

SELLING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held at Selling Village Hall on Thursday 20th February 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Andy Day (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Cllr Andrew Bowles, Cllr Garry Evans (from agenda item 3), Cllr Sue Henderson (from agenda item 2), Cllr Sally King, Cllr Jonnie Reeves, Bex Ratchford (Clerk)

Public: 3

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Hobson and Cllr Lehmann (SBC & KCC) due to being away. The reasons for absence were **approved**. Due to the absence of Cllr Hobson, the meeting was chaired by Cllr Day.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Bowles and Cllr Reeves declared an interest in agenda item 7 as residents of Selling Court.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2025

The minutes were **agreed** as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed and dated by the Chair.

4. Clerk's report

- a. Action 1: photos of cleared drain circulated.
- b. Action 2: Cllr Lehmann's report circulated.
- c. Action 3: response sent to email.
- d. Action 4: site plan and proposal formulated; agenda item 8.
- e. Action 5: change of address form signed; agenda item 11b.
- f. Action 6: adjustments to financial records made.
- g. Action 7: finance page of website updated.
- h. Action 8: extension requested; agenda item 12.
- i. Action 9: training booked.

5. Reports from borough and county councillors

A report from Cllr Lehmann (SBC & KCC) was read out: not being included in the devolution programme has advantages and disadvantages: additional funding will not be forthcoming but KCC elections will go ahead; as the health boundaries for Swale do not align with the district boundaries, Swale will either need to be divided in the reorganisation or have different areas for primary health care and adult social care; the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is open for consultation until 12th March.

6. Public session

Residents raised issues as follows:

- the trees opposite the plantation have been reduced in height and the rest are due to be looked at.
- KCC has cleared the drains at Hogbens Hill.
- police surgeries in neighbouring parishes have been helpful; it was requested that the PC consider funding the use of the village hall for this purpose in Selling.
- an offer was made to make a wooden signpost to replace the missing one, although it was noted that this is KCC's responsibility and the work has been programmed; the resident was thanked for his offer.
- an offer was made to make noticeboards and planters for the station project; this will be discussed under agenda item 8 and the resident was thanked for his offer.
- the agendas were posted late on the noticeboards.

7. Streetlights

Due to Cllr Bowles and Cllr Reeves declaring an interest, they gave comments as residents but did not vote on the issue.

The report was considered and it was **agreed** that due to the cost and wishes of residents the lights should not be removed. It was noted that any financial agreement with residents would need to be legally drafted to be binding. It was noted that the energy costs are a small proportion of the budget, as is the maintenance contract. It was noted that the lantern on column 5 is also likely to fail in the near future. It was **agreed** to replace the lanterns in both columns 4 and 5 and to continue maintaining the lights and paying for the energy usage, but to ask for a contribution towards the cost of the lantern replacement from the residents. **Action 1: Clerk to write to residents and progress lantern replacement with maintenance contractor.**

Due to the arrival of PC Tancock, the meeting was adjourned for a further public session. PC Tancock covers Boughton and Courtney ward and Abbey ward. There was little to report in Selling but Cllr Bowles raised the issue of hare coursing. This can be reported via the Rural Team WhatsApp group or by calling 999 and quoting Op. Galileo. PC Tancock would like to hold surgeries in the village once a month if a suitable location can be found. Currently, the pub has agreed and dates are due to be confirmed. **Action 2: Clerk to advertise surgeries once dates are confirmed.**

8. Selling station

The report was considered and it was **agreed** that it would be good to make use of the £1500 funding from SER if possible. Cllr Day may also be able to source some labour and equipment through work contacts. Concern was raised over the structural safety of the wall and potential anti-social behaviour and it was noted that this would need to remain the responsibility of SER. It was felt that the priority should be to make the site safe and that planters should not be included in the first phase. The proposal was **agreed** with the amendment of moving planters to further down the list of priorities. **Action 3: Clerk to send proposal to SER and liaise over next steps.**

9. Play area

There is £204.85 left from the s106 funding and it was **agreed** to use this towards the purchase of play bark for the play area near the car park, with the VHC meeting the remaining cost. **Action 4: Cllr Henderson to inform VHC.**

10. Annual Parish Meeting

Due to the KCC elections going ahead on 1st May, another date for the APM is required. It was **agreed** to hold the APM on Thursday 24th April and noted that the council meeting that month will be on 17th April (the normal third Thursday) and not 24th as previously arranged. **Action 5: Clerk to inform VHC and APM speaker.**

11. Finance

- a. The financial statement and bank reconciliation were reviewed and accepted. Due to statements still going to the previous clerk, the inability to check balances and transfer money and the large payment for play equipment last month, the current account did not have enough funds to pay one of the cheques raised at the previous meeting. A transfer of £5000 from the reserve account to the current account, along with the address change and an update of signatories has now been requested. The refused cheque will need to be re-issued.

Account	Balance as of 31/01/25
Reserve account	14,918.88
Current account	18,455.42
Total	33,374.30

- b. Due to the issues above, it was felt that online banking would be advantageous. This is difficult to arrange with high street banks due to the two signatory rule and the need for the clerk to have administration access but not be a signatory. Unity Trust Bank provides online banking tailored for parish councils which fulfils these requirements, at a fee of approximately £6 per month. It was **agreed** to move all bank accounts to Unity Trust Bank and for all cllrs to be signatories. **Action 6: Clerk to progress move to Unity Trust Bank.**
- c. Payments were **agreed** as follows, with cheques to be raised once confirmation of transfer of funds has been received:

Ref	Payment	Net	*VAT	Total
D/D	SSE – energy supply (Jan)	56.42	3.86	60.28
tbc	Bex Ratchford – salary and office rental	754.40	-	754.40
tbc	Bex Ratchford – expenses (mileage and mouse)	21.38	1.66	23.04
tbc	KALC – new cllr course	50.00	10.00	60.00
tbc	Streetlights – maintenance payment 4 of 4	44.62	8.92	53.54
tbc	Vision ICT – new cllr email address set up	13.33	2.67	16.00
tbc	Selling Village Hall – grounds maintenance	150.00	-	150.00
tbc	Selling PCC – parish magazine	6.00	-	6.00
tbc	KALC – Chair’s conference	70.00	14.00	84.00

* VAT to be reclaimed

12. Planning

- a. 25/500166 - Application for Minor Material Amendment to approved plans condition 2 (changes to internal layout and elevations and introduction of a north facing glazed balcony) pursuant to application 23/500867/FULL for - Erection of 1no. three bedroom dwelling with associated parking, gardens and landscaping – Forge House, Crouch Lane, Selling. It was noted that the PC originally objected to the application and the amendment involves additional

windows and a balcony. It was **agreed** to respond with no objections. **Action 7: Clerk to make planning comment.**

13. Highways

There are many significant potholes on Selling Road which have been reported by Cllr Day. Residents were encouraged to use the online reporting tool to report any issues also. It was **agreed** to raise the issue with Cllr Lehmann. **Action 8: Clerk to raise with Cllr Lehmann.** There is due to be a road closure of Winding Hill in the near future. A resident has raised the ongoing issue of parking outside the school; this will be discussed on the next agenda.

14. Reports from parish councillors

Cllr King attended a meeting of the KALC learning and development group, which covered available training, attendance, accessibility and barriers to training.
Cllr King also attended the KALC Swale Area Committee meeting, which covered devolution, including its impact on planning; report attached.
Cllr Bowles attended the KALC Executive; report attached.
Cllr Henderson reported that she is investigating the source of the water running on to the road from behind the village hall.

15. Correspondence

- All correspondence was noted.
- a. The clerk attended the Parish Councils Liaison Forum which gave an update on devolution.
 - b. The Duchy of Cornwall is holding public events regarding its planning application; these have been publicised on the website.
 - c. A resident had emailed regarding the proposal for the land at the station and been reassured that the area in question was not where he thought.
 - d. The Great British Spring Clean is taking place but due to the nature of the parish there are too many safety concerns to take part.
 - e. A resident had emailed regarding refuse lorries turning round at Neames Forstal and damaging the grass; Cllr Lehmann is addressing this with the waste contractor.

16. Close and date of next meeting

The meeting closed at 9.01pm.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 20th March 2025 at 7.00pm.

Signed.....

Date.....