

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Staploe Parish Council Held at 7.45pm on Thursday 16th May 2024 in the Village Hall at Wyboston.

Please note that there was no open forum in this meeting because there was an open forum in the Annual Parish Meeting which immediately preceded this meeting.

Present: Cllr. J. Ibbett (Chair), Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. E. Meola. The Council is quorate with three Councillors. We have two vacancies.

Apologies for absence: Cllr. P. Yockney and Cllr. J. Thomson

2024/029. Election of Chairman

Cllr. J. Ibbett was nominated by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola. There being no other nominations she was duly elected as chair.

2024/030. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr. P. Yockney was nominated by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett. There being no other nominations he was duly elected as Vice Chairman.

2024/031. Resignations, Vacancies and Declarations of Acceptance of Office

Cllr. V. Zwetsloot resigned on 11th May. The Councillors thanked her for many years of service on the Parish Council.

There are now two vacancies on the Parish Council. The Clerk has advertised these on noticeboards, the website and will include them in the next “News Update” which she will prepare in lieu of a full Hamlets Voice newsletter as we don’t have an editor.

Cllr. J. Ibbett signed her declaration of acceptance of office and the Clerk will ask Cllr. P. Yockney to sign his after the meeting.

2024/032. Declarations of Interest and Registers of Members Interests

Cllr. J. Ibbett, Cllr. E. Meola and Cllr. G. Meola all need to update their registers of interest forms and will do so after the meeting. Cllr. P. Yockney has confirmed that there are no changes to his. The Clerk will confirm with Cllr. J. Thomson regarding her register of interests after the meeting.

Cllr. J. Ibbett declared an interest in the change of use at Lower Honeydon Farm as her husband works for the landowner.

2024/033. Ratify the Decisions and Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held online on Thursday 21st March 2024

As the meeting on 21st March was held online it was not a legally convened Parish Council meeting. Parish Council meetings have to be held in person – although there was a temporary arrangement to allow online meetings during lockdown. Therefore the decisions made at the online meeting were ratified and approved at this in person (and therefore legally convened) meeting. Proposed by Cllr. J. Ibbett and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola.

2024/034. Appointments and Responsibilities

- Staffing committee: Cllr. J. Ibbett, Cllr. G. Meola and Cllr. P. Yockney
- Finance committee – Cllr. J. Ibbett, Cllr. P. Yockney and Cllr. E. Meola.
- BATPC – Cllr. J. Ibbett

- Village Hall Management Committee: Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. E. Meola and Cllr. J. Thomson were appointed (only two representatives of the Parish Council are required for the committee so they will decide between themselves who will join as an ordinary member and who as a representative of the Parish Council). Mark Crawford has resigned as Chairman and the committee are looking for a new Chair.
- Rights of Way. Both representatives have resigned. The Clerk will seek new volunteers.
- Speedwatch. Richard Squire, Mark and Soo Potts, Tom Tagg and Veronica Zwetsloot
- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The Parish Council do not appoint members to this steering group but the members are as follows: Tom Tagg (Chair), Ged Meola (Vice Chair), Charlotte Quince, Kate Abrahams, Lucy Crawford and Lorraine Jewell.

2024/035. Borough Cllr. J. Cox's Ward Report

- *Glass Recycling*

The Council has launched the trial and residents on a number of streets in in West Kempston, Keysoe, Riseley and Pertenhall will be able to recycle glass bottles and jars directly in their orange-lidded bins.

The trial will last for 9-months and aims to capture the glass that ends up in domestic black bins, an estimated 1,500 additional tonnes for the whole of Bedford Borough.

The Council will be monitoring the trial through the process and will conduct regular reviews to assess results and impact on the existing collection rounds.

- *Yoga or wellbeing session at this year's Bedford Park event*

Yoga and Wellbeing will be returning this year on Sunday 9th June, 2024, at Bedford Park, near the Pavilion for anyone seeking a day of mindfulness, relaxation, and physical activity.

Bedford Council is asking clubs, organisations, and qualified instructors interested in taking part in the event to contact Amy Stevens at amy.stevens@bedford.gov.uk. All instructors must have Public Liability Insurance and be fully qualified.

- *"Active Adults" programme*

Active Adults is a Borough Council Programme that is designed to encourage a more active lifestyle through a variety of sports and activity courses. The programme caters to individuals of all backgrounds, including those who may have never tried sports before.

The course will run for 8 weeks from the new starting on Monday 13th May. To secure a spot and find out more, people should visit www.bedford.gov.uk/activeadults.

There will be a number of different courses and activities including:

- *Golf*
- *Walking football*
- *Indoor bowls*
- *Tennis*
- *Kendo Fitness*
- *Dance Classes*
- *Yoga sessions ect...*

- *Refurbishment of Time Gardens at Russell Park*

The Council will be embarking on a project to refurbish the Time Gardens at Russell Park into a vibrant sensory garden. The refurbished garden will feature predominantly pollinator-friendly planting and incorporate bug hotels.

This is a collaborative project backed by £40,000 in funding secured through the East London Foundation NHS Trust. The Council's Parks and Open Space Team and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Team will be working alongside the East London Foundation NHS Trust, and the Bedford Borough Parent Carer Forum.

- *New staff join Council Homelessness Service*

In order to bring costs back under control the Council has launched a recruitment drive to bring in more permanent staff and reduce the historic reliance expensive agency staff.

The Council has now hired 22 new staff who have just started their new roles and are undertaking significant training. The Council has also adopted a new property acquisition programme to improve accommodation as well as reducing the enormous cost of hotel placements.

Adult services are also holding a recruitment drive to bring down the historically high agency spends and are currently interviewing staff.

- *Community Safety Plan*

The Council recently adopted a new Community Safety Plan which will set the focus for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour for the coming years.

Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership is a joint partnership of five responsible authorities – Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire Police, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Offender Management Services and Bedfordshire Integrated Care Board. The plan will include a new emphasis on problem places such as tackling rural crime, and on cyber crime for the first time.

- *Spectrum Gaming*

Bedford Borough Council has partnered with Spectrum Gaming, an autistic-led UK based charity that supports autistic young people.

The partnership will involve 100 free places on its online Autism Acceptance Course for parents, carers and professionals who live or work in Bedford Borough. The series of six sessions will initially be run four times over the next two years. The first set of sessions will begin in May, and Autistic young people will be among those delivering the sessions.

Topics will include Understanding Autism, Autism and Trauma, Supporting Young People with Meltdowns, and Understanding Anxiety and Wellbeing. Recordings of the sessions will also be made available.

2024/036. Standing Orders and Terms of Reference

The following were reviewed without amendments:

- Parish Council Standing Orders
- Staffing and Finance Committees (committees are covered under Parish Council Standing Orders)
- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

2024/037. Social Events

- D-Day Celebrations 6th June 2024. Consider purchasing a beacon. The Clerk presented an official quote for a D-Day beacon from the official supplier (Middlepeak Engineering). It was £2,100 plus the cost of the post and installation. The post is very large and it require a concrete base and large machinery to instal it. **It was resolved not to purchase a beacon but to use two fire pits on the hard standing in the south west corner of the playing field. It was resolved to make an exception to our rule of “no fires of barbecues on the playing field” for this event. The fires will be in fire pits to minimize risks. £50 was allocated for the event for drinks, crisps and sundries.** Proposed by Cllr. J. Ibbett and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett. The Clerk will organise this event and she will send out a short paper newsletter to inform everyone about it.
- Parish Walk on Sunday 9th June at 2pm from Duloe Playing Field to Bushmead Priory. Residents to bring their own picnic. The Wade-Gery family will provide tea and a talk about the role of Little Staughton Airfield duing the war and a tour of the Priory. It is a 1.5 hour walk each way. Those who don't wish to walk can drive to the Priory. The Clerk will organise this.
- Fish and Chip night – A £100 donation has been generously offered towards hall hire. The event will be held on Saturday 12th October from 7pm to 9.30pm (hall hired from 6.30pm to 10pm). Cllr. G. Meola to lead the arrangements.

2024/038. Village Hall Report (Cllr. G. Meola)

The Chairman Mark Crawford has resigned and the committee are seeking a new Chair. The committee are preparing a business plan and a survey to run past the Parish Council. It has been difficult to get committee members together and find suitable dates for meetings. They are concerned about continuing to ask the Parish Council to pay for their insurance costs (£365 per year). They are considering how to improve engagement. They have received one message from a resident of Staploe who doesn't want a new village hall. Said resident will be able to respond when the questionnaire is circulated.

2024/039. Planning Applications

It was resolved not to object to the following planning application as it is for private use and any commercial use would require a new planning application. Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
24/00377/MAF	Major Full & Change of Use Application	Erection of stable barn and associated outdoor equestrian facilities for private use	St Dunstans Farm, Bushmead Rd, Upper Staploe PE19 5JF	30th April. Extension requested to 17th May	24/00377/MAF

The following notification of permitted development has been received and approved by the Borough Council. As it is permitted development the Parish Council are not statutory consultees.

Application number	Type	Description	Location	Deadline	Link
24/00582/CPNQ	Change of Use	Prior notification for change of use from an Agricultural building to a dwellinghouse(s) (Use Class C3) including associated building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building.	Lower Honeydon Farm Honeydon Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 2LR	15/05/2024	24/00582/CPNQ

2024/040. Community Cabins and Playing Field

- **It was resolved to offer the use of the playing field to the U15 girls team from St Neots Town Youth Football Club for another year from August 2024 to May 2025. It was also resolved in principal to offer the use of the playing field for additional midweek training sessions providing the players are U15's and younger and there are no more than 2 midweek training sessions per week. If it is going to be any more than this then the Parish Council would require more information.** Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.
- **It was resolved not to replace the damaged picnic table. The Clerk will update the asset register to show that there are now 3 picnic tables, not 4..** Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. E. Meola.

2024/041. Highways and Rights of Way

- Bushmead Road closures for works by Anglian Water 10th June to 26th July. The Clerk and T. Tagg met a team from Anglian Water to discuss these closures on Wednesday 1st May. They agreed to install "road closed except for access" signs at the entrance to Cadbury Lane from the Bushmead Road and Lower Honeydon Lane from Staploe Road, signs saying "Local Access Only - no access to Bushmead Road" at the entrance to Gypsy Lane from Bushmead Road, the entrance to Staploe Lane from Shakers Way and the entrance to Honeydon Road from Colmworth. The local closures will be manned for the first day to ensure compliance.
- The Clerk reported that Footpath 8 and 8A diversion at Eaton Socon substation is not well marked and she has reported this to Bedford Borough Council.

2024/042. Assets and Insurance

- Review land and asset registers. These were reviewed with no changes. **It was resolved that the Clerk should register for updates on the Playing Field, Village Hall car park and site and the two village greens with the Land Registry.** Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.
- Consider insurance quotes and renew insurance. **It was resolved to accept the quote from Clear Councils for £596.71**
- Street light at Duloe Butts – update on reconnection. UK Power need a road closure before they can reconnect the light. Given the roadworks planned on the Bushmead Road in June it may be some time before the road closure is granted.

2024/043. A428 grant applications

We made three applications for the A428 Social Value (larger) grants. None were successful. The key thing they are concerned about is having guarantees that the money will be used by end of March 2027. They felt that there was too much uncertainty about:

1. The biodiversity site at the ex Traveller Site. We might not be successful in purchasing the land
2. The planning application for the village hall. We might not succeed with our application and it could take a long time to get permission.
3. Any application for Average Speed Cameras should be made by Bedford Borough Council not by us because the roads are owned by Bedford Borough Council.

We were told that if we owned the ex Traveller Site we could apply for funds to develop it into a biodiversity site eg. creating a pond and planting trees etc. and if we were to get planning permission for the hall we could apply again. We could ask Bedford Borough Council to apply for the ASC's on our behalf.

The Clerk has asked Bedford Borough Council about applying for ASC's on our behalf.

In addition we applied to the A428 Community Fund to install trail equipment at the Playing Field, to install a fixed speed indicator sign and replace the notice board for Duloe Common. These applications were not successful. The fund was heavily oversubscribed (receiving requests for £500,000 for an available £50,000) and, unfortunately, they said our application was not as strongly linked to the A428 development and their priority areas as others.

2024/044. Updates / reports

- **Traveller site at Upper Staploe.** On 12th April at Bedford County Court the Judge agreed an order for the sale of the land. The terms of the order were that the landowner had until 12th February to settle the debt (£20,758). If that did not happen then the Council would take possession of the land and could sell it at a price not less than £60,000. Any funds left over from the sale after the debts had been settled were go to the landowner. The land was due to be put up for auction on 17th April but the landowners settled the debt before the auction.
- **East Park solar farm.**
- **Bedford Borough Council have published their response to the Eastpark Energy Environmental Scoping Document.** It is 10 pages long so I have summarised it here:
Bedford Borough Council raise significant concern regarding the extent of land (c. 768ha) being taken out of food production in this Application. This concern needs to be read further against the cumulative effect of consented applications and pending applications within the sub-region that have similarly taken/ propose to take productive soils out of agricultural use. The Applicant will need to assess and evidence this matter specifically in relation to the ongoing tensions between the Government's energy strategy and the Government's food strategy.

The scoping report said that the soil would be rested and remain in agricultural production because of sheep grazing. However Bedford Borough Council said "BBC is not in agreement with these statements regarding protecting the quality (productivity) of agricultural soil. Soils are living habitats that require annual soil augmentation to remain active ecosystems. Soils kept in partial shade and with no or limited cultivation or augmentation over a 40-years period has the potential to irreversible harm the liveability and productivity of the soil. BBC would want to see considerable assessment, statement,

and a long-term maintenance methodology regarding this matter to support the Applicant's approach that this is temporary and that the soils can be brought back into productive agricultural use."

In addition they have asked for the project to have:

- a more accurate description*
- the red line boundary should not include highways*
- width of footpaths should be specified at 8m and bridleways at 9m*
- they should give evidence of how they will finance and staff the maintenance of landscaping etc.*
- provide evidence of how they determined the site selection and whether they considered a series of smaller sites*
- they should assess the cumulative effect over the zone of influence*
- address the Thurleigh airfield safeguarding zone*
- the zone of theoretical visibility assumes infrastructure is 3m high but storage buildings, switchgear and transformers etc, will be higher*
- security fencing and all infrastructure should be included in the landscape and visual impact assessment*
- there should be a more localised landscape and visual impact assessment from the rights of way and heritage assets*
- the effect of glint and glare on aviation should be included*
- lighting should be scoped in during operational phase as some lighting is likely to be required for maintenance, security etc.*
- address how shadows from hedges and trees in hedges will be managed*
- field surveys will only be valid for 3 years*
- priority habitats, other on-site habitats, amphibians, bats and badgers should all be scoped in*
- pollution from chemical spills for cleaning materials for the PV units should be scoped in*
- the setting of heritage assets should be assessed and they should describe the mitigation measures in more detail*
- there should be further site visits to identify non-designated heritage assets*
- traffic noise from decommissioning needs to be scoped in*
- staff facilities including construction compounds should be scoped in*
- the access route to the substation and battery energy storage scheme located in site C (the one south of Great Staughton) are not noted in the scoping report and nor is the location of the storage and maintenance building*
- the full life cycle carbon footprint of all infrastructure should be assessed*
- potential ground and soil contamination from the battery energy storage scheme should be scoped in*

- **Peter Dijkhuis of Bedford Borough Council also sent us responses to some of our questions about the Eastpark planning process.** He explained that this Development Control Order is not a typical planning application and consequently this one has been placed in front of the Planning Inspectorate.

1. Which local authority is the host authority?
(Officer Note: the Application sits across the boundary circa 50/50 in land area)
2. For every mention of the Local Authority in the National Infrastructure Process will this be the host authority, the neighbouring authority or both?
(Officer Note: all; BBC, CCC and HuntsDC are all – equally - statutory consultees)
3. Thank you for confirming you are the point of contact for Bedford Borough. Who would the point of contact be at Huntingdonshire / Cambridgeshire?

(Officer Note: it has been agreed between Parties (i.e. BBC, CCC and HuntsDC) that we will form a single LPA Project Team to aid in resourcing across several disciplines, with David Carford (CCC) as the LEAD Project Manager/ Case Officer, Clara Kerr/ Charlotte Fox (Case Officer HuntsDC), and myself (BBC). Please note that all Application correspondence should be issued to PINS when the time comes; and, all BBC Internal correspondence to myself.

4. *When/how do we get sight of the Applicant's Application to the Inspectorate?*
(Officer Note: c. December 2024/ January 2025)
5. *Examining Authority – who is it made up of?*
(Officer Note: PINS)
6. *Local Authority's* Statement of Adequacy re consultation – do we get to see it?*
(Officer Note: if you refer to the SoCC this will be material the Applicant will submit to the Examination and will be available for public review/ comment)
7. *Local Authority's* Local Impact Report - do we get sight of this?*
(Officer Note: this will be prepared and submitted to the Examination)
8. *Statements of Common Ground. Can you tell us a bit more about these.*
(Officer Note: an agreed statement of common ground is essentially to ensure that the evidence considered at an Examination focuses on the material agreement and differences between the Applicant and the local planning authority(s))
9. *What qualifies as being an Interested Party? Ie should we encourage all residents to register?*
(Officer Note: all statutory and non-statutory organisations and persons; residents can register with the Examination should they so feel to do so – it is for the Inspector to decide whether such parties can speak at Examination)
10. *When/how do we get sight of the final Decision?*
(Officer Note: this will be issued by the Inspector on their portal)

- **Richard Fuller (MP) sent us a copy of a statement made by Claire Coutinho** (Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero) on 15th May in which she raised the need to protect the best agricultural land, address the cumulative impact of geographical clustering of solar farms, and support solar on rooftops and brownfield sites.
- **It was resolved that the Clerk should respond to say that it is good to see lots of acknowledgement of the issues but the Parish Council would like to see definitive regulations to cover solar power.** Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. E. Meola.

- **Local Plan 2040.**
- Bedford Borough's Local Plan 2040 was not approved by the inspector in early December 2023. The key issues were:
 - Some of the transport infrastructure projects (eg. A421 widening project) were critical to the proposals and yet they do not have committed funding.
 - The inspectors felt that there was a risk that they would not be able to build homes at Little Barford and Kempston Hardwick at the rates assumed (600 dwellings per year on each site for 3 years).
 - The inspector suggested an element of targeted growth around key service centres (eg Great Barford and Sharnbrook) and rural service centres (eg. Roxton). At the moment we are not a rural service centre.
 - The Borough Council have requested that the examination process be paused until January 2025 because there is a proposal for Universal Studios to develop a theme park and associated housing in Bedford at Kempston Hardwick. The idea is not currently a firm proposal. To assist Universal in making a decision whether to pursue

the project National Highways have prepared a model of the A421 route from the M1 to the A1. The Borough Council are asking National Highways whether this model could be used for the assessment of local plan allocations (eg for sites for new homes). This would mean that they could test scenarios without the need to spend nine months updating the Bedford Borough Traffic Model.

- The Borough Council explained that they are progressing well with assessing additional sites which fit with the Plan's strategy. They will propose some additional sites for allocation when they report back to the inspector towards the end of this year.
- The inspector has suggested that they will need to undertake further consultation and that they should send the inspector monthly updates which will be posted on the examination webpage.
- The first monthly update was published in April 2024. Key information in the update:
 - Bedford Borough Council are preparing to test options to deal with highways constraints
 - Bedford Borough Council are planning to revert to a lower housing need figure of 1,310 dwellings per year.
 - Universal Studios may have implications for the local plan - less homes may be developed on the site and the employment on the site may affect the need for employment provision elsewhere.
 - The Council is assessing several new urban sites for allocation
 - We have been informed that consultation on the proposed new Local Plan site allocations is likely to take place in early 2025.
- Some residents have asked if this is likely to increase the possibility of Denybrook or Eaton Bank resurfacing for this plan period. Since the Planning Inspector has said that the plan was too dependent on large sites which take a long time to begin development it seems unlikely that they would accept new large sites for this Local Plan to 2040.

2024/045. Finances

- Receive internal audit report May 2024. The internal audit was conducted by Nicola Hageman of The Numbers Quarter in Bedford on 14th May because our usual auditor Kim Webb was not available. She had no issues to report but she did recommend that the Council consider using accounting software. **It was resolved that the Clerk should research accounting software options for the next meeting.** Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola.
- The cost of the internal audit exceeded our budget. We had budgeted £150 but we paid £250. Due to time constraints the Clerk had to obtain authorisation for the additional cost by e-mail. **It was resolved to approve this additional spending on the internal audit.** Proposed by Cllr. G. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.
- Having been previously circulated the Council approved the Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for the Annual Return for 2023/24. **It was resolved to approve the accounting statements presented on p11.** Proposed by Cllr. J. Ibbett and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola.
- The Clerk presented the performance against budget for 2023-24. It is not reproduced here as it was presented in detail in the meeting on 21st March and the only significant difference is that we received an extra interest payment of £121.45 before year end.
- The Clerk reported the performance against budget for 2024-25 to date and this is presented on p12-15
- Allocate reserves. **It was resolved to add the following underspends from 2023-24 to earmarked reserves.** Proposed by Cllr. J. Ibbett and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola. and the reserves are presented on p16-17:
 - £228 grass cutting

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- £180 hall hire to use towards social events
 - £125 cabin maintenance
 - £150 admin to create a reserve for a scroll if we choose to award the Freedom of the Parish
- VAT reclaim for 2023-24 will be for £1914.67
- **It was resolved to continue our direct debits.** Proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. G. Meola. These are for:
 - EDF Energy power to cabins £13 to £40 per month
 - SSE Energy power to street lights £28 to £32 per month
 - Anglian Water (Wave) water and sewage for cabins 4 payments of around £42 and 4 payments of around £6-£10 depending on useage
 - Information Commissioner's Office Registration fee £35 per year
- The receipts and payments were examined against the invoices by Cllr. G. Meola and Cllr. E. Meola who signed the schedule of regular payments and approved the list of payments. The receipts and payments are presented on p18-19.
- The bank reconciliation was checked against the bank statements by Cllr. G. Meola and is presented on p20-21

2024/046. Policies

- The code of conduct was reviewed without amendment
- **It was resolved to adopt a new “Policy for Awarding the Freedom of the Parish”.** This was circulated in advance of the meeting by Cllr. P. Yockney. Adoption was proposed by Cllr. E. Meola and seconded by Cllr. J. Ibbett.

2024/047. General Power of Competence

- The Council is not eligible to use this power as the Clerk does not have the Certificate in Local Council Administration qualification. However, there are other legal powers available to carry out everything the Council wishes to do.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

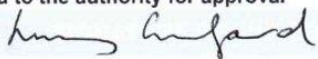
STAPLOE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	20,209	26,617	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	13,336	14,324	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	19,674	31,628	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	5,603	5,916	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	20,999	23,997	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	26,617	42,656	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	26,617	42,656	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	42,853	46,523	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 2024 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


Date 02/05/2024

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

16/05/2024

as recorded in minute reference:

2024/045. May 2024

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



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Staploe Parish Council Performance Against Budget 2024 - 2025	Actual to 31st Mch 2024	Budget to Mch 2025	Actual to 15th May 2024	Forecast to 31st March 2025	Forecast less budget	Comment
		1.3%				% increase vs 2023-24
Regular Receipts						
Precept	£14,324.00	£14,513.48	£7,257.00	£14,513.48	£-	
Interest	£381.06	£500.00		£500.00	£-	
Cabin hire	£500.00	£500.00	£125.00	£500.00	£-	
Total Regular Receipts	£15,205.06	£15,513.48	£7,382.00	£15,513.48	£-	
Other Receipts						
Newsletter advertising	£10.00	£-			£-	
Ward Fund	£1,404.98	£-			£-	
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	£9,763.00	£-			£-	
Donations for Local Plan advice & campagin	£-	£-		£-	£-	
Ticket sales from social events	£214.00				£-	
CIL income	£17,229.03			£-	£-	
Other (eg. refunds, proceeds from social events / book sales)	£255.22	£-		£2,219.00	£2,219.00	Insurance payout expected for street light (less £125 excess)
Total Other Receipts	£28,876.23	£-	£-	£2,219.00	£2,219.00	
total incl VAT						
Total excl precept						
Total Receipts	£44,081.29	£15,513.48	£7,382.00	£17,732.48	£2,219.00	

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Regular Payments (from precept)						
	Actual to 31st Mch 2024	Budget to Mch 2025	Actual to 15th May 2024	Forecast to 31st March 2025	Forecast less budget	Comment
Clerk's salary & pension	£4,929.73	£5,176.28		£5,176.28	£-	Remain on Salary Point 17 but budget assumed 5% increase in 2023/24 when in fact it was 7% and 5% in 2024/25. 5 hours per week for PC (see Neighbourhood Plan below for extra hour). ER pension contributions remain at 26.8%
Clerk's PAYE		£-			£-	
Clerk's salary & pension extra hour per week for Neighbourhood Plan	£985.95	£1,035.25		£1,035.25	£-	
Total staff costs	£5,915.68	£6,211.53	£-	£6,211.53	£-	
Audit Fees	£285.00	£320.00		£450.00	£130.00	External; £200, internal £250. Internal audit more expensive as Kim not available.
Councillors Expenses	£-	£30.00		£30.00	£-	
Clerk's employment expenses	£282.61	£312.00		£312.00	£-	Monthly mileage (£8) and Working From Home Allowance (£18)
Clerk's Other Expenses eg. postage & sundries	£15.34	£40.00		£40.00	£-	Postage and sundries.
Training	£-	£80.00		£80.00	£-	£50 Clerk's training, £30 for 2 x Cllrs training
Insurance	£549.24	£549.24		£596.71	£47.47	New defibrillators purchased
Power to street lights	£283.40	£604.02		£524.02	-£80.00	Fixed contract with SSE until 30th Sep 2026
Elec (CCTV & cabins)	£261.23	£320.00	£48.96	£320.00	£-	Electricity prices have increased. Now in 2 year deal with EDF 25p per day standing charge (similar) but big increase in consumption to 35.6p per kwh
Water and sewerage for cabins	£195.37	£240.00		£240.00	£-	Fixed costs £102.50 Water and foul water costs £3.08 per m3
Maintainance (street lights, speed signs, benches, play area & planters)	£214.04	£200.00		£200.00	£-	eg. noticeboards, benches, play area etc.
Defib costs	£35.00	£35.00		£35.00	£-	£35 for electricity to owner of the Old Chapel. £150 maintenance per year after two years - save for this in reserves.
Play Area Inspection	£75.00	£75.00		£75.00	£-	
Play Area Works (assets purchased)	£-			£-	£-	

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	Actual to 31st Mch 2024	Budget to Mch 2025	Actual to 15th May 2024	Forecast to 31st March 2025	Forecast less budget	Comment
Regular payments continued						
Play Area Works (consumables / labour)	£-			£-	£-	
Community cabins and picnic area	£175.00	£300.00		£300.00	£-	Repairs (cables, taps, leaks) £227 plus burying cables & fixing drain £750 plus signage and cleaning products.
Playing field grass	£1,124.16	£1,330.00		£1,330.00	£-	Grass cutting £1209 for ten cuts. We are likely to only need 9 (one due in March). Save £110 to reserve to pay in April
Duloe Common grass	£88.00	£110.00		£110.00	£-	Grass cutting - budgeted for 10 but one due in March so 9 total. Save £10 to reserve to pay in April
Tree surveys and works	£200.00				£-	Saving into earmarked reserve for surveys and works
Street light inspection	£434.00	£-		£-	£-	Saving into earmarked reserve for surveys and works
Subs (SLCC / BATPC)	£209.00	£209.00	£112.00	£209.00	£-	BATPC £93 + SLCC £95 if Clerk on 5 hrs / wk but £112 if on 6hrs / wk
Admin	£92.65	£200.00		£200.00	£-	£35 info commissioner, stationary items (£80) and printer cartridges bought direct (£100), other eg.prof advice, social events (£42).
Literature & info	£-	£-		£-	£-	
Web & e-mail hosting, software subs	£318.30	£295.00		£261.98	-£33.02	Assumes Eyelid £100 web support + Cloudnext £100 + £75 software. Gov domain of £110 every 2 years is due in Sep 2023. £55 to be transferred to reserve in 2024/25 - see transfers to reserve. £45.40 paid to Currys PC World for MS Office in duplicate - allocated to Other Payments and refunded
Other assets (eg. street furniture / tools / office equipment). Excl. playing field/ play area)	£336.75	£-		£-	£-	
Village Hall Hire	£120.00	£300.00		£300.00	£-	Budget assumes 1 APM 3 hrs @£10 /hr, 1 public meeting 2.5 hours @£10/hr, 10 PC / committee meetings of 2.5 hrs @ £8/hr) and £15 towards each of 3 social events.
Village Hall Works / Maintenance	£365.00	£375.59		£375.59	£-	Contribution towards insurance
Newsletter	£112.97	£369.10		£369.10	£-	2 issues
Donations	£-			£-	£-	
Other	£76.21		£125.00	£125.00	£125.00	Excess payable for reconnecting the street light
Contingency	£-	£150.00		£150.00	£-	
Total regular payments	£11,763.95	£12,655.48	£285.96	£12,844.93	£189.45	We are forecast to spend £189 more than we budgeted in our regular payments (which we aim to match to precept). This is due to additional costs for the internal audit (£130), excess payable on repairing the street light (£125) and insurance (£47) less a saving of £80 on our street light electricity due to government support for small businesses and £33 saving in our software costs.
Regular transfers to reserve (from precept)						
Village Hall Savings	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£-	
Hedge cutting savings (field & common)	£75.00	£75.00	£75.00	£75.00	£-	
Asset replacement savings	£125.00	£125.00	£125.00	£125.00	£-	Clerk's laptop and printer £600 every 5 years
Tree surveys and works savings	£53.00	£253.00	£253.00	£253.00	£-	Survey cost £360 every 3 years (£120pa). Works £400 every three years (£133pa)
Defibrillator	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£-	Needs to increase to £288 next year because of two new defibrillators
Street light inspection savings	£-	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£-	Formal inspection due in 2023/24 and then 2029/30
Decking replacement savings	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00		
Gov domain (alternate years)	£-	£55.00	£55.00	£55.00	£-	£110 every other year (Sep 21, 23, 25 etc)
Total Regular transfers to reserve (from precept)	£2,303.00	£2,858.00	£2,858.00	£2,858.00	£-	
Regular payments + regular transfers to reserve	£14,066.95	£15,513.48	£3,143.96	£15,702.93	£189.45	
Regular receipts - regular payments & transfers to reserve	£1,138.11	£-	£4,238.04	-£189.45	-£189.45	

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Other payments (met from additional receipts eg. grants or earmarked reserves)						
	Actual to 31st Mch 2024	Budget to Mch 2025	Actual to 15th May 2024	Forecast to 31st March 2025	Forecast less budget	Comment
Local Plan advice and campaign					£-	
Village Hall payments from earmarked reserve	£630.00			£-	£-	£630 towards CCTV replacement in car park (from heater refund) spent in April 2023.
Ward Fund assets purchased	£2,169.98			£-	£-	£765 spent on CCTV for hall car park in May 2023 and remainder on defibrillators
CIL income					£-	
RAIDIUS					£-	Received from V. Zwetsloot 15th August 2022 - remains of campaign against traveller site in Upper Staploe
Playing field & common grass cutting			£148.50	£148.50		Payment for a cut in August 2023 invoiced late in April 2024
Tree surveys and works	£50.00			£-	£-	
Defibrillator replacement parts / maintenance	£218.98				£-	
Gov domain	£-					
Elections	£45.73				£-	
Other assets purchased from earmarked res	£901.70			£-	£-	Printer purchased from cartridge refunds
Tree surveys and works						
Neighbourhood Plan costs met by grant	£3,023.51				£-	For green infrastructure review and NDP advice
Neighbourhood Plan unspent grant refunds	£5,914.00		£6,739.49	£6,739.49	£6,739.49	Repayment of unspent grant - to be used next year.
Street light inspections	£278.50				£-	
Hall hire for social events (met from ticket receipts)	£-				£-	
Other payments from earmarked reserves			£2,344.00	£2,344.00	£2,344.00	To UK Power Networks for reconnecting the street light
Other payments (duplicates, refunds etc.)			£45.40	£45.40	£45.40	MS Office duplicate payment - refunded
Total Other Payments	£16,239.28	£-	£9,277.39	£9,277.39	£9,277.39	
Total Payments	£28,003.23	£12,655.48	£9,563.35	£22,122.32	£9,466.84	
Other transfers to reserves (not from precept)						
Defibrillator replacement parts / maintenance					£-	
Asset replacement					£-	
Solar Farm Payment					£-	
Local Plan advice and campaign					£-	
Maintenance					£-	
Extra grass & hedge cutting on field & common			£148.50	£148.50	£148.50	From underspend in 2023/24 (late invoice for August cut paid from this reserve in April 2024)
Play area assets					£-	
Total other transfers to reserves	£-	£-	£148.50	£148.50	£148.50	
Total Payments & Transfers to Reserve	£30,306.23	£15,513.48	£12,569.85	£25,128.82	£9,615.34	
Total receipts - (total payments & transfers to reserve)	£13,775.06	£-	-£5,187.85	-£7,396.34	-£7,396.34	We are forecast to spend £9,615 more than we receive this year. This is largely due to spending or returning grants received last year or planned spending from earmarked reserves.

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Staploe Parish Council Reserves				16/05/2024							
Earmarked Reserve Category	Category breakdown	Funds Reserved	Receipts to reserve to	Payments from reserve to	Balance to		Receipts forecast to	Payments forecast to	Balance forecast to		Comment
		01/04/2024	16/05/2024	16/05/2024	16/05/2024		31/03/2025	31/03/2025	31/03/2025		
					Breakdown	Total			Breakdown	Total	
Dennybrook Planning		£386.75				£386.75				£386.75	
Village Hall Rebuild Reserve	General Village Hall Rebuild Fund	£7,262.90	£1,500.00			£8,762.90				£8,762.90	
	Heater refund (from Ward Fund 2018)	£30.00				£30.00				£30.00	Used for CCTV April 2023 as well as Ward Fund from 2022/23
	Total Village Hall Rebuild Reserves	£7,292.90	£1,500.00	£0.00		£8,792.90				£8,792.90	
Ward Fund											CCTV for hall car park in May 2023 (Ward Fund received in 2022/23), £1404.98 for two new defibrillators (plus match funding from government).
		£0.00				£0.00	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	
Community Infrastructure Levy											
	Tally Ho Corner Farm 22/6/2023	£6,730.38				£6,730.38	£0.00			£6,730.38	
	Lower Goodwick Farm 22/6/2023	£5,000.94				£5,000.94	£0.00			£5,000.94	
	Upper Goodwick Farm Cottage 22/6/2023	£3,818.05				£3,818.05	£0.00			£3,818.05	
	Honeydon Barn 28/11/2023	£1,679.66				£1,679.66	£0.00			£1,679.66	
	Total CIL Reserves	£17,229.03	£0.00	£0.00		£17,229.03				£17,229.03	
RAIDIUS fund		£706.41				£706.41				£706.41	
Election fund		£464.56				£464.56				£464.56	
Literature & info fund		£30.86				£30.86				£30.86	
Grass & hedge cutting field		£382.00	£228.00	£228.00		£382.00				£382.00	£148.50 2 for two grass cuts in 2023/24 were invoiced in 2024/5
Hedge cutting Duloe Common		£135.00	£37.00			£172.00				£172.00	
Play area assets		£53.38				£53.38				£53.38	
General Maintenance		£0.00				£0.00				£0.00	
Cabin Maintenance		£0.00	£125.00			£125.00				£125.00	
Defibrillator		£0.00	£50.00	£0.00		£50.00				£50.00	Towards replacing batteries / pads. £219 spent in 2023/24
Asset replacement (eg. laptop, noticeboards)		£0.00	£125.00	£508.19		-£383.19				-£383.19	£125 from precept + £233.15 from refunded cartridges
Tree works		£789.00	£253.00			£1,042.00				£1,042.00	Towards inspections and works on Duloe Common and Duloe Playing Field.
Neighbourhood Plan		£6,739.49	£0.00	£6,739.49		£0.00		£0.00		£0.00	Balance from 2021-22 repaid. £3023.51 for green infrastructure review and planning advice. £6739 to be repaid and a new application made in 2024/25
Street light inspection		£589.50	£300.00	£0.00		£889.50				£889.50	Saving £434 per year for 3 years to do a formal inspection in 2023/24. The actual cost was only £367.50 but £345 spent on repairs.
Gov domain (alternate 16s)		£0.00	£55.00	£0.00		£55.00				£55.00	£110 to paid in Sept 2023. £55 from precept and £55 from reserve.

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Earmarked Reserve Category	Category breakdown	Funds Reserved	Receipts to reserve to	Payments from reserve to	Balance to	Receipts forecast to	Payments forecast to	Balance forecast to	Comment
		01/04/2023	16/05/2024	16/05/2024	16/05/2024	31/03/2024	31/03/2024	31/03/2024	
Social Events		£83.56			£83.56			£83.56	Funds allocated in Jan 2022 from underspend in admin budget. £83.56 unspent. £180 saving in hall hire costs in 2023/24 allocated to reserve in 2024/25 or social events
Football Club Deposit		£100.00			£100.00			£100.00	
Decking Savings		£500.00	£500.00		£1,000.00			£1,000.00	
Total earmarked reserves		£52,324.72	£3,173.00	£7,475.68	£30,793.01			£30,793.01	
VAT (negative figure means we are owed VAT)		-£1,865.98	£1,865.98	£1,919.12	-£1,919.12		£29.70	-£1,948.82	
Available reserves ex VAT		-£7,803.32			£10,990.78			£9,338.55	Balance forecast is opening balance ex VAT plus ((forecast total receipts ex VAT less forecast total payments ex VAT) less earmarked reserves). Actuals are based on ((bank balances less earmarked reserves) less VAT). VAT balance is always negative or zero because it is paid in arrears.
Available reserves incl VAT (higher than ex VAT because VAT usually owed)								£7,389.73	
Total funds ex VAT		£44,521.40			£41,783.79			£40,131.56	
Total funds incl VAT (matches balance bf)		£42,655.42			£39,864.67			£38,182.74	
Earmarked reserves = funds set aside for a specific purpose. These can only be allocated to another purpose if the council passes a resolution to do so.									
Available reserves = total balance in the accounts less the earmarked reserves. This should be 50-100% of our precept ie. £7257 - £14513									
Therefore £9338.55 is within the recommended range									

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Summary of Transactions for Staploe Parish Council for Approval at Meeting on:						16/05/2024		
Main Account Payments								
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Cheque / Ref Number	Amount		
1	08/04/2024	UK Power Networks	Payment for streetlight reconnection	BACS	0	£2,962.80		
2	09/04/2024	EDF Energy	Electricity for cabins	Direct Debit	0	£24.36		
4	25/04/2024	Society for Local Council Clerks	Annual Subs	BACS	0	£112.00		
5	25/04/2024	Groundwork UK	Repayment of unspent Neighbourhood Plan grant	BACS	0	£6,739.49		
6	25/04/2024	Bradgate Fencing	Grass cutting on the playing field and common August	BACS	0	£178.20		
7	25/04/2024	Currys PC World	Office 365 subs (duplicate to be refunded) & virus	BACS	0	£68.86		
9	07/05/2024	EDF Energy	Electricity for cabins	Direct Debit	0	£27.05		
11	16/05/2024	The Numbers Quarter	Internal audit	BACS	0	£300.00		
12	16/05/2024	Clear Councils	Annual insurance	BACS	0	£596.71		
13	20/05/2024	Anglian Water - Wave	Water and sewerage for the cabins	Direct Debit	0	£45.54		
14	24/06/2024	L. Crawford	Clerk's pay & WFHA Apr-June	Cheque	100965	£1,156.19		
15	24/06/2024	Bedfordshire Pension Fund	Clerk's pension Apr-Jun	BACS	0	£376.73		
Total						£12,587.93		
Debit Card Account Payments								
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Cheque / Ref Number	Amount		
8	29/04/2024	Microsoft	Office 365 subscription	Debit card	0	£59.99		
Total						£59.99		

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Main Account Receipts								
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount		
3	15/04/2024	Bedford Borough Council	First half of precept	Credit	0	£7,257.00		
10	10/05/2024	St Neots Town Youth Football Team	Quarterly cabin hire May to July	Credit	2024/002	£125.00		
Total						£7,382.00		
Barclays Savings Account Receipts								
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount		
None								
Total						£0.00		
Unity Savings Account Receipts								
Ref	Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount		
None								
Total						£0.00		
Transfers								
Ref	Date	Recipient	Details	CommAcc	Debit Card Account	Barclays Savings Account	Unity Savings Account	Total
None								
Total				0	0	0	0	0
	payment not yet made							
Posted balances after the above transactions clear								
Community Account 30833940				£1,659.41				
Debit Card Acc 13099075				£80.80				
Base Rate Savings 43461580				£7,003.01				
Unity Savings 20496487				£31,121.45				
Total				£39,864.67				

May 2024

STAPLOE PARISH COUNCIL BANK RECONCILIATION 1st APRIL 2024 TO 15 May 2024									
Date of bank statement			15/05/2024						
Prepared by Mrs. Lucy Crawford, Parish Clerk							Date prepared:		15/05/2024
Balance per bank statements as at:			15/05/2024						

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				BARCLAYS					
DATE				Community Account 30833940					
				Receipts		Payments	Transfers	Balance	
1-Apr-24	Balance bf		£4,390.17						
15-May-24	Posted balance per accounts		£-	£7,382.00		£10,112.76	£0.00	<u>£1,659.41</u>	
Unpresented cheques / uncleared payments:									
	Total					£0.00			
15-May-24	Balance as per bank statement		£1,659.41						
15-May-24	Posted balance - cleared balance		-£1,659.41						
15-May-24	Balance cf		£-						
				BARCLAYS					
				Base Rate Savings 43461580					
				Receipts		Payments	Transfers	Balance	
1-Apr-24	Balance bf		£7,003.01						
15-May-24	Posted balance as per accounts		£-	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00	<u>£7,003.01</u>	
15-May-24	Balance as per bank statement		£7,003.01						
15-May-24	Posted balance - cleared balance		-£7,003.01						
15-May-24	Balance cf		£-						
				BARCLAYS					
				Payments Account 13099075					
				Receipts		Payments	Transfers	Balance	
1-Apr-24	Balance bf		£140.79						
15-May-24	Posted balance as per accounts		£-	£0.00		£59.99	£0.00	<u>£80.80</u>	
15-May-24	Balance as per bank statement		£80.80						
15-May-24	Posted balance - cleared balance		-£80.80						
15-May-24	Balance cf		£-						
				UNITY TRUST BANK					
				Instant Access Savings 20496487					
				Receipts		Payments	Transfers	Balance	
1-Apr-24	Balance bf		£31,121.45						
15-May-24	Posted balance as per accounts		£-	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00	<u>£31,121.45</u>	
15-May-24	Balance as per bank statement		£31,121.45						
15-May-24	Posted balance - cleared balance		-£31,121.45						
15-May-24	Balance cf		£-						