

**STELLING MINNIS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE STATUTORY ANNUAL MEETING ON 13 MAY 2026 HELD AT
7.30PM IN STELLING MINNIS VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Parish Cllr Max Couch (Chairman)
Parish Cllr John Haffenden (Vice Chairman)
Parish Cllr Ann Day
Parish Cllr Garry Watts
Parish Cllr Robert Hubble
Parish Cllr Sally Morley-Smith
FHDC Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee (arrived at 8.10pm)
FHDC Cllr Elaine Martin (arrived at 8.10pm)

Gail Hubbard, Clerk to the Council
There was one member of the public present.

The Vice Chairman began by reading out the statement about filming and recording during the meeting.

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2026-27

Cllr Haffenden, as current Vice Chair asked for nominations for Chair. Cllr Smith had given a written nomination for Cllr Robert Hubble, seconded by Cllr Day. Cllr Haffenden proposed Cllr Couch, seconded by Cllr Morley-Smith. A vote was taken by a show of hands and Cllr Couch was duly elected. He then signed the Declaration of Office of Chairman form and took the rest of the meeting.

2. ELECTION OF THE VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2026-27

Cllr Couch proposed Cllr Haffenden as Vice Chair for the year, this was seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED. There were no other nominations.

3. APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

- 3.1 Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council Members who cannot attend a meeting. These shall be tendered to the Parish Clerk prior to the meeting, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted. Apologies received from Cllr Nick Smith and KCC Cllr Chris Hespe. Cllr Hollingsbee and Cllr Martin were to arrive late as firstly attending another PC meeting.
- 3.2 Declaration of changes to the Register of Interests. There were none
- 3.3 To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda. In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers. There were none
- 3.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 3.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 11 MARCH 2026

The minutes from the previous meeting were proposed by Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Morley Smith and AGREED. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

ADJOURNMENT

There was none.

5. TRUSTEES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 2026-27

The following Trustee positions were appointed:

Trustee for Stelling Minnis Common Trust – Cllr Haffenden

Trustee for Stelling Minnis Village Hall – Cllr Day

Trustee for Stelling Minnis Windmill Trust – Cllr Morley -Smith

The following roles were AGREED for the year:

KALC – All Cllrs shared role

Planning – Cllr Hubble

Minnis Managers – Cllr Haffenden and Cllr Day

Highways – Cllr Hubble

Tree Warden – All Cllrs shared role

Footpath Warden – Jill Swan

Community Website – Cllr Smith

RFO – Clerk

Flag Officer – Cllr Hubble

6. CORRESPONDENCE

The following items of correspondence had been circulated to the Cllrs;

6.1 Age UK – Thanking for the £100 donation

6.2 Kent Air Ambulance Charity asking for a £400 donation. Cllr Haffenden proposed a £100 donation (to reflect what we put in the budget) this was seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED.

6.3 FHDC – invitation to a meeting with MP Sojan Joseph on 19th June. No representative to attend from SMPC.

6.4 FHDC – details of their precept deadlines for 2027-28. Which will mean the SMPC budget will need to be set and AGREED at the November meeting to meet their new timescales.

7. PLANNING

7.1 NOTED any relevant updates on planning

Cllr Hubble gave a brief update on the Bower Farm enforcement matter from FHDC.

7.2 NOTED planning applications received for consideration since the last meeting

26/0293/FH	Erection of a bungalow and detached garage Land lying northeast of Sandy Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AP	Objection submitted from SMPC
26/0463/FH	Single storey rear extension with roof terrace, glazed canopy and new front porch Windemere, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AG	No objections submitted from SMPC

7.3 NOTED decisions by the planning authority

26/0281/FH	Installation of a ground mounted 18 x solar panel array Apple Tree Farm, Mill Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AE	No objections from SMPC Approved by FHDC
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8. VILLAGE MATTERS

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

Cllr Day had allowed Kent Police to use the VH carpark for a speed related event and requested the subject of community speedwatch be raised. It was felt this could not be pursued any further at present due to a lack of volunteers and no access to equipment. When the scheme had been in operation previously the equipment had been loaned from another parish.

FHDC MEETING IN SMVH

Cllr Hubble had attended this meeting held in the hall on 2nd April, subjects discussed had included community energy and South Kent Food Partnership.

Cllr Martin and Cllr Hollingsbee arrived at 8.10pm

KENT INVICTA FLAG FOR FLAGPOLE

This item had been deferred from the March meeting for further discussion. Cllr Watts explained that it would be nice to have more than the two current flags to fly from the flagpole. There is a Kent day that it could be flown and on other occasions. Cllr Day mentioned that she had now repaired the Ukraine flag so this could now be flown again. The Council were happy for the Kent Invicta flag to be flown but were unsure about who should fund it. Cllr Watts volunteered to purchase the flag personally so it could be flown.

PROTECTION OF OAK BENCH OUTSIDE STELLING STORES

This matter was also deferred from the March meeting and since Cllr Hubble has put some concrete blocks in place as a temporary measure.

At the last meeting Cllr Haffenden was asked to speak with the Trustees of The Minnis and they had stated they didn't want anything positioned on the Minnis itself. For now the concrete blocks should remain as they were doing the job. The idea of positioning a single wooden post in the road to prevent vehicles driving round in a loop was discussed but it was felt this might hinder disabled customers. Cllr Watts suggested relocating the bench forward, this was felt to be the easiest solution, Cllr Haffenden would firstly speak to the shop owners and then would organise a working party to do the relocation with Cllr Watts if everyone was happy.

The state of the second bench was also raised by Cllr Hubble, Cllr Haffenden volunteered the use of his powerwasher, this could possibly be done at the same time as the relocation of the new bench.

ASH TREE SAFETY CONCERNS

Cllr Hubble had identified several dead Ash trees on Curtis Lane and one on Bossingham Road next to the VH. The one on Bossingham Road is very large and a dead branch fell onto the roadway recently. The clerk had previously reported the Curtis Lane ones to KCC highways but no works had been done. Clerk asked to write to KCC Highways regarding these trees and highlight the safety hazard to the highway should limbs break off into the public highway. Clerk asked for a photo to be taken of the Bossingham Road tree to aid the reporting.

9. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

APM to be held on 20 May at 7.30pm in the main hall. Reports from local groups have been invited and event advertised on Facebook. No refreshments to be served this year due to lack of attendance in previous years.

10. REPORTS

There were reports as follows:

10.1 Website/Facebook

No issues reported or observed with either website.

With the SMPC Facebook page a resident had suggested that comments should be allowed, the recent road closure notice that had been posted turned out not to be closed on those days, it was felt some disruption could have been avoided with comments allowed. Facebook page is not monitored 24/7 so comments to remain off, page is for information sharing only.

10.2 KCC

Cllr Hespe had send round his annual report which will be shared at next weeks APM.

10.3 FHDC

Cllr Martin and Cllr Hollingsbee's reports can be found under the Appendix at the end of Minutes.

10.4 SMVH

25th Anniversary event being held on Saturday 11th July 2-4pm

Heating has now been switched off for summer to conserve fuel bill

Committee is exploring possibilities of solar helping with heating going forward.

10.5 Windmill

Cllr Morley Smith had attended the recent AGM.

KCC are still planning to go ahead with divestment of windmills

10.6 The Minnis

The cattle are now out due to good dry conditions.

Community invited for open day walk on 29th May, advertised parish magazine, clerk to share on Facebook page.

10.7 Highways

Covered under tree safety concerns

11. AGAR 2025-26 & YEAR END ACCOUNTS

11.1 Financial Policies for review

- I. Reviewed SMPC Standing Orders (without amendment)
- II. Reviewed SMPC Financial Regulations (without amendment)
- III. Reviewed the SMPC Risk assessment
- IV. Reviewed the SMPC Fixed Asset register
- V. Reviewed the SMPC Ear Marked Reserves

The above policies were proposed by Cllr Haffenden, seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED.

11.2 RECEIVED the Internal Auditors Report for 2025-26 and NOTED any recommendations thereon. There were no recommendations highlighted.

11.3 RECEIVED, CONSIDERED & APPROVED the AGAR for the financial year ended 31st March 2026

- I. SMPC Accounts 2025-26
- II. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for consideration by Cllrs and signing by the Chairman, Comprising of the;
 - I. Exemption Certificate
 - II. Annual Governance Statement
 - III. Accounting Statements

This was proposed by Cllr Morley Smith, seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED. The necessary papers were signed by the Clerk and Chairman

12. FINANCE

- a. RENEWED the bank mandate for the use of Direct Debits (Unity Trust Bank. Hugo Fox, ICO) Proposed by Cllr Watts, seconded by Cllr Haffenden and AGREED.

- b. NOTED receipts of income

FHDC – 1 st precept payment	4711.50
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TOTALS £4711.50

- c. AUTHORISED PAYMENTS

Direct Debits noted

DD	Hugo Fox – monthly website fee Mar & Apr	23.98
DD	Hugo Fox – monthly email fee Mar & Apr	5.98
DD	Unity Trust – account charge Mar & Apr	14.00

TOTALS £43.96

Payments for authorisation

CHQ048	SMS CIS and payroll solutions – year end payroll	24.00
CHQ049	Clerks salary - April	317.00
CHQ050	Clerks expenses – postage & stationary	21.44
CHQ051	CPRE – annual subscription	36.00
CHQ052	KALC – annual subscription	375.71
CHQ053	Cllr N Smith – expenses (printing costs for noticeboard 25-26)	8.54
CHQ054	Zurich Insurance – annual PC insurance renewal	824.17
CHQ055	St Marys Stelling – grant for upkeep of closed churchyard 2026-27	200.00
CHQ056	Stelling Minnis Stores- grant for defib electricity usage	35.00
CHQ057	Stelling Minnis VH – grant for defib electricity usage	35.00
CHQ058	Hopkins – annual aftercare for 2 x defibrillators	498.96
CHQ059	Clerks salary - May	317.00
CHQ060	Lionel Robbins – internal audit 25-26	70.00
CHQ061	Clerk reimbursement of expenses (printer ink)	18.49
CHQ062	Anthony Hadlow – Strimming April	55.00

TOTALS £2,836.31

The above payments were proposed by Cllr Haffenden, seconded by Cllr Morley Smith and AGREED for payment.

- d. RECEIVED the bank reconciliation for the two accounts to 30 April 2026.

13. AOB FOR INFO ONLY

Cllr Morley Smith raised the issue of a rut being created in the verge of the Minnis that has been created by a horsebox repeatedly parking there, Cllr Haffenden would take a look on behalf of the Minnis.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Dates of future meetings: 20 May APM, 8 July, 9 September, 11 November 2026.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

APPENDIX REPORTS MAY

10.3

District Councillor report – May 2026

Community Funding

A package of funding has been agreed to help residents facing hardship, support the voluntary sector and to allow more people across the district to improve their physical health. Funding provided by central government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund has ended so this administration is providing grants to local organisations to enable them to continue support for vulnerable residents previously funded by central government.

As a significant step in addressing poor health outcomes in parts of the district, £75k has been allocated to increase activity levels and boost health and wellbeing.

Member's Ward Grant

The amount of the Ward Member grants is increasing to £5,000. Please contact me if you know of any community projects that need supporting.

Renters' Rights Act

Renting is changing and the council's private sector housing team has been working to get the message out to tenants, landlords and letting agents living and working in the private rented sector. The first phase of the Act, which came into force on 1 May, is tenancy reforms and details are published on the council website. The Act abolishes Section 21 'no fault' evictions. Landlords will no longer be able to service a notice without providing a valid reason for eviction.

Play areas

Work has now begun on installing new play area equipment in the Lower Leas Coastal Park in Folkestone. The project is due to complete before the start of the school summer holidays and the area will once again become the largest, free to use adventure playground in the south east.

Carton Recycling

Liquid cartons, including those made by Tetra Pak, can go in with other household recycling. All that is needed is for the carton to be rinsed and the cap left on.

Otterpool Park

On The 28th April F&HDC heard that KCC had granted permission for the Waste Water Treatment construction to take place at Otterpool Park. This is a very positive step along the way. The wastewater treatment plant is an essential part of the future of Otterpool. And is the key that unlocks the door.

Contact: Elaine.Martin@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

District Councillor Report – May 2026

Otterpool Park - the recently signed collaboration agreement with Homes England was reported at the last full Council Meeting. This agreement lasts until December 2026. It

was also said that one of the options to buy additional land had been executed by Homes England. However, detailed planning permission and planning for the Waste Water Treatment plant still need to be obtained.

Road of Remembrance - the Council has agreed to contribute £236,000 towards the work required to reopen the Road of Remembrance. The total cost is expected to be about £5 m.

Folkestone Sports Centre - A £2.4m grant which will enable the reopening of swimming facilities at Folkestone Sports Centre has been supported. Cabinet members have endorsed The Sports Trust's scheme to revitalise the Radnor Park Avenue site – agreeing to fund essential work including pool and changing room renovation, the addition of solar panels and repairs to the flat roof. Unfortunately, just recently I was very disappointed to hear about the vandalism that had taken place. It is certainly not what we want or expect, especially for an organisation trying to open a swimming pool that is so desperately needed in this district.

Hythe Swimming Pool – At the full Council Meeting on 1 April I asked about any planned (or unplanned) urgent works required for Hythe Pool prior to its closure for redevelopment or refurbishment. This was because there was a problem with water getting behind the pool lining and people had mentioned this to me. I was told that the pool lining leak had been resolved and that there will be routine maintenance but no major works planned.

Local government reorganisation — what a mess it is. There is so much work for our officers. I know it feels never-ending, and things are changing all the time. We are now waiting for the outcome on who we might partner with. From what we are hearing about Surrey, it could be anyone — it could be all over the place. We could even find ourselves paired with Swale, and what do we really have in common with Swale? But we will have to wait and see. There is still so much work to do. And when July comes, I believe the District Council will have about two weeks to organise the different work streams — the 11 groups that will be or have already been established to take forward some of that work

Road Closure - Temporary Road Closure - Lympne Hill, Lympne - 26th May 2

A road to avoid - Due to works planned to be undertaken by **Trooli Ltd**, it will be necessary to close part of Lympne Hill, Lympne, from 26th May 2026 with estimated completion by 29th May 2026.

Contact – jennyhollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk Mobile 07887918458