

**STELLING MINNIS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2025 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 Nick Smith
Parish Cllr Robert Hubble
Parish Cllr Garry Watts
Parish Cllr Sally Morley-Smith
FHDC Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee (for part of the meeting)

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.

21. APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

- 13.1 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 Elaine Martin and Cllr Chris Hespe. Cllr Hollingsbee to arrive late (attending another meeting first).
- 13.2 Declaration of changes to the Register of Interests. There were none
- 13.3 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 and Cllr Watts declared an interest in the Village Hall as both are committee members.
- 13.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 13.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

22. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 18 JUNE 2025

The draft minutes from the previous meeting on 18 June had been updated to correctly reflect the attendees and were then proposed by Cllr Haffenden, seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED as record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

23. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The clerk had written to the Rose Lane Management Committee following the discussions at the June meeting and had spoken on the phone to one of the Directors, who had promised to raise the councils concerns over the buffer zone at the annual shareholders meeting which was in July. The Clerk had also forwarded over some documents that might be of use like the S106 and detail of the Ecological Mitigation Plan which can be found on the FHDC planning site. Other than making the committee aware of the rules in place for the buffer zone the council has no power in this area as FHDC are the planning authority and would deal with any enforcement issues.

ADJOURNMENT

There was none.

24. CORRESPONDENCE

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

- KALC – latest newsletter – circulated to Cllrs

25. PLANNING

24.1 DISCUSSED new planning applications received

25/1575/FH	Listed building consent for replacement roof to cart shed. Stelling Lodge Farm, Church Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 5PS	No objection from SMPC
25/1426/FH	Listed building consent for the partial reconstruction and repairs to cart shed, reconstruction of south and part of east walls, renewal of corrugated iron roof and addition of cast iron rainwater goods.	No objection from SMPC
25/1506/FH	Conversion of existing detached garage into annexe. Yew Tree Cottage, Stone Street, Petham CT4 5PU	No objection from SMPC on proviso that it can only be used in conjunction with the main dwelling.

24.2 NOTED planning applications considered since last meeting

25/1310/FH	Detached dwelling with carport and landscaping Land east of Sunrise, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AQ	No objections from SMPC logged Cllr Hubble introduced the applicants to the council and briefly explained the plans. Applicants have meeting arranged with Minnis owners to discuss access.
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24.4 NOTED decisions by the planning authority.

25/0659/FH	Erection of a dingle storey pool house Doghouse Farm, Stone Street, Petham CT4 5PU	APPEAL lodged APP/L2250/D/25/3370841
25/0589/FH	Replacement of flat roofed areas and installation of solar panels. Almond Tree Cottage, Curtis Lane CT4 6AE	APPROVED by FHDC 18/06/25

Cllr Hollingsbee arrived at 8pm.

26. VILLAGE MATTERS

REPLACEMENT BENCH

Cllr Smith had sourced an oak bench for outside the shop and had managed to secure a good discount for SMPC at a final cost of £1143.75 incl VAT. The words 'purchased by the parish council for the community' will be engraved on the back rest. Cllr Smith had arranged with Anthony Hadlow to fit the bench at no cost.

It was proposed by Cllr Day, seconded by Cllr Haffenden that the bench be ordered and installed outside the shop, this was AGREED.

ST MARYS CHURCH STELLING FUNDING REQUEST

A request for £1000 grant had been made by St Marys Church Stelling towards their kitchen refurbishment project. The church have already been given second hand wall units and door and drawer fronts to use. The request for £1000 would cover the cost of the base carcass units, installation labour, worktops and a limewash paint for the walls.

The council discussed the application and felt that SMPC should not be funding 100% of the costs of the project, this is not something they would normally do. There was also some questions raised over the current state of the fabric of the building and where monies should maybe be prioritised. Cllr Haffenden suggested a contribution was made once the kitchen work is complete.

Cllr Watts made an initial proposal of a donation of £200. Cllr Couch then proposed that once the kitchen is finished that SMPC give a donation of £250.00 for the project, this was seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED.

EV CHARGING POINTS

The clerk had checked and the current KCC LEVI (Local electric vehicle infrastructure) fund is more about on street chargers rather than those in carparks. The original funding scheme that would have involved the VH carpark had been organised via KCC and Connected Kerb but this is not currently open. Keep an eye on any opportunities as currently no grant scheme available but this might change again going forward.

HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP)

Cllr Hubble gave a brief update on the current HIP and items on the list. The 30mph roundels and terminal enhancements throughout the 30mph sections of the village had been done last year from the HIP.

The main concern is the speed on Curtis Road, from the end of the 30mph to Stone Street, it's very narrow and unsuitable for driving at speed. KCC Highways were not in support of our request to extend the 30mph to Stone Street and removed this from our HIP. It was felt we should again ask for this to be reviewed and if not 30mph could it be 40mph as this would be better than the current national limit on this stretch. Also request for 20mph through the village. Clerk to update and send to Highways officer.

COMMUNITY WEBSITE

This has been provided without charge by a former resident for a number of years, he has changed providers and now the site is now running at a much faster speed. There may be a cost implication for SMPC going forward. SMPC will need to consider whether they continue with this site or just rely PC website.

WELCOME PACKS

The main wording for the pack is in Word format so can easily be updated, rather than an expensive printed folder the clerk suggested she create an A4 front page to go onto the Word document and run off a number of these periodically and provide to Cllr Day to deliver to new residents. The Clerk would re-register for the electoral updates from

FHDC so she should receive notification of when people move into the parish so she can advise Cllr Day. Cllr Watts also suggested that a digital version could also be made available on the website and emailed out to people.

The creation of more glossy folders could be reconsidered when we receive further CIL funds from FHDC.

27. PARISH COUNCIL FUTURE PLANS

The Chairman wanted Cllrs to think about what they would like to achieve over the next twelve months. The following items were suggested:

- Bike hoops/stands for outside the shop
- Increasing the turnout for the APM
- Would like to encourage the return of the Windmill fete
- Increase the PC digital presence

28. REPORTS

The full reports can be found in the Appendix at the end of the minutes.

28.1	Website report	Cllr Smith
28.2	Kent County Council	Cllr Hespe
28.3	FHDC Council	Cllr Hollingsbee
28.4	Stelling Minnis Tree Warden	Cllr Smith
28.5	Village Hall	Cllr Couch/Cllr Day
28.6	The Windmill	Cllr Morley-Smith

29. FINANCE

29.1 It was proposed by Cllr Haffenden and seconded by Cllr Day and AGREED that the clerk be awarded the Local Government Services pay agreement 2025-26 backdated to 1st April 2025.

29.2 NOTED receipts of income

HMRC – 2024-25 VAT reclaim	159.00
TOTALS	£159.00

29.3 AUTHORISED payments

Direct Debits to note

DD	Hugo Fox – monthly website fee July & August	23.98
DD	Unity Trust – account charge July & August	12.00
TOTALS		£25.98

Payments for authorisation

CHQ025	Anthony Hadlow – strimming July	55.00
CHQ026	Clerks salary July	299.60
CHQ027	Clerks salary August	299.40
CHQ028	Anthony Hadlow – strimming August	55.00
CHQ029	SMS CIS Payroll solutions – payroll for Qtr	36.00
CHQ030	Cllr Nick Smith – reimbursement for replacement bench to be ordered after approval at this meeting	1143.75
CHQ031	Clerks salary September (to be paid 30 th)	299.40
CHQ032	HMRC – PAYE for 2 nd QTR (to be paid 30 th)	224.60
TOTALS		£2,412.75

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

29.4 RECEIVED the bank reconciliation to 31 August 2025

29.5 RECEIVED the budget expenditure report to 31st August 2025

30. AGREED the meeting dates for 2026:

14th January 2026

11th March 2026

13th May 2026 – Statutory Annual Meeting

20th May 2026 - Annual Parish Meeting

8th July 2026

9th September 2026

11th November 2026

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Dates of future meetings: 12 November 2025.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

SMPC REPORTS 10 SEPTEMBER 2025

28.1 Community Web Site

Community web site has now been restored. The upload facility now works better and faster. The host provider has said that it was now more expensive and he will see how things go, but may have to start making a charge. Currently the web site is provided at no cost to the Parish Council or community by Terabyte-computing.

If a charge is made then Parish Council will have to make a decision on the future of the site.

Nick Smith

28.2 Kent County Councillor Update Report – Cllr Chris Hespe

Local Government Reorganisation

Kent's Leaders from the district councils and KCC met on 3 September 2025 to determine which of seven options for the future structure of local government in Kent should go forward for detailed appraisal by consultants KPMG. The districts selected an option involving three unitary authorities and one with four unitaries to be appraised. KCC's option was not favoured by the districts. KCC will now commit to undertaking a detailed business case for its favoured model, which it believes will compare well against the other two options. The KCC option involves the creation of one Unitary Council ('Kent Council') that includes three Area Assemblies. In addition, there would be Parish, Town or Community Councils at local level. With this option, there would be no need for a Strategic

Mayoral Authority. Hence, this proposal would be less expensive, easier to establish and have a mix of local and strategic capability compared to the other options. It would also have only two tiers, rather than the three tiers being put forward by districts.

Submissions from Kent are due to be made to government by 28 November. KCC is keen to consult widely on the proposals. Every one of Kent's district council Leaders stated or voted that they did not wish the joint consultation to ask whether the public and stakeholders believe there is a need for major restructure of local government in Kent; whether cost should be a major consideration in any restructure, and whether Kent residents would be prepared to pay more in Council Tax due to reorganisation. These questions will be asked by KCC as a core part of its consultation.

Road Repairs

KCC has earmarked £67 million for new road repairs, including carrying out a record number of pothole repairs. Recent road repairs and resurfacing works in Elham Valley have included Spitfire Way, Hawkinge, the High Street in Etchinghill, and a section of Stone Street (B2086) near Petham.

KCC Budget Consultation

Please do take part in the consultation regarding the KCC budget for 2026/27. Currently, it looks as though KCC will have to find a further £50 million in savings and income in that year to balance the books. The public is being asked where savings should be made and which services should be protected. The consultation ends on 29 September 2025.

Home to School Transport for Special Needs Children

New software is being implemented to simplify journey planning and make savings where possible.

Women and Girls Safety Partnership

KCC is establishing a new working relationship with the organisation with a number of initiatives being planned to make our streets safer for women and girls in Kent.

Savings

KCC has announced more than £40 million of new savings from its future spend, in addition to £45 million of revenue savings achieved to date in 2025/26 and debt reduction of £16 million, following the difficult financial position that the new Reform administration inherited from the outgoing administration at

County Hall.

Property and Land Disposals

KCC has a legal duty to dispose of any land and property that is surplus to its needs. KCC is stepping up its disposals work in order to strengthen its reserves.

Small Member Community Grants

Small grants in the region of £250 to £500 are available for community events and activities. Voluntary sector and not-for-profit organisations who wish to explore whether they could receive a grant should contact Christopher Hespe on

Christopher.Hespe@kent.gov.uk

28.3 District Councillor Report – Cllr Jenny Hollingsbee

Folkestone – A Brighter Future - As you probably know Bouverie Square is returning to its former use as a garden square and a new linear bus station is being created. The current Folkestone bus station will close on Saturday 20 September. To minimise service disruption temporary bus stops will operate from 21 September while this work is completed. Stagecoach has created a diagram displaying the positions of these new temporary stops and the routes using them. You can view this diagram and find out more about bus services on the dedicated page on the Stagecoach website.

Stelling Minnis Windmill – the Windmill’s restoration is nearing the end of its 2 year refurbishment and is included in the Folkestone and Hythe Heritage Open Day festivals. The Windmill will be open as usual on Sunday 21 September from 12:00 noon until 17:00 as part of the Heritage Open Day festival. There will be the usual cream teas and tours around the Windmill and subject to weather a few classic cars! For further information visit [Stelling Minnis Windmill - Celebrating recent major refurbishment and almost 50 Years of being open to the public!](#)

Local Government Re-organisation –

At a recent meeting the fourteen Kent Leaders, or their nominated representatives, met virtually to agree which two LGR models should be worked up to full business cases by November. Following extensive analysis of the seven potential models that had been short-listed from the long-list of ten, two models were agreed by consensus to progress:

- The 3 unitary authority model – which puts F&H district in the East cluster with Canterbury, Thanet, Dover and Ashford (known as the 3a model); and
- A 4 unitary authority model – which puts F&H district with Ashford and Swale (known as the 4b model).

Other models of different configurations were proposed and discussed but did not have support from the majority to progress through the collaborative workstream co-ordinated by KPMG. However, Medway and Kent Councils, (at their own expense) have decided to put forward their own specific models for analysis.

Annual Canvass

Residents will be receiving an email or a paper form to check that their details on the electoral register are up to date, following the launch of the canvass for 2025. Those required to respond will receive email and telephone reminders or a house call in October and November from an electoral canvasser.

jennyhollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

28.4 Tree warden report

One resident reported a possible infringement of the hedge cutting regulations and it looked like plans were being made to cut hedge before the 1st September.

I did look into the regulations, and whilst commercial (farms etc.) hedge cutting cannot be undertaken Between March and the end of August, except for visibility and safety reasons, those rules do not apply to residential hedges including those on the roadside – however the wildlife restrictions (nesting birds etc.) do still apply to all hedge cutting activities.

In the instance reported the concerned resident did come back to me as there was in the end no problems.

Nick Smith

28.5 Stelling Minnis Village Hall

Cllr Couch reported that the roof repairs had been carried out. Cllr Day mentioned the Bingo night being held in the Rose & Crown on 7th November to raise funds for the hall. There is also a Witches and Warlocks fundraiser on 24th October.

28.6 Stelling Minnis Windmill

Cllr Morley-Smith reported that the sweeps and fantail are now backup on the mill, with the works expected to be complete by Saturday. Sunday 21st September is a heritage open day. Hopefully now the sweeps are no longer in the field they will be able to resurrect the fete for next year.