

**STELLING MINNIS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 8 JULY 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
Parish Cllr Nick Smith

Gail Hubbard, Clerk to the Council
There were six members of the public present.

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

14. APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

- 14.1 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 FHDC Cllr Martin and KCC Cllr Hespe.
- 14.2 Declaration of changes to the Register of Interests. There were none
- 14.3 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
- 14.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 14.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

15. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13 MAY 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.

16. CORRESPONDENCE

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

16.1 FHDC – Electoral Services – change in legislation from 29 June will mean Cllrs home addresses are redacted from DPI forms (FHDC will do this automatically). It was noted the clerk had received a request from the FHDC Monitoring Officer for some updated DPI forms, this request had been passed to the relevant Cllrs for action.

16.2 FHDC – Local Plan Timetable and Notice of Intention to Commence Local Plan preparation.

16.3 FHDC – Draft Statement of Licensing Policy 2026-2031 – consultation live 29 June-23 Aug

16.4 KCC Highways – Advising they are pausing all HIP parish meetings for 12 weeks, fortunately SMPC only had a HIP review in March so will not be due till next year now.

17. PLANNING

17.1 NOTED any relevant updates on planning

There were none.

17.2 DISCUSSED any planning applications received for consideration

26/0825/FH	Erection of agricultural building South Lodge Farm, South Lodge Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6BL	No objection to be submitted by SMPC
26/0895/FH & 26/0909/FH Listed consent	Erection of a porch, addition of vents, replacement double glazed timber windows, enlargement of windows to kitchen and garden room, lowering of external ground level, removal of chimney, rainwater goods to be replaced with cast iron, removal of render from south west elevation, installation of cast iron air bricks and repairs to roof using reclaimed tiles and replacement of defective roof timbers to main dwelling. Installation of PV panels to detached outbuilding. Coxsole Farm, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AQ	Recommend approve to be submitted by SMPC

17.3 NOTED applications considered since the last meeting

26/0767/FH	Listed building consent for replacement of existing timber windows with double glazed timber windows. Yew Tree Cottage, Stone Street, Petham CT4 5PU	No objections from SMPC
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17.4 NOTED decisions by the planning authority

26/0293/FH	Erection of a bungalow and detached garage Land lying NE of Sandy Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AP	Refused
26/0878/FH	Listed building consent for the erection of an agricultural building South Lodge Farm, South Lodge Rd, Stelling Minnis CT4 6BL	Withdrawn
26/0463/FH	Single storey rear extension with rood terrace, glazed canopy and new front porch Windemere, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AG	Approved

18. VILLAGE MATTERS

STELLING MINNIS WINDMILL

Windmill Trustees, Cara Cooper, Shelagh Carter and Laszlo Dudas were present and updated the meeting on the current situation with the KCC divestment of their windmills.

Following receipt of the letter from FHDC advising notification from KCC of the intended sale of the Stelling Minnis Windmill, which is listed as an Asset of Community Value

(ACV). A period to 26th June at 12.10pm was given for any expressions of interest to buy the asset, if an expression is received by this deadline a six-month moratorium period will be triggered (dated from 15th May 2026).

On 18th June The Stelling Minnis Mill and Museum Trust wrote to KCC and FHDC with an expression of interest to bid, thus triggering this six-month extension to the timescales. Cara thanked Lazlo for all his work on this expression of interest. He is now pulling together the running costs and maintenance costs to prepare a draft business plan. The Trustees are also keen to obtain a full condition report and a bottom-line figure.

Full ownership however in this format is not what the current Mill Trustees want, they do not want this level of responsibility they are hoping for a Community Asset Transfer, with a lease for a set number of years. The costs involved with outright ownership would be huge, an annual insurance policy could cost anywhere between £8,000-£15,000 per year, alone due to the listed nature of the Mill. With a Community Asset Transfer, KCC would retain ownership so the Mill would remain covered under there umbrella insurance policy. The Trustees have been advised that KCC currently have no policy for a Community Asset Transfer.

The National Trust would not be interested without a large amount of money to fund for the foreseeable future.

Due to the close proximity to neighbours the type of events that could be held at the Mill to raise revenue are limited.

Cllr Day suggested that neighbouring villages could be approached for funding and Cllr Watts suggested another councillor get together as was held previously as a forum to ask for support.

Clerk to write to KCC on behalf of SMPC giving our support for the Trustee's preferred choice of a Community Asset Transfer rather than full ownership under the Asset of Community Value process.

The Chairman thanked the Trustees for the update and all their work so far on this.

COMMUNITY FARM AT KNOWLER FARM

Bee Gifford from Knowler farm was in attendance to give an update on the Community Farm and other activities happening at Knowler Farm. They have been awarded a grant from the FHDC Prosperity fund for a community farm initiative, a small holding that will be free and accessible for all to use. They have had a polytunnel donated to act as a growing space and a cabin which can be used as a community space.

Aiming for the Farm to be sustainable:

Composting all waste, using animal waste, wildlife ponds added for natural overflow

Renewable energy options are being explored for the farm – Solar/small wind turbines

Tree planting – last year 200 trees were planted on the farm

Other areas of involvement include:

Outdoor education, specialising in children with additional needs

Partnership with Canterbury Food Bank

Attending Kent Show

Working with Fifth Trust

Working with a Dementia support group

Setting up their own young farmers group

The Chairman thanked Bee for coming along and updating the Council on this project.

SMPC DEFIBRILLATORS

A report had been received from Hopkins Training and Support, who look after the parishes two defibrillators highlighting options for necessary replacement of equipment. The hall defibrillator needs a replacement battery and pads next month at a cost of £443 plus VAT. The defibrillator is now over 18 years old and outside any warranty, it continues to pass operation checks but will have aged over time. A replacement defibrillator could be supplied for £895 plus VAT. The shop defibrillator needs replacement pads next month at a cost of £59.35 plus VAT. This unit is over 15 years old but the battery is good for another year yet.

When the budget was set in January money was set side from CIL for the replacement of one defibrillator this year with the plan to then replace the other the following year. Cllr Day proposed that the hall defibrillator be replaced at a cost of £895 plus VAT from CIL monies, this was seconded by Cllr Morley-Smith and AGREED.

19. KFRS CONSULATION

The clerk advised that this public consultation has now been deferred whilst Kent Fire and Rescue Authority meet to decide whether to launch the formal 12-week survey.

20. REPORTS

There were reports as follows:

20.1 Website/Facebook

Currently all up to date and working as should.

20.2 KCC

Cllr Hespe's brief update can be found under the Appendix

20.3 FHDC

Cllr Martin's report can be found under the Appendix

20.4 SMVH

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

Cllr Day is continuing with fundraising events, with a bingo evening at the Rose and a new QR code banner to be launched as a replacement roof fund 'sponsor a tile'

A website that will allow booking for the hall is also being constructed.

20.5 The Minnis

Cllr Haffenden reported the walk had been well attended at the end of May. One dog poo bin is in place with 3 further to be installed.

20.6 Highways

Cllr Hubble reported that the pothole in lower Curtis Lane had now been filled and the rutting by the field half filled. The dead Ash tree on Bossingham Road had now been felled, following his communications with highways, which included an officer attending to inspect the tree and issuing documentation to the landowner to fell the tree. The Chairman thanked Cllr Hubble for pursuing this on behalf of the council.

21. FINANCE

- a. NOTED the CIL report for 2025-26 prepared by the clerk, submitted to FHDC and published on the website with a remaining balance of £2,022.48.
- b. AGREED to accept the kind donation offered by Bossingham Preschool Committee (following the winding up of the charitable company), clerk to provide bank details as requested, amount unknown at present.

c. NOTED receipts of income

None	0.00
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TOTALS £0.00

d. AUTHORISED PAYMENTS

Direct Debits to note

DD	Hugo Fox – monthly website fee May & June	23.98
DD	Hugo Fox – monthly email fee May & June	5.98
DD	ICO – Data protection annual renewal	47.00
DD	Unity Trust – CHQ cancellation fee	8.00
DD	Unity Trust – account charge May & June	12.00

TOTALS £98.96

Payments for authorisation

BACS	SMS & CIS Payroll – payroll for 1 st QTR (already paid)	36.00
BACS	Clerks reimbursement for expenditure (MS Office renews from Clerks CC) (already paid)	84.99
BACS	Clerks salary June (already paid)	317.00
BACS	HMRC – PAYE for 1 st QTR (already paid)	237.60
CHQ063	KSS Air Ambulance Charity – annual donation 26-27	100.00
BACS	Clerks wages July (to be paid 31 July)	317.00
BACS	HMRC – PAYE July (to be paid 31 July)	79.20
BACS	Anthony Hadlow – strimming May & June	110.00

TOTALS £1,281.79

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

e. RECEIVED the bank reconciliation for the two accounts to 30 June 2026 and the budget expenditure report for the 1st Quarter.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.

Dates of future meetings: 9 September, 11 November 2026.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

APPENDIX REPORTS JULY

20.2

KCC Councillor – Cllr Chris Hespe

Brief update

We are expecting to hear the government's decision on the structure of local government reorganisation in Kent on 16 July. This will have a far-reaching consequence on Kent and the services provided currently. With the new Prime Minister envisaged to commence around that time, the government may believe that any decision should have his blessing. So far, he has spoken about devolution rather than local reorganisation, so

it really could mean anything. Personally, I wouldn't be surprised if the announcement was delayed.

KCC has opened its consultation on how it should spend its budget next year, what savings it should make, what services should be a priority, etc. I would welcome all parishioners taking part in this consultation to help determine their services. The consultation can be found on the KCC website and at libraries.

Christopher.hespe@kent.gov.uk

20.3

District Councillor – Cllr Elaine Martin

Otterpool Park

Otterpool Park LLP held a Public exhibition at Sellindge Village Hall on Wednesday 24 June. The Exhibition was to update the public on the next steps for Otterpool Park. The council resolved to grant planning permission for Otterpool Park in 2023 and several elements have progressed. The exhibition covered the changes at Otterpool Park. Homes England have purchased Hillcrest Farm which is close to Westenhanger station. They are planning to develop the southern end of the site for the delivery of the first homes there with an access road coming off the A20.

Green Grants

The Green Grants scheme has been launched again and is open for applications. A £250,000 package of support for organisations to deliver sustainable and carbon reducing projects in the Folkestone and Hythe district has been agreed. Applications for four categories of funding and bids have to be received by Friday 17 July. Applications can be made on the [Folkestone Works](#) website.

Neighbourhood Inspection

On the 25th June I attended the Neighbourhood Inspection of Council owned properties with a member of the Housing Team and a representative from Mears. This inspection included those in Stelling Minnis. The general state of repairs of the properties we gained access to was good the only issues mentioned several times was the cutting of the verges. It was pointed out that this was now done by KCC>

North Downs Forum

At the last North Downs Forum meeting we had a talk by Michaela Luckett, the Good Neighbours Service Co-Ordinator at Kent Coast Volunteering. Their volunteer befrienders contact lonely people experiencing social isolation in the south coast area including the North Downs. They also provide transport for people to get to appointments. They are looking for volunteer drivers and volunteers with some time to spare to contact clients on a regular basis. They can also be contacted if you know someone who would like to use their Good Neighbour service or require transport to attend appointments. Please call 01304 367898 if you can volunteer or know anyone who would like their help. The next meeting is being held at Knowler Farm on the 24th September when the topic will focus on producing food for your own use.

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.

Accommodation for Homeless people

F&HDC has bought a block of new flats to help residents facing homelessness. The flats in central Folkestone, are to provide short-term housing for families facing the crisis of having nowhere to live. The eight two-bedroomed flats, have been designed to offer safe, modern and energy efficient accommodation. Each flat is fully self-contained, giving residents privacy and stability while they wait to move into permanent housing. The purchase is part of the council's pledge to invest £5 million in supporting residents and reducing costs by expanding its supply of council owned flats to be used for temporary accommodation. This reduces the cost of using private, nightly-let short-term accommodation.

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