

**STELLING MINNIS PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 8 NOVEMBER 2023 HELD AT 7.30PM IN STELLING
MINNIS VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Parish Cllr Robert Hubble (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
FHDC Councillor Jenny Hollingsbee
FHDC Councillor Elaine Martin

Gail Hubbard, Clerk to the Council
There was one member 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 Cllr John Haffenden (holiday) and Lee Jones (PC Internal Auditor).
- 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. There were none.
- 1.4 Requests for Dispensations. There were none.
- 1.5 Declarations of Lobbying. There were none.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

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

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

There was none.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

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

4.1 KALC – invitation to Cllrs for this years AGM on Sat 18th November (circulated).

4.2 Slow Ways – National walking network (circulated) To also be passed onto our footpath warden for information.

4.3 Rural England Prosperity fund – Rural Grant Scheme - Funding opportunity for rural businesses and communities (circulated). Also shared with SMVH as might be useful to them.

5. PLANNING

5.1 RECEIVED a presentation from resident, Mr Whitehead on a current application:

23/1598/FH – Sandgath, Sandy Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6DR

Two-storey side and rear extension, solar panels on the workshop roof.

Plans were shown to Cllrs of the proposals and it was explained the extension will be clad in larch that should weather nicely.

Mr Whitehead left the meeting at 7.45pm.

5.2 RECEIVED an update on 21/1777/FH – White Cottage, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AQ for the erection of 1 detached dwelling following the demolition of the garage.

The Chairman had attended the Planning Committee meeting last night, 7th November and had spoken against the application but it had been Approved by FHDC.

5.3 DISCUSSED planning applications received for consideration since the last meeting

23/1633/FH/PA	Determination as to whether the prior approval of the local planning authority is required under schedule 2, Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning) General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 for the erection of a grain store. High Chimney Farm, Split Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6BA	SMPC to submit no objection as long as there is to be no increase in noise levels.
23/1460/FH	Variation of condition 4 (Operational hours) of planning permission 21/2459/FH to allow for an extension of opening times. The Stores, Minnis Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AS	SMPC to submit no objection but to raise concerns over 11pm closing time (noise & vehicle movements)
23/1598/FH	Two storey side and rear extension, solar panels on workshop roof. Sandgath, Sandy Lane, Stelling Minnis CT4 6DR	SMPC to submit no objection
23/1285/FH	Variation of condition2 (approved drawings) of planning permission 21/2319/FH for the erection of two 3 bedroom chalet bungalows to allow for revised layout. Land rear of St Bernadettes Cottage, Meadow View, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AX	SMPC no objection submitted
23/1361/FH	Installation of 36 solar photovoltaic (PV) system panels Stone Hall, Stone Street, Stelling Minnis Canterbury CT4 6DD	SMPC no objection submitted
23/1212/FH	Raised terrace, installation of new roof coverings and photovoltaic panels, replacement windows and	SMPC no objection

	installation of patio doors. Jacaranda House, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT4 6AQ	submitted
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5.4 NOTED decisions by the planning authority since the last meeting

23/1361/FH	Installation of 36 photo voltaic system panels Stone Hall, Stone Street, Stelling Minnis CT4 6DD	Approved
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	Approved
23/0820/FH	Front and first floor extension and replacement garage. Kinross, Bossingham Road, Stelling Minnis CT16 6AG	Approved

6. VILLAGE MATTERS

STELLING VILLAGE HALL EV CHARGING

The Village Hall Committee are keen to pursue the installation by KCC of two EV bays in the carpark. To do this they need to demonstrate a need in the area. The Committee have asked SMPC to assist with carrying out a needs survey.

The preferred option is for an item to be written for the Newsletter encouraging anyone supportive of the scheme to let SMPC know so we can compile a list of support. Cllr Carey explained the type of questions to ask should be along the lines of;
Would you use an EV charge bay at the Village Hall?
Would it help you to switch to using an EV vehicle?
The Chairman is to include this within his Chairmans Report in the next newsletter.

HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (HIP)

The Chairman explained he had created a video tour of the Stone Street/Curtis Lane junction with the Highways Steward and this had now been passed on to be reviewed as part of the SMPC HIP. The next step is meeting is to be setup early in December to discuss the HIP over Teams.

Other issues impacting this stretch of road to be raised;
Gullies need to be regularly cleaned – a lot of surface water currently
Pulling out from Curtis Lane visibility is poor
Grit and debris covering the white lines – a visit from the road sweeper would improve things.

VILLAGE SURVEY

Cllr Couch reported that the response to the survey conducted last year had been slim, with only a 30% return. Cllr Couch and Cllr Morley-Smith had focused on the below issues;

1. Residential development
27% did not want any more development at all
63% were in favour of development with the greatest number (24% in favour of low-cost housing)

2. Commercial development
24% didn't want any commercial development.
15% would welcome the use of redundant farm buildings.
3. Infrastructure
43% wanted improved broadband.
39% wanted mains drainage.
15% were against mains drainage due to the cost
4. Amenity
The most popular suggestion was for a childrens play area by 20% of respondents. 12% wanted a monthly film club which has now happened.
5. Renewable energy
27% were keen to explore if this was feasible.
14% were keen if it benefitted the village.
Since the survey was undertaken, solar panels have been installed on the hall roof and EV chargers are being pursued for the carpark.
6. Communication
24% of respondents didn't complete this section.
13% thought it was adequate.

The main outcome from the survey seemed to be no change please.

It was decided that all respondents that had left a contact email address should receive an email giving them the breakdown of the findings and thanking them for completing.

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES & POLLING STATIONS

FHDC are in the process of carrying out a review the above with regard to;

- Current structure of polling districts
- Current polling places
- Accessibility of polling stations
- Alternative venues to use as polling stations
- Returning Officers comments

Cllrs had asked if this was the opportunity to move the few properties in Wheelbarrows Town that are within Elham into the parish of Stelling Minnis. The clerk had investigated and this would need a Community Governance Review, which is done by the Local Boundary Commission. This is recommended to be done every 10-15 years (unsure of when the last one was carried out). It can be petitioned to trigger one, but this would need to be signed by at least 50% of the electors within the Parish of Stelling Minnis.

SMPC had no particular comments to make with regard to the review of the polling districts, places and stations.

REMEMBRANCE DAY ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairman explained that in the past he had carried out this role but he felt it would be good to share among the councillors. It was agreed that for this year Cllr Day would read the list of names from the 1st World War and lay the SMPC wreath at the ceremony in Bossingham on 12th November.

PHONE BOX

Cllr Smith reported that he now has the plaque to go up in the phone box. Cllr Watts will also fit a light inside at some point.

FINGERPOST ON WHEELBARROW TOWN HILL

One of the direction arrows had snapped off. The Chairman reported that highways had been contacted and would be replacing in due course.

7. REPORTS

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

7.1 Website/Facebook reports Clerk/Cllr Smith

7.2 KCC Report Cllr Carey

Additional information given on the matter of KCC consulting over the future ownership of the 8 windmills they own in Kent, including the Stelling Minnis Mill, as part of a shrinking of assets to save money. The mill managers were given a confidential briefing on 25th October in advance of any official publication of papers. There will be a formal consultation in the first instance and there will be a chance for local groups to consider taking ownership. KCC will be encouraging Mill Managers to register the mill as an ACV (Asset of Community Value). To be noted that SMPC would be supportive of the Mill Managers if they wanted to pursue this option and would try to assist in anyway they could.

7.3 FHDC Report Cllr Martin/Cllr Hollingsbee

7.4 Tree Warden Cllr Smith

7.5 Stelling Minnis Hall Cllr Couch

Cllr Couch reported that the WIFI is now up and running, with two services, one free for walk in use and the other requiring a password. The solar panels are now installed on the roof and in action. The Cinema Club's success seems to be really dependent on film selection.

7.6 Windmill Cllr Morley-Smith

As already discussed under Cllrs Carey's report.

8. FINANCE

8.1 NOTED the Clerk has submitted the redeclaration of compliance with the pensions regulator as required every 3 years.

8.2 NOTED the resignation of the Internal Auditor, Lee Jones had been received by the clerk. Lee has secured a new job and will be unable to continue with our internal audit. Clerk to seek a new auditor and hopefully we can appoint a new one at the January meeting, in readiness for the year end. Thanks was given to Lee for all his work as SPMC Internal Auditor over the last few years and best wishes for his new role.

8.3 NOTED receipts of income

FHDC – second precept payment for 2023-24	3,979.50
TOTALS £3,979.50	

8.4 AUTHORISED payments

CHQ449	SMVH – hire of meeting room for PC meetings 2023	110.00
CHQ450	SMVH – CIL grant for Solar panels & broadband installation into hall	9,386.00
CHQ451	A Hadlow – strimming September	55.00
CHQ452	Victim Support – donation 2023	50.00

CHQ453	Clerks reclaim of expenses (ink,postage)	37.54
CHQ454	Clerks salary October	273.60
CHQ455	Clerks salary November (to be paid 30 th Nov)	273.60
TOTALS		£10,185.74

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

8.5 RECEIVED the bank reconciliation dated 31st October 2023.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Dates of future meetings: 10 January, 13 March, 8 May, 22 May APM, 10 July, 11 September, 13 November 2024.

Signed..... (Chairman)

Date.....

APPENDIX A

SMPC REPORTS 8 NOVEMBER 2023

PC Website

Nothing heard yet from Hugo Fox re charging for site so no action to be taken yet. Will allow for cost in budget for next year though.

All up to date.

Gail Hubbard
Parish Clerk

Stelling Minnis Community web site report,

Individual page maintenance and requested revisions were made as required up to 29 October.

FOSM page is not accessible – still trying to resolve that one. All other pages are accessible, but a temporary problem has not allowed me to upload any new or amended pages, since 29 October – this has now been rectified by the host although the FOSM page is still not fully working.

Nick Smith – Webmaster for the community site.
1 November 2023

Tree Warden Report

Nothing new brought to my attention.

Nick Smith – Tree Warden
1 November 2023

Phone Box

Plaque recording the date and names of volunteers who restored the phone box has been made, at no charge to SMPC, by Micklecreative. Photo circulated to Cllrs. I will hold plaque until Anthony Hadlow has completed the shelving and can place it in position.

If the phone box is to be used as, for example a book exchange, then this will need to be managed – as residents should be discouraged from just dumping boxes of books – that is fly tipping. Need to establish clear but simple rules – for example take what books (or CDs/DVDs etc) you want and only place new ones on the shelves if there is space. The phone box will need to be “policed”.

Nick Smith
1 November 2023

KCC report for Stelling Minnis meeting 08 November 2023

As I've reported before, Kent County Council is facing great financial challenges with council tax having risen by 5% but inflation running higher than this. Care of the elderly, child protection and other services to vulnerable people account for around two thirds of KCC's expenditure so we continue to make most of our savings from other parts of the council's work. The County Council Network is leading lobbying efforts for extra funding to be allocated to councils that have responsibility for adult and children's care in the Government's Autumn Statement on 22 November but we know that we will need to make savings both large and small.

One of the proposals being considered is divesting our ownership of eight heritage windmills including that at Stelling Minnis. A paper with more details on this has just been published and will be discussed at the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 15 November. It's then expected there will be a public consultation and a report on the results would go to the committee in the New Year. KCC has recently spent nearly £900,000 on bringing the windmills into a decent condition and it's hoped that the local groups that manage the windmills may wish to take them on. KCC is also selling County Hall in Maidstone which has housed the council since it was created in 1889. We can no longer afford the upkeep of these heritage buildings and must give priority to our statutory responsibilities such as the provision of school places.

The work of the volunteers at the Stelling Minnis windmill is greatly valued and I know the Heritage team at KCC will be working to help the volunteer groups (that wish to do so) register the windmill as an Asset of Community Value and create a business plan with a view to making a bid.

Following your meeting on 13 September, I have followed up with Kent Highways about the damage caused to the tree in Curtis Lane and the evidence of the tarpaulin. Kent Highways were of the view that there wasn't sufficient information for them to pursue the HGV owner. I also asked about inspection of the trees. Whilst the Highways Inspectors will check the road for safety issues and would report/deal with any obvious issues, the trees along this road are not the responsibility of KCC Highways. I have asked that the Highways Inspectors issue 154 notices where appropriate to the tree owners (they should of course keep their trees in good order without needing to be served notice.) Should a similar problem occur, do still use the normal reporting channels but also copy me in where you think the matter urgent and I will do my best to help.

Susan Carey, Member for Elham Valley

District Councillor Report Stelling Minnis 8 November 2023

Contact: jenny.hollingsbee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

At the Kent & Medway Police & Crime Panel Meeting on 17 October, I raised the issue of speeding through our Villages and I also raised this with the Community Safety Partnership Police Inspector. I understand that random road checks are being undertaken throughout the district which also include speed checks. I will be asking for feedback on this exercise in due course.

Otterpool Park

The District Council is seeking a strategic partner for the project in order to bring in additional finance. I will be following this closely as it is important that the Council do not lose control of the development and also that the original Charter is adhered to. There is no doubt that this will cause a delay in delivery and we await further details.

District Wide Carbon plan has been published by the District Council and sets out the suggested approach towards a net zero future. The plan can be read on the council website and is open for comment until 5pm on Friday 1 December 2023. The consultation details can be found at folkestone-hythe-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/

Christmas Parking – As is normal at Christmas in the District, parking fees in Council Car Parks and On Street Parking will be waived on the following dates Saturday 9 December, Saturday 16 December and Saturday 23 December.

Hythe Golf Club - the owner is proposing to redevelop the Golf Course into a new Lakeside Holiday Destination. There is a public consultation prior to submitting a planning application, at the Hythe Imperial Hotel tomorrow from 5-8 pm. It is an opportunity to make your views known on the proposed plan at an early stage.

District Councillor Report – 8 November

F&HDC have made a successful bid and have been awarded a Safer Streets government grant of £335,546.64. The fund will be used to invest in crime prevention initiatives that focus on reducing levels of crime in the district, anti-social behaviour and violence against women and girls.

There are a few surveys and consultations to tell you about. There is going to be public consultation on the Carbon Reduction plan. The proposed District-Wide Carbon Plan sets out the suggested approach towards a net zero future. The plan is open for comment until 5pm on Friday 1 December 2023 and you can give your comments either online via council website <https://folkestone-hythe-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/> or emailing DWCP.Consultation@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk . The public consultations will also be held at Hythe on 16 November, Sellindge Village Hall on 21 November and at the Civic Centre on 22 November. All sessions are from 12noon until 4pm.

An easy – to – follow guide detailing the best way of achieving net zero carbon in a house build or renovation has been published by Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

The launch event for phase two public engagement of the Folkestone – a Brighter Future project will be open to the public on Friday 17 November (1pm – 7pm) and Saturday 18 November (11am-4pm). The event will be hosted at Bouverie House Business Centre, immediately beside the bus station.

Kent Police's annual Crime and Community survey has been launched. They want to hear your views on crime, community, and your experience of Neighbourhood Watch. The survey is open to everyone regardless of whether you are a Neighbourhood Watch member. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete and everyone who completes it can choose to opt-in to the prize draw to win one of three £25 Amazon vouchers. The survey can be completed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/surveyCC2023>

From the 1st of November the new Parliamentary boundary lines, will be implemented for the next General Election. The North Downs East and North Downs West wards of the F&HDC area will now form part of the Ashford Constituency at Parliamentary elections. The District Wards and the County Council Divisions will remain the same.

F&HDC are now looking for a strategic partner for Otterpool Park to inject funding into the development. They are only looking to enter into agreements with those partners who have a track record of facilitating development at scale, and a commitment to delivering the Council's vision for Otterpool Park.

There has been a very poor take up of the Folkestone and Hythe Green Business Grant Scheme. The grant is to help small businesses to save carbon, become more energy efficient and, in turn, to save the business money. Also, details of the Rural England Prosperity Fund grant have now been published. All the information regarding both funds can be found on the Folkestone Works website (<https://folkestone.works/>).

Just a reminder, all District Councillors have a £3,000 Ward grant available to help fund local community projects. Please contact me or Jenny if you have any projects you would like help funding.

Finally, some good news, the Free Parking in Folkestone and Hythe District will be back on the 9th, 16th and 23rd December. Plenty of time to buy those Christmas goodies!

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