recurrence. **Action:** Clerk to include the payment and consideration of retrospective approval on the November agenda.
5.	**Staple Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee – Grant Request** • Members considered a request from Staple Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee for a grant of £1,000 towards the upkeep of Staple Village Hall and minor repairs to the building. **Resolved:** To approve a grant of £1,000 to Staple Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee towards the upkeep and minor repairs of Staple Village Hall. Proposed: Cllr Davis-Marks Seconded: Cllr Loukes
6.	**Dover District Town and Parish Charter 2026** • Members considered the final Dover District Town and Parish Charter 2026. **Resolved:** To agree to the final Dover District Town and Parish Charter 2026. Members raised questions regarding the implications of Local Government Reorganisation and any future transition to unitary authorities for the

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	operation and continuing relevance of the Charter. Proposed: Cllr Martin Seconded: Cllr Kirk Clarification was also requested regarding the appropriate point of contact for Parish Council enquiries and recommendations concerning planning applications. **Action:** Clerk to seek clarification from Dover District Council regarding the implications of Local Government Reorganisation for the Charter and the appropriate contact arrangements for planning-related enquiries and representations and to notify Dover District Council of the Parish Council's agreement to the Charter.
7.	**Review of Council Policies and Governance Documents** • Members considered the proposed adoption of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Model Publication Scheme and associated Guide to Information. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to the documents at the November Parish Council meeting. **Action:** Include the ICO Model Publication Scheme and associated Guide to Information on the November 2026 agenda.
8.	**Clerk's Report** • Buckland Lane / Cave Lane – Missing Highway Signage (Ref: 987385) The Clerk reported the missing width restriction and unsuitable for HGV signage at the junction of Buckland Lane and Cave Lane in both directions to Kent County Council Highways. KCC has confirmed that replacement signage has been ordered and will be installed on new posts once available. No timescale has been provided. In addition, works have been raised to replace the Give Way signs and refresh the associated road markings at the junction. Status: Awaiting completion of works by KCC Highways. • KCC Highways – Investing in Kent's Roads - The Clerk received correspondence on KCC's Strategic Transport Report dated 10 October 2026, regarding its approach to preventative highway maintenance. KCC is prioritising surface dressing and micro-surfacing treatments to extend the lifespan of roads, reduce pothole formation and minimise the need for more costly resurfacing works. Over 446,000 metres of road surface have reportedly been treated across 91 locations in Kent during spring and summer 2026. Residents are encouraged to identify local roads that may benefit from preventative maintenance that could be put forward to KCC for consideration under this approach directly on https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement **Action:** Clerk to add note in The Escallop and on Parish Council website • Software Review – Scribe The Clerk presented an update on implementation and onboarding of Scribe Accounts following the Council's decision on 9th September 2026. To date budget, cost code and cost centres have been set up with further work required to finalise monthly financial reporting.

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	• People's Emergency Briefing – Screening Request - Members considered a request for the Parish Council to support or facilitate a community screening of the People's Emergency Briefing at Staple Village Hall. • **Resolved:** That residents wishing to organise a community screening should be advised that Staple Village Hall is available for private hire.
9.	**Reports** • District Councillors Report – Members received the District Councillors' report, which included an update on Local Government Reorganisation and the forthcoming May 2027 local elections. Members were advised that community grants of between £100 and £2,500 were available for eligible community projects, including applications from local clubs, organisations and churches, with a closing date of 26 October 2026 at communitygrants@dover.gov.uk. The report was noted. • County Councillor Report – No County Councillor report received Clerk has contacted Cllr Evans for update. • Village Hall Report – Members were advised that Wi-Fi had been installed and was now available at Staple Village Hall. It was noted that this would be a beneficial addition to the facilities available to hall users and hirers. • Highways – Community Speedwatch and SID Report Five Community Speedwatch sessions had taken place, during which 25 vehicles were recorded exceeding the speed limit. Of these, 21 were validated against DVLA records, representing a recording accuracy rate of 84%. The highest speed recorded was 42 mph in a 30 mph limit. Kent Police attended a Speedwatch session on 24th September 2026. The Speedwatch organiser, Chief Inspector Alan Watson, thanked volunteers for their continued commitment and reminded participants of the importance of wearing reflective clothing as daylight hours decrease, particularly given the limited footway provision along local roads. Since the Speedwatch scheme commenced in December 2018, a total of 227 sessions had been undertaken, with 798 vehicles recorded exceeding the speed limit. The highest speed recorded during this period was 63 mph in a 30 mph limit. Members noted the report and the continued work of the Community Speedwatch volunteers. • Footpaths – Cllr Rogers-Hudson reported that public footpaths within the Parish were generally in good condition. Five footpaths remained of concern and had been reported to Kent County Council Public Rights of Way. The reports were awaiting allocation for further investigation. Particular concerns were raised regarding the condition and safety of stiles at two locations. The first concerned public footpath EE186B, for which a report had been submitted to KCC under reference 260967461. A second stile of concern was identified in the vicinity of the memorial, where further clarification regarding land ownership and responsibility for maintenance was required. Members discussed the potential safety implications of defective stiles and the importance of identifying the parties responsible for their maintenance.

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	Action: Cllr Rogers-Hudson to establish ownership and maintenance responsibility for the stile near the memorial and to continue monitoring the outstanding Public Rights of Way reports submitted to KCC. • Planning Applications New Application Ref: 26/00900 – The Colt Bungalow, Durlock Bridge Farm, Durlock Road, Staple. Members considered the application for the erection of a single-storey side extension, including an extension to the first-floor balcony with balustrade. **Resolved:** Councillors considered the planning application and expressed their support for the proposal. • Police – No police report had been received.
10.	**Items for Information / Future Agenda Items** • No further matters were raised.
11.	**Date of Next Parish Council Meeting** • The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 11th November 2026 at 7.30pm, at Staple Village Hall.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.44pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Position: _____

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