

**STELLING MINNIS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2023 HELD AT 7.30PM IN
STELLING MINNIS VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Parish Cllr Robert Hubble (Chairman)
Parish Cllr John Haffenden (Vice Chairman)
Parish Cllr Nick Smith
Parish Cllr Ann Day
Parish Cllr Garry Watts
Parish Cllr Sally Morley-Smith
Parish Cllr Max Couch
KCC Councillor Susan Carey (part of the meeting)
FHDC Councillor Elaine Martin (part of the meeting)

Lee Jones, Internal Auditor
Gail Hubbard, Clerk to the Council
There were three members of the public present.

The Chairman began by reading out the statement about filming and recording during the meeting then welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

- 1.1 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 District Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee (attending another meeting). District Cllr Martin & County Cllr Carey to arrive later as attending Stanford PC meeting first.
- 1.2 Declaration of changes to the Register of Interests. There were none
- 1.3 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. Cllr Day, Cllr Couch and Cllr Watts declared an interest in item 7.1 on the agenda as they are members of Stelling Minnis Village Hall Committee (they will not take part in the vote on that item).
- 1.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 1.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 12 JULY 2023

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

There was none.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES 2023-24

The following role had been rolled over from the May meeting:

KALC area committee – AGREED this should be a shared role. Clerk to circulate meeting details to all Cllrs in future.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

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

- 5.1 Victim Support Kent & Medway– request for funding. £25 had been donated last year by SMPC. Cllr Smith proposed we donate £50, this was seconded by Cllr Watts and AGREED.
- 5.2 KCC Community Warden Consultation – service has been asked to make cuts of £1 million by 2024-25. To achieve this they need to redesign the service, hence the consultation which finishes on 3rd October. <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/community-warden-service>

6. PLANNING

6.1 RECEIVED a presentation from residents on a future application/amendment to existing permission granted.

21/2319/FH Land to the rear of St Bernadettes Cottage

This land has now been sold by the original applicant, who obtained permission to develop the site. The new owners, long time residents of the village wish to alter the plans for what has been granted. This will still be two, three-bedroom chalet style dwellings but in a different style to suit their family needs.

Cllr Hollingsbee and Cllr Hubble had visited the site with the new owners and the proposed plans were shown to the councillors at the meeting.

SMPC would consider this application once it had been submitted via FHDC.

6.2 RECEIVED an update on the following COL application.

Y17/0143/CM Stuarts Lodge, South Lodge Road

Cllr Martin had received a response back from FHDC’s Enforcement Team Leader giving the latest situation on this case. The applicant had submitted an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) against the refusal of the application and FHDC are still awaiting a decision on that. At the moment it would be unreasonable for FHDC to take action over the enforcement notice until the above appeal has been determined and the appellant give a further reasonable period to comply should the appeal be dismissed.

6.3 DISCUSSED planning applications received for consideration since the last meeting

23/1067/FH	Retrospective application for siting of one static caravan and erection of barn Doghouse Farm, Stone Street, Petham, Canterbury CT4 5PU	SMPC objection to be logged by 14 Sept
23/1165/FH	First floor extension to the existing bungalow to create a two storey dwelling and the addition of a porch to the side elevation. York Dene, Curtis Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AE	SMPC no objections response logged.
23/1212/FH	Raised terrace, installation of new roof	Application removed

	coverings and photovoltaic panels, replacement windows and installation of patio doors. Jacaranda House, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AQ	awaiting revised edition.
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6.4 NOTED decisions by the planning authority since the last meeting

23/0799/FH	Single storey rear extension. Knowler Farm, Curtis Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AD	Approved with conditions 8/8/23
23/0881FH	Two storey rear extension Annexe Knowler Farm, Curtis Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AD	Approved with conditions 25/08/23

7. VILLAGE MATTERS

STELLING VILLAGE HALL SOLAR AND BROADBAND PROJECTS

A request had been received from the village hall for some of the parish CIL money for their solar panel project (part of the KCC Solar Together Project) and the installation of broadband into the hall. The request is for £8737 for the supply and installation of 12 solar panels c/w battery for the village hall and then for up to £649 for the installation of broadband into the hall. The broadband will allow full functionality/monitoring of the solar panels and be a very useful addition to the hall for those that hire it.

Cllr Haffenden proposed the full amount of £9,386.00 be awarded from the CIL monies for these two projects, the was seconded by Cllr Morley-Smith and this was AGREED. None of the hall committee members voted.

EV charge point still to be discussed by the VH Committee at their next meeting. Clerk to include on Nov agenda for update.

Cllr Martin arrived at 8.20pm.

VILLAGE SURVEY

Cllr Couch and Cllr Morley-Smith had been reviewing the responses received from last year's village survey. They had gone back to revisit the Village Appraisal document from 2008 and also looked again at the idea of a Neighbourhood Plan for the village. A neighbourhood plan had been considered previously but ruled out as not practical for SMPC, Cllr Couch concurred that this was what they has surmised from their research also. The original documents had now also been received back from ex Cllr Elizabeth Philips, these would be looked at in more depth and some suggestions for moving forward to be discussed at the next meeting.

Cllr Carey arrived at 8.30pm

HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP)

The proposed HIP had been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting; the order of suggestions against the Stone Street/Curtis Lane junction were amended and the addition of a request to make Curtis Lane 30mph in its entirety was added. Clerk to update and return to KCC Highways and Cllr Hubble before his meeting with the Highway Steward next week.

PHONE BOX

Cllr Smith updated the councillors on the progress to date. The shelves are now to be built for the back of the box, with a brace to prevent the shelves toppling forward.

Cllr Smith has created a proof for a plaque to be mounted inside the phone box, this has been circulated to Cllrs for comments. Mickle Creative have kindly offered to donate this plaque so Cllr Smith will arrange for this to be made and fitted.

LORRY FLY SHEET & FALLEN TREE ON CURTIS LANE

On the 24th August a lorry fly sheet and its metal frame caught in an oak tree on Curtis Lane, this was reported by Cllr Smith with the work requested to be carried out before the 18a school bus service resumed. This work was undertaken on Friday 1st September. Then on 2nd September a tree about 10m along the hedgerow from this incident fell across Curtis Lane, this was then also reported by Cllr Smith and Cllr Haffenden. It was cleared by a volunteer to keep the road open.

Letter to be written to KCC regarding the trees in this section of hedgerow asking for them to be inspected to verify their safety. Cllr Carey suggested she should also be involved in these types of issues as she might have been able to assist.

BUS SHELTER MAINTENANCE

Cllr Couch asked about the arrangements for the maintenance of the shelters. The shelters have been made using oak so it will weather down and the wood should not need any maintenance going forward. Cllr Hubble does also sweep the two shelters out on a regular basis.

SMPC WEBSITE WITH HUGO FOX

Notification had been received via KALC that Hugo Fox are to start charging for their Bronze website package, that up till now has been free for parish councils. No direct notification has yet been received but a date at the end of September was mentioned for ending the FOC site. Clerk asked for permission to, when the time comes sign up for the Bronze package at a cost of £9.99 plus VAT per month. This was AGREED.

8. REPORTS

Refer to Appendix A at end of minutes for the full reports.

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| 8.1 | Website/Facebook reports | Clerk/Cllr Smith |
| 8.2 | KCC Report | Cllr Carey |
| 8.3 | FHDC Report | Cllr Martin/Cllr Hollingsbee |
| 8.4 | Tree Warden | Cllr Smith |

The Chairman thanked Cllr Smith for his assistance to English Rural Housing regarding the Ash trees in Brambleton Close.

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| 8.5 | Stelling Minnis Hall | Cllr Couch |
| 8.6 | Windmill | Cllr Morley-Smith |

The fete had been well attended and the weather kind, in excess of £2000 had been made.

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| 8.7 | Minnis | Cllr Haffenden |
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Cattle are on their second rotation of the Minnis. Working parties due to start again soon.

9. FINANCE

9.1 NOTED the budget expenditure sheet to date.

9.2 NOTED receipts of income

None	0.00
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TOTALS £0.00

9.3 AUTHORISED payments

CHQ441	A Hadlow – strimming July (already paid)	55.00
CHQ442	A Hadlow – strimming August (already paid)	55.00
CHQ443	Clerks salary August	273.60
CHQ444	Clerks expenses reclaim – June/July/Aug	6.74
CHQ445	Dynamix – payroll services end of QTR	36.00
CHQ446	KALC – Cllr conference attendance Cllr Couch	84.00
CHQ447	HMRC PAYE for end of QTR (to be paid 29 th Sept)	205.20
CHQ448	Clerks salary September (to be paid 29 Sept)	273.60

TOTALS £989.14

The above payments were proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Haffenden so AGREED.

9.4 RECEIVED the bank reconciliation dated 31st August 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Dates of future meetings: 13 September, 8 November

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

APPENDIX A

SMPC REPORTS 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

PC Website

Updated to reflect new councillors and responsibilities.

Our website domain name www.stellingminnis.co.uk had expired (must have been linked to previous clerks own email address). Anyway now renewed and I just need to figure out how to link it back to our actual website (proving more tricky than I hoped so far!)

I have still not heard directly from Hugo Fox (our SMPC website provider) but from KALC that they are ceasing their free website from 20th September 2023. They will be offering three levels of website Bronze, Silver and Gold. I circulated the brochure showing what you get for those levels. To be honest the Bronze package at £9.99 a month is basically what we have now, I cannot see the benefit of paying anymore for the other levels.

As a parish council we do need to have our own website to cover transparency regulations - to display the Minutes, Agendas and financial year end information.

Gail Hubbard
Parish Clerk

Stelling Minnis Community web site report

Individual page maintenance and requested revisions made as required. Web site was down for 2 days at the end of July, server upgrade. Seems to be OK now.

FOSM page is not accessible – looks like it needs a re-write.

Nick Smith – Webmaster for the community site.
9 September 2023

Tree Warden Report

Luke Versteeg of English Rural Housing asked for advice on removal of what he says are diseased Ash Trees impacting the West end of the last block of properties. With assistance from F&HDC Cllr Elaine Martin I have made contact with the tree officer and suggested he contact Luke direct to discuss and advise accordingly. Luke made enquiries of the land registry and the land the trees are on has no registered owner!

A formal highways fault report was raised regarding the tarpaulin and frame wedged in a tree in Curtis Lane and for it to be removed before the 18A double deck school bus service resumed, although this had already been noted and surveyed by KCC Highways. The fault report resulted in the road being closed on Friday 1st September to remove the tarpaulin and frame.

Nick Smith – Tree Warden
5 September 2023

Phone Box

Re-painting of exterior of phone box has now been completed.

The original proposed use, promoted by ex Councillor Pam Carr, was to use it as a book exchange. The materials are with Anthony Hadlow, and I have been in contact with him to undertake the installation of shelves, with suitable bracing to prevent them from tipping over, He will add that to his schedule of works.

I circulated a draft wording of a suitable plaque – the only comment was that a date should be included. I did originally suggest an A5 plaque, but perhaps a A6 landscape plaque fitted to the shelf bracing would be more practical. Mickle Creative can manufacture the plaque.

Nick Smith
5 September 2023

Defibrillator training

Steve Moores has not responded to phone or e-mail requests to set up a training date. Will keep trying for something in the new year.

Nick Smith
5 September 2023

KCC Councillor Report

13 September 2023 report for Stelling Minnis Parish Council meeting

I was pleased to see how well supported the Windmill fete was on 02 September. Jenny Hollingsbee and I also enjoyed the Film Club in July and it's good to see so many activities in the parish and contributions to the village newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who's taken part in recent consultations particularly on the priorities for next year's budget. Current consultations include one on the Community Wardens another on Domestic Abuse and the Local Transport Plan for Kent. Consultations are not referendums but their results are considered in shaping policy or making decisions. See letstalkkent.gov.uk or you can ask for printed copy from a library.

KCC is facing a budget crisis in social care and in the costs of transport for children with Special Educational Needs. Inflation is a big part of the problem but so too is rising demand especially in areas such as Mental Health. A special meeting on 05 October will consider emergency measures to reduce costs in these areas but it's likely we will need to make savings more widely to avoid bankruptcy.

To make matters worse, the situation with Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) arriving in Kent continues to present an enormous challenge to KCC. The numbers involved are far beyond the resources of any single council and the National Transfer Scheme which shares UASC to other councils remains voluntary and slow. KCC's Children's Services were judged as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted but they simply can't cope with the scale of the problem we face. We

expect to receive financial recompense from the Government for the costs involved and wait for the outcome of various court cases on the matter.

KCC's Plan Bee, Pollinator Action Plan, has won a Government award - the 'Bees Needs'. Plan Bee has led to changes in how KCC manages its estate and has inspired other landowners to help pollinators as well.

Our pollinators face a threat from Asian hornets which have been sighted here in Kent. They have an orange face, their lower legs are yellow and their abdomen is dark except for one orange band. They are larger than a wasp and can eat between 30 – 50 honey bees a day. DEFRA are trying to find and eradicate their nests before their young hatch at the end of October. They have been found (and destroyed) in Etchinghill and Hawkinge. Please report any sightings to nonnativespecies.org

There's further news on Environment matters from KCC in my newsletter as KCC's Cabinet Member for Environment which was issued earlier this week.

Susan Carey

Member for Elham Valley, Kent County Council

District Councillor Report

Stagecoach has implemented a set of wide ranging and savage cuts to local bus services across the district. A combination of service reduction and service removal. When I last reported, you may recall, Stagecoach had claimed their service reduction would be subject to additional subsidies being negotiated with KCC. KCC themselves need to make a £57 million pound reduction in their budget, so it was hardly surprising that very few additional subsidies were granted to Stagecoach. The implementation of these cuts in services has been incompetently managed causing a great deal of stress and disruption for people in the district. Many bus stops are still displaying timetables for services that are no longer running. Please check the Stagecoach website (<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables>) for up to date timetables.

The savings Stagecoach hope to achieve by cutting services are centered around the permanent closure of the Cheriton Road Bus Depot and reducing staff numbers by 15%. Unsurprisingly, when Stagecoach offered staff a redundancy option as opposed to travelling to Ashford or Dover, most of the drivers accepted the redundancy package and Stagecoach now has a massive driver shortage.

Great news -In the next couple of weeks there will be an opportunity to apply for a grant from the Rural England Prosperity Fund. F&HDC were awarded £570k grant to be used between 2023 and 2025. Briefly, the grants are a minimum of £3,000 and a maximum of £30,000 and will need to be match funded. Businesses will need to match fund a minimum of 25% of the grant and community groups a minimum of 10%. When the details are confirmed, on what the grant can be used for and how to apply, they will be placed on the Folkestone Works website (<https://folkestone.works/>).

Folkestone and Hythe District Councillors who represent rural wards held a meeting on the 2nd September to discuss the issues facing those communities and how the District Council can best support them. Topics discussed included how best community groups with shared interests could connect and share ideas, routes for getting people involved in their communities and having a voice in the district council for rural areas. We are hoping to arrange a forum to explore these important issues further.

At the Rural Initiatives meeting we held one of the participants wanted better communication between the Parish Councils. There are already quarterly Joint Parish Council meetings held with the District Council. These take place online and the next meeting is on 14th September. The meeting can be viewed via the live stream on YouTube: bit.ly/YouTubeMeetings

There was a well-attended public consultation workshop held for phase 1b held in Sellindge Village Hall on Saturday. The feedback I received on the day was, although all communications welcomed, the endless questions on a post-it note format was frustrating for residents who wanted answers.

The review of the Otterpool Park project is continuing. The Governance report has been received and the recommendations are being implemented. The Financial report has been received and the recommendations are being discussed. The third element, Management Review, is ongoing.

F&HDC are predicting a £4.5million deficit for next year and there is likely to be a reduction in services to save money. Consultations are ongoing, all front-line services and statutory services will be fully protected. I'll provide further updates when available.

Finally, there has been an Asian Hornet nest found in the woods on Hospital Hill in Hythe. DEFRA were contacted and the nest was destroyed. Asian Hornets are a highly aggressive non-native predator of native insects. They pose a threat to honeybees and other pollinators. The number of sightings of the Asian Hornet is increasing and I have given the Parish Council a leaflet detailing what the Asian Hornet looks like and what you should do if you see one.

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

District Councillor Report

**Cllr Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee – Contact jenny.hollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk
Mobile 07887918458 Twitter @jennyhollingsbe**

Planning – I have received a number of enquiries on planning issues throughout the Ward recently and have visited a number of sites. If you have an issue with a planning application please do let me know.

Windmill Fete – what a lovely day and event. It was great to meet some ex colleagues and enjoy the cream team and learn to do some lace making! My grandson is enjoying his ‘Gramps’ book signed by the author Louise Peregrina! Well done to the team.

Waste service - A report by East Kent Audit Partnership has identified that some aspects of the District’s street cleansing service need to improve, particularly in relation to town centres and busier areas of the district. This has resulted in a number of improvements being recommended in a report being considered by the Audit & Governance Committee today.

Otterpool Park – the bore holing taking place on the A20 is to identify where there are utility channels or other underground services. On 8 September, I joined the Design Team for Phase 1b (Barrow Hill Sellindge) on a tour of the area surrounding the site and pointed out some of the characteristics and issues for the Villages. I joined the morning session of the Planning Day last Saturday and will attend the feedback session on 20 September at Westenhanger Castle.

Just a reminder to sign up to ‘My Community Voice’. My Community Voice is a messaging service that helps Kent and Medway residents, businesses, and community groups to keep in touch with their local policing teams. The service sends updates about your local area directly from the police officers themselves. My Community Voice is more than just a messaging service; it allows you to reply to the alerts sent to you, share information and tell Officers about the issues affecting you.

Please also do sign-up to ‘My Account’ www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk to report issues as it is an easier and quicker way to interact with the District Council. It is very useful to report fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, damage to directional signs etc.

Ward Budget – please do contact me if any organization is looking for small amounts of funding.