



## ANSTY AND STAPLEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

### The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at

### Ashenground Community Centre on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

**Members present:** Bob Birthwright (BB), Chris East (CE), Maria Fielding (MF) Jon Gilley (JG), Mandi Graves (MG), Candida Lewis (CL), Amanda Saunders (AS), Heinrich Schmidt (HS), Simon Stokes (SS) (Chair) and Brad Williams (BW).

**Also present:** Sarah Abellan (SA) (Clerk), MSDC Cllr Richard Bates (RB), MSDC Cllr Malcolm Avery (MA), MSDC Cllr Jim Knight (JK), WSCC Cllr Sujan Wickremaratchi (SW) and 8 MoP's.

#### Meeting Started at 7.30pm.

- 1. To receive apologies for absence:** Nuala Hampshire (NH), Crispin Salimbeni (CS).
- 2. Public Session.** One member of the public spoke about planning application DM/26/0075, describing the gymnastics group's benefits for local children and noting a shortage of facilities. Another member provided a detailed objection report on DM/26/0454 and outlined their concerns to the council.
- 3. Declarations of interest regarding agenda items:** CE, SS, and JG disclosed that they reside opposite the location of the proposed planning application DM/26/0075. AS noted her association with the Bolnore Scout Grant Application.
- 4. To agree the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026.** BW moved to approve the minutes, JG seconded. The council ratified and the chair signed the minutes from 9 February 2026.
- 5. To receive updates from District and County Councillors.** JK voiced disappointment over the Rocky Lane Community Governance Review, feeling ASPC and residents lacked support from RB. MA shared June 9<sup>th</sup> as the date for the Ansty Farm planning appeal and announced Eric Owens replacing Ann Biggs as head of planning. RB noted Crawley appear to be muscling in on one of the major sites (Crabbett Park) near Worth. District approved a 3% rate rise. RB responded he was unaware of ASPC's view and considers Rocky Lane part of Hayward's Heath. SW invited Rocky Lane residents to contact him with any questions and noted ongoing pothole repairs.. MA and JK left the meeting.

#### 6. To consider the following planning applications and any others that arrive before the meeting.

DM/26/0261	10 Highfields Brighton Road Warninglid Haywards Heath	Variation of conditions 2 and 3 to planning reference DM/25/1514 to allow for amended plans and materials.	No objections
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DM/26/0235	6 Highfields Brighton Road Warninglid Haywards Heath	Addition of an ancillary outbuilding, front gates and 1.8m close boarded fence to the front entrance/garden.	No objections providing ancillary buildings are tied to the main building.
DM/25/2992	North Hall Staplefield Lane Staplefield Haywards Heath	Conversion of the first floor of the Granary to facilitate ancillary accommodation to the main house together with associated minor external alterations. (Amended plans received 04.02.2026)	No objections providing ancillary buildings are tied to the main building.
DM/25/2991	North Hall Staplefield Lane Staplefield Haywards Heath	Conversion of the first floor of the Granary to facilitate ancillary accommodation to the main house together with associated minor external alterations. (Amended plans received 04.02.2026)	No objections providing ancillary buildings are tied to the main building.
DM/25/3242	Skyline 90 Valebridge Road Burgess Hill West Sussex	Alteration, extension and re-modeling of existing dwelling house including a new roof structure with new first floor and a single storey rear corner infill extension (Amended plans received 02.01.26 and 04.01.26)	Council to object on grounds of overdevelopment.
DM/26/0075	Home Farm Slaugham Road Staplefield Haywards Heath	Change of use of former grainstore to gymnastics club training facility.	No objections but council would like to question if this should be a retrospective application.
DM/26/0454	Land Parcel At Bolney Road Ansty West Sussex	Proposed erection of 34 new homes with access from Marwick Close, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works.	Council have no objection but have concerns over highways safety and would like know what provisions will be made to make it safer. <b>(SS, JG &amp; CE left the room whilst this was discussed. BW took over as Chair for this item only.)</b>
DM/25/3212	Red Oaks Weald Chase Staplefield Road Cuckfield	Proposed conversion and extension of the existing garage into additional living accommodation, construction of new glass link extension and demolition of existing porch extension with proposed replacement extension. (amended plans received 12/02/2026)	no objections providing it stays within the curtilage.
DM/25/2071	Land To Rear Off Chideok Valebridge Road Burgess Hill West Sussex	Construction of 2 no houses with detached garages and retrospective permission for the creation of a new access from Valebridge Road (Flood Risk Assessment received 12.01.2026) (Tree information received 18.02.2026) (Revised description agreed 19.02.2026)	Council to object as overdevelopment and against the district plan.

AP/26/0017	Land East Of Ansty Way Cuckfield Bypass Cuckfield West Sussex	Outline planning application (All matters reserved except for access) for the redevelopment of land to the east of Ansty to create a new Garden Community, comprising of the erection of up to 1,450 homes (including 30% affordable housing), up to 90 residential care units (C2 class), a primary school, a SEND school, health hub, sports facilities including all weather hockey pitches and tennis centre, allotments, retail, community and employment uses together with ancillary and associated development including new and enhanced pedestrian/cycle routes, open spaces, and landscaping.	The inquiry is being held on 9th June. ASPC to reiterate our objection and will be a rule 6 party along with Cuckfield Parish Council.
DM/26/0365	Little Haslings Orchard Way Warninglid Haywards Heath	Installation of free standing 3.3x5.3m glass and aluminium veranda garden room located on patio out side kitchen patio doors.	No objections.
DM/26/0273	St Marks Primary School Brantridge Lane Staplefield Haywards Heath	Retrospective application for installation of a new timber flat roof structure at a higher level to the existing lead-lined valley.	No objection.
DM/26/0272	St Marks Primary School Brantridge Lane Staplefield Haywards Heath	Retrospective application for installation of a new timber flat roof structure at a higher level to the existing lead-lined valley.	No objection.
AP/26/0015	5 The Holt Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 4XR	Proposed front ground floor extension to extend the existing garage. Side first floor extension over the existing garage and utility room. Hip-to-gable loft conversion with dormers, with juliette balconies to the front elevation.	Original objection stands.
DM/26/0319	Great Thorndean Barn Slough Green Lane Warninglid Haywards Heath	Demolition of existing barn and erection of new barn for storage purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling.	No objections providing ancillary buildings are tied to the main building.
DM/25/2195	Recreation Ground Deaks Lane Ansty West Sussex	Propose to extend the external path and install a picket fence at the community building front. Install drainage on the eastern side of the building. Repair the maintenance track along the western boundary. Perform drainage works around the western northern, eastern, and southern boundaries. Install a picket fence around cricket nets. Regularise storage containers that are already present in the north field. Relocate the bin store.	No objection

3 MoP's and SW left the meeting.

**7. CGR** – SS reported that the CGR has determined Rocky Lane Wards will be transferred to HHTC, resulting in their removal from ASPC effective May 2027. This transition will lead to a significant reduction in ASPC's precept and, notably, the departure of three highly valued councillors, which is regarded as a considerable loss for the council. MG noted that the majority of residents in her estate preferred joining Haywards Heath, while AS and HS indicated that most residents in their areas wished to remain with ASPC. SS stated that Cllr Lucraft has agreed to meet to discuss potential financial compensation. In response to the review, SS recommended establishing a working party dedicated to evaluating next steps, including budget considerations and efforts to maximize funding, given ASPC's reliance on the precept. The Parish remains viable; however, recent developments suggest there may not be a unified community of interest between Staplefield and the rest of the Parish. This topic will be added to the agenda for the next meeting. It was observed that the parish tax base has not increased over recent years, a concern raised multiple times. ASPC requested RB to investigate the parish's tax base, as well as S106 and precept funding.

**8. Grants** – Final update on last year's allocations.

- a. Brook Street – request for extra time was agreed.
- b. Bolnore Scouts – request to repurpose was agreed.
- c. ASCS – update provided on how the grant was spent.
- d. SVH - update provided on how the grant was spent.
- e. Cuckfield Lawn Tennis Club – update provided on the fundraising/matchfunding.

2 MoP's and RB left the meeting.

**9. Land/assets from MSDC/WSCC.**

- a. Land behind Ansty Sports Club.
- b. Whiteman's Green.

The Clerk update council that MSDC are still refusing to discuss any transfers.

**10. Cricket and pavilion fees for 2026** – It was ratified by Council to increase fees by 2%.

**11. Staplefield**

- a. Agree pavilion and common fees – as above.
- b. Request for reduced fee for charity morning – The request to reduce the fee for the charity morning was not approved. The council advised that they do not wish to establish a precedent and consider the current fees to be appropriately low.
- c. Park update – The clerk advised council that the drainage section has been completed and they would be back on site w/c 16<sup>th</sup> March to put in the wet pour and complete the job. The contractors have advised to keep the park closed until the land has settled and the new grass taken. MF asked how long that would take and requested an opening date from the contractor.
- d. Pavilion Quotation – A quotation was submitted to the Council for the necessary works

required to achieve full compliance for the pavilion's opening. The Council resolved to proceed with the proposed works and approved an additional 15% contingency, resulting in a total of £21,261.09. The expenditure was authorised, and the Clerk was instructed to take appropriate action.

- e. Staplefield Lane – it has been noted by some residents that there is an encampment along Staplefield Lane. This was previously reported to planning by a resident. Council would like to request an update on the site. Clerk to action.
- f. Staplefield Fete – The Council resolved to participate in the Staplefield Fete, with Councillors SS and HS confirming their attendance at the event.
- g. Tree work – Council agreed to cut back a tree on the upper common that is currently overhanging a resident's property. A quote of £650 was approved. Clerk to action.

**12. Land** – CE said that the Ansty land was straight forward but he would need further discussions with NH to confirm the extent of the Brook Street section.

**13. Brook Street** – Layby – as above.

**14. ACV** – CE now has everything he needs to complete the forms on the asset of community value applications for the 2 pubs in Staplefield. SS to complete the Ansty one.

#### **15. Finance**

- a. **Monthly finances** - financial statement including the schedule of payments, the receipts, bank statements and bank reconciliation were **agreed and signed by councillors.**
- b. **Payments approved since last meeting** - None
- c. **Payment to Steve Tilbury to advise on the Rocky Lane Mast application** – Approved.
- d. **Budget report and prediction for end of year** – MF questioned the garden section. SA advised this was how it was being recorded when she first took over and that there is a 0 in the outgoings figure as it is all put through as the ground's maintenance. This line has now been removed from the next budget.

**16. This was moved to the last item, see below. Confidential Items: To pass a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussion where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.**

- a. **Staffing matters.**

**17. Interim Audit** – booked in for April 20<sup>th</sup> 2026.

**18. Local Publications** – BW updated Council on the latest edition of Cuckfield life featuring NH with Chief Constable Jo Shiner doing speed watch in Brook Street.

**19. Meetings attended.** SS attended the Community Governance Review, WSALC meeting and updated council on discussions. MG advised that a meeting had taken place with MSDC over the road widening at Cedar Avenue. They were presented with a revised plan as the original would now cost over £600,000 so were told it was either the new plan or it wouldn't happen so they have had to agree. There will be double yellow lines on the corner and going down into the close.

**20. Minor matters for consideration and items for the next agenda.** None noted.

**21. Confirm date and place of next meeting.** Whiteman’s Green Sports Centre, 13<sup>th</sup> April.

3 MoP’s left the meeting. 1 Mop and SA left the room.

**(16). Confidential Items: To pass a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for discussion where publicity might be prejudicial to the special nature of the business.**

a. **Staffing matters** – The proposal was approved by Council. SS to action.

1 Mop and SA returned to the room.

**Meeting closed at 9.30pm.**

***Minutes are in draft form until agreed and signed at the next full council meeting.***

Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council											
Listing of transactions dated between 01/02/2026 and 09/03/2026											
Voucher	Date	Description	Type	Supplier / customer	Account name	Reserve	Bank Account	Net	VAT	Total	
799	28/02/2026	Service Charge	Payment	Unity Trust	Bank Charges	General	Current Acct	-7.80	0.00	-7.80	
800	17/02/2026	Feb Invoice	Payment	Plan.com	Equipment and software	General	Current Acct	-22.00	-4.40	-26.40	
801	17/02/2026	Website Jan/Feb	Payment	Hugofox Ltd	Equipment and software	General	Current Acct	-9.99	-2.00	-11.99	
802	13/02/2026	Emails Jan/Feb	Payment	Hugofox Ltd	Equipment and software	General	Current Acct	-24.99	-5.00	-29.99	
803	05/02/2026	24-25	Payment	NPower	Phone Box	General	Current Acct	-17.31	-0.87	-18.18	
804	18/02/2026	January	Payment	Castle Water	Staplefield Pavilion	General	Current Acct	-15.25	0.00	-15.25	
805	13/02/2026	ICO Renewal	Payment	Information Commission	Subscriptions	General	Current Acct	-47.00	0.00	-47.00	
806	02/02/2026	Emails March	Payment	Wessex IT	Equipment and software	General	Current Acct	-30.67	-6.13	-36.80	
807	16/02/2026	Jan	Payment	Smartest Energy	Staplefield Pavilion	General	Current Acct	-12.52	0.00	-12.52	
808	09/03/2026	Feb Mileage	Payment	Sarah Abellan	Clerk's Expenses	General	Current Acct	-1.35	0.00	-1.35	
809	09/03/2026	Feb FC Meeting	Payment	Staplefield Village Hall	Room Bookings	General	Current Acct	-22.00	0.00	-22.00	
810	09/03/2026	SLCC membership	Payment	slcc	Subscriptions	General	Current Acct	-253.00	0.00	-253.00	
811	09/03/2026	Bench installation	Payment	Screwed and Glued	Staplefield Play Park refurb	Play Park refurb	Current Acct	-80.00	0.00	-80.00	
812	09/03/2026	Donation to Rocky Lane Mast	Payment	Beeches Rocky Lane c/o	Rocky Lane Mast Appeal	General	Current Acct	-1,000.00	0.00	-1,000.00	
813	09/03/2026	Planning Advice	Payment	Steve Tilbury Consulting	Rocky Lane Mast Appeal	General	Current Acct	-390.00	0.00	-390.00	
814	09/03/2026	3 meetings Jan/Feb	Payment	Ansty Sports and Social C	Room Bookings	General	Current Acct	-30.00	0.00	-30.00	
815	09/03/2026	Key Cutting	Payment	Sarah Abellan	Staplefield Pavilion	General	Current Acct	-15.00	0.00	-15.00	
816	09/03/2026	Upper Common 2 trees	Payment	Edwoods Tree Care	Trees	General	Current Acct	-1,250.00	0.00	-1,250.00	