

SELLING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held at Selling Village Hall on Thursday 11th September 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Andy Day (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Cllr Andrew Bowles, Cllr Sue Henderson, Cllr Sally King, Cllr Jonnie Reeves, Cllr Alastair Gould (SBC), Bex Ratchford (Clerk)

Public: 1

53. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Hobson due to being away and Cllr Evans due to work. Due to the absence of Cllr Hobson, the meeting was chaired by Cllr Day.

54. Declarations of interest

Cllrs had no interests to declare.

55. Minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2025

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

56. Clerk's report

- a. Action 1: Cllr Henderson still to confirm successful log in to Unity Trust Bank. **Action 1: Cllr Henderson to log in.**
- b. Action 2: Cllr Reeves still to speak to local farms, although the issue of HGV's is also being addressed through the HIP.
- c. Action 3: the lighting work had taken place; this was confirmed by a resident.
- d. Action 4: a written summary of the verbal advice from KALC had not been provided and it was **agreed** to forgo this and draw a line under the issue.
- e. Action 5: landlord spoken to – a new team member is being trained and although originally it was hoped to have the post office open again by the end of August, this has been delayed slightly. **Action 2: Clerk to check timescale with landlord.**
- f. Action 6: website updated.
- g. Action 7: no comments received so no collective response submitted.
- h. Action 8: LGR still to be publicised as an ongoing issue.
- i. Action 9: new policies to be put in place before next year's audit. It appears that there is no legal requirement to provide policies in other languages or Braille, but noted that compliance with Web Accessibility guidelines (WCAG) should ensure website content is accessible with a screen reader for the visually impaired.
- j. Action 10: NatWest spoken to; agenda item 66c.
- k. Action 11: insurance premium paid.
- l. Action 12: photos of station circulated; agenda item 61.
- m. Action 13: email regarding repairs at Perry Wood forwarded; agenda item 59.
- n. Action 14: enquiry regarding Christmas tree forwarded to KCC and resident responded to.
- o. Action 15: complaint to auditor responded to; response awaited from auditor.
- p. The VAT reclaim for £3418.39 has been submitted, covering February 2024 to July 2025.

57. Reports from the police and borough and county councillors

Cllr Gould (SBC) gave an update: various options for LGR have emerged, with two being favoured – one where Swale would join with Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe, and the other where it would join with Medway and Dartford. There is an extraordinary full council meeting next week to decide which one to support or whether to propose an alternative one, which would need to be funded by Swale. The Local Development Scheme has been put back due to the Highsted Valley Enquiry.

58. Public session

Members of the public raised issues as follows:

- a. the clerk was asked if she was recording the meeting and responded no.
- b. Cllr Bowles was requested to provide the written report as per action point 4, but it was **agreed** that this was no longer necessary.
- c. it was queried why the PC was paying for membership of KALC if it chose not to take its advice.

59. Perry Wood

A suggestion had been made by SBC regarding the PC taking over management of Perry Wood under the Community Asset Transfer scheme. Cllrs voiced concerns regarding the implications, the makeup of the potential management group, the logistics, the size of the wood, whether it could be split into smaller areas, the need for wardens, the legal fees, the cost of ongoing maintenance, the increase to the precept, and the issues with cyclists. It was **agreed** to find out from SBC what the annual cost has been and what they would intend to do with the wood should the PC decide not to take it on. **Action 3: Clerk to contact SBC for the required information.**

60. Selling Village Hall

Cllr Bowles and Cllr Henderson both declared an interest in this item and did not vote. The amount remaining from the s106 money is £204.85 and if the PC purchases the play bark and donates it to the VHC, it can claim back the VAT. However, the cost of the bark is currently £206.67 plus VAT. It was **agreed** to purchase the bark, up to a cost of £220 to allow for increased prices, and to take the extra money from the VH maintenance budget. **Action 4: Clerk to purchase bark in liaison with the VHC.**

61. Station

Cllr Day had provided an updated proposal with estimated costs for the area at the station and it was **agreed** to arrange a meeting with Network Rail and present this proposal, with the addition of murals.

Action 5: Cllr Day to update the proposal and clerk to arrange a meeting. It was noted that the noticeboards are looking a little tatty and out-of-date. **Action 6: Clerk to raise with Network Rail.**

62. Highways Improvement Plan

The increase in HGV and general traffic was noted and felt to be due to roadworks but also the time of year. The clerk had had a meeting with KCC regarding the HIP and presented the three priorities. KCC will provide an 'unsuitable for HGVs' sign to go at the junction of Newhouse Lane and the A251. The installation of a 30mph limit in Hogbens Hill is not possible as it would leave a stretch of de-restricted road of only 430m between Hogbens Hill and Selling, and the minimum length of any stretch should be 600m. The 430m stretch of road would not be suitable for a 30mph limit due to the road environment, ie, lack of houses. The five-way junction by Station Approach could be adjusted by locating the give way on the highway boundary and building out the kerb to narrow the remaining junction space. However, this would be costly, with an initial design fee of £1124, and there have been no crashes in the area and speeds are

slow. It was **agreed** not to pursue the changes, particularly as KCC has agreed to update the road markings at the junction.

It was noted that Speedwatch has not been active recently. **Action 7: Clerk to raise with Cllr Hobson.**

63. Streetlights

It was **agreed** to repair column 1 following it being struck by a vehicle, at the slightly lower than originally quoted cost of £375. The lower cost is due to not needing a HIAB lorry. Any cost above that in the lighting maintenance budget will come out of reserves. **Action 8: Clerk to arrange repair with lighting maintenance contractor.**

64. Local Government Reorganisation

This had been covered under agenda item 57.

65. Training

It was noted that cllrs often find it difficult to attend training due to work schedules. The clerk will attend a free day's conference regarding finance. Cllr King attended a KALC L & D meeting this week – covered under agenda item 68. Cllr Day expressed an interest in training on fraud and governance.

66. Finance

- a. The financial statement and bank reconciliation were reviewed and accepted, with the proviso that the amount in the NatWest current account remains unconfirmed.

Account	Balance as of 31/08/25
Current account (NatWest)	1,387.49
Reserve account (NatWest)	0
Current account (Unity)	3,511.92
Reserve account (Unity)	10,000.00
Total	14,899.41

- b. Although written confirmation is awaited, the external auditor has confirmed there are no issues, except for a small matter regarding the internal auditor ticking the wrong box.
- c. Both Unity accounts are open and being used, with £10,000 being transferred to the reserve account to gain interest. As the remaining cheque outstanding on the NatWest current account is unlikely to be cashed, it was **agreed** to close the account, transferring all funds to Unity. **Action 9: Clerk to arrange transfer of funds and account closure.**
- d. Due to the change from an unmetered supply to a half-hourly meter, the contract had only been extended for a few weeks so has now expired. SSE has agreed to back date a new contract, although at higher rates. It was **agreed** to accept the offer and get new quotes when the contract is up for renewal again next year. **Action 10: Clerk to renew contract with SSE.**

- e. Payments were **agreed** as follows:

Ref	Payment	Net	*VAT	Total	Auth
D/D	SSE – energy supply (Jul & Aug)	tbc	tbc	tbc	
21	Clerk's salary and office rental (07/07-31/08)	1508.80	-	1508.80	AD, JR
22	Clerk's expenses (ink Jul & Aug)	10.82	2.16	12.98	AD, JR
23	Selling Village Hall – grounds maintenance	60.00	-	60.00	AD, JR
24	Streetlights – maintenance payment 2 of 4	55.68	11.14	66.82	AD, JR
25	Selling Village Hall – hall hire April-Sept 25	156.00	-	156.00	AD, JR

* VAT to be reclaimed

67. Planning

- a. 25/501948 – 2 Neames Forstal – erection of a two storey rear extension including 1no. roof light – approved – noted.
- b. 25/502237 – Rhode Common Barn – Prior notification for the change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from agricultural to 2 residential dwellinghouses (1 two bed and 1 three bed unit) and associated operational development – revised details. It was **agreed** to make no further comment.

68. Reports from parish councillors

Cllr King attended a KALC learning and development meeting which covered accessibility, feedback and training logs and certificates. KALC plans to provide sessions on s106/CIL funding. **Action 11: Cllr King to forward accessibility details to the clerk.**

Cllr Henderson reported that mud has been cleared from the village hall car park, creating more room for parking.

The footpath by Fox Lane is overgrown.

The next date of the KALC Swale Area Committee meeting was queried. **Action 12: Clerk to check and circulate.**

69. Correspondence

All correspondence was noted.

- a. The National Highways satisfaction surveys have been publicised on the website.
- b. Faversham TC held a meeting to discuss LGR, which Cllr Hobson was due to attend although may not have done so due to personal issues.
- c. A resident enquiring about lack of verge maintenance at Neames Forstal has been directed to the KCC fault reporting website.
- d. An offer to install a clothing bank at the village hall has been forwarded to Cllr Henderson.
- e. An invitation from SBC to nominate assets for a Local Heritage List may be of interest for Perry Wood. **Action 13: Clerk to investigate the benefits of an asset being added to the list.**
- f. A request from the BBC for a drone to take off from the car park will be forwarded to Cllr Henderson and the necessary permits and licences will be requested. **Action 14: Clerk to forward email and Cllr Henderson to liaise with the BBC.**

70. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 8.51pm.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 16th October 2025 at 7.00pm.

Signed.....

Date.....