



Rolvenden Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 21 August 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr A. Hinge (Chairman), Cllr H. Back, Cllr. C. Balch, Cllr. S. Bryant, Cllr. M. Geerts, Cllr M. Gilchrist.

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk

MP Katie Lam, Kent Police PS Daniel Edge and 23 members of the public.

Louise Goldsmith Parish Clerk
5 Artisan Road
Headcorn
Kent
TN27 9AZ

clerk@rolvendenparishcouncil.gov.uk

1309. Administration:

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones.

1310. Intention to record the Meeting:

There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1311. Apologies for Absence:

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Wayne Chapman and Cllr. Walker and the reasons for absence were accepted.

1312. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Bryant noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

Cllr Hinge noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

1313. Minutes of the meeting of the 17 July 2025

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 17 July 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

1314. MP Katie Lam

MP Katie Lam introduced herself and gave some background information and explained that she was attending the meeting to listen to any concerns. MP Katie Lam explained that she was aware of the latest situation regarding Monypenny and was glad to see that ABC is pausing to reconsider their plans.

Standing Orders were lowered to allow member of the public to ask questions.

Q: A member of the public expressed their concerns about further housing developments in the parish.

A: MP Katie Lam explained that the emerging Local Plan will contain information on any sites and that residents should respond to the consultations.

Q: Some members of the public expressed their concerns about the number of road closures and diversions and the time it takes for the works to be completed and the signage removed.

A: MP Katie Lam explained that the lack of coordination and communication from utility companies continues to be a big concern and that the powers that KCC has in emergency situations are disproportionate. MP Katie Lam explained that she sits on the Transport Select Committee in the House of Commons and that this issue has been discussed and that recommendations to change the way in which road closures are handled are being taken forward.

Q: Concerns were raised about the fact that despite its pro-business stance and focus on economic growth, the current Government appears firmly committed to maintaining the off-payroll rules, or IR35. Stricter regulations which are due to be introduced in 2026 will mean that agencies will be expected to bear responsibility for ensuring proper PAYE deductions, Class 1 NICs, and apprenticeship levy payments, regardless of payroll outsourcing arrangements. Concern was expressed about the effect of this on small businesses.

A: MP Katie Lam offered to raise this issue.

Three members of the public individually thanked Katie Lam for her support on issues to do with Highways, Neighbourhood Watch and crime prevention in the parish.

The meeting resumed.

1315. Ward Member/County Councillor Report:

Cllr. Hinge announced that Ward Member Kate Walder has resigned as a Ward Member due to poor health. Cllr. Hinge publicly thanked Kate Walder for all her hard work and support over many years. A by-election to fill the vacancy is due to be held on Thursday 25 September 2025.

County Councillor Report:

Cllr. Hinge reported that County Councillor Wayne Chapman has sent a lengthy report containing updates on a number of issues for all of Tenterden and the surrounding parishes. A copy of the report will be appended to the minutes.

1316. Chairman's report:

Since the last full report I have attended a number of meetings on behalf of the Council. I have attended a Code of Conduct training session organised by KALC which clarified behaviours and gave a clearer perspective on matters. I attended a KALC Area Committee Meeting with particular emphasis on NDP, police matters and their attendance at PC meetings. Unfortunately, ABC gave very little substantive information on planning deferring most issues to a later date. As such we are no wiser as to the direction it will take for Rolvenden. There will be series of road shows in August/September which may give a more informed update. I have received the resignation of Edward Barham and this will now lead to submission of applications for co-option to the vacant position. We have also received the resignation of Kate Walder due to poor health. I thank both Councillors for their contributions towards Rolvenden. We met with Sylvia Kellet, our local arborist, and carried an assessment of the communal trees around the Parish, both those under ABC responsibility and Parish Council and village hall. A number of recommendations were made, largely of uplifting and removal of low growth. A further suggestion was made to form a working party to prune and clear the base of trees, especially those with guards. Should anyone be interested in helping, please do contact the Clerk. On behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee I have recruited a new cleaner from the village who will start on the 1 November 2025. This will restore the hall cashflow. We are already seeing significant utility savings with the new heating management system, and from that are looking into the viability and economics of a solar system on the Southern roof. The chairman of the Trustees of the hall has now resigned to pursue his retirement ambitions. The Committee has recruited a number of new Trustees which will greatly assist with the management of the hall. The Committee will continue to upgrade and make improvements to the facilities of the hall. I would like to thank Kevin and Janet May for the hard work they have put towards the village hall. Thoburn Trust unfortunately missed the opportunity for Capital grants, which were oversubscribed in a very short period and closed once the funding limit had been met. The Parish Council will be meeting the advisors next week to assess other funding options available.

1317. Clerk's report:

Nothing additional.

1318. Open Session:

No comments made.

1319. Planning:

a) To consider any planning applications received prior to the meeting

OTH/2025/1368: Great Maytham Hall, Maytham, Road, Rolvenden

T1 Oak – upper crown reduction of 4-5 metres, opposite side limbs reduction of 2-3 metres and reduce the northwest of tree by 2-4 metres. Reason for works – rebalance tree and improve safety and long term stability.

Resolved: Support

OTH/2025/1341: Great Maytham Hall, Maytham Road, Rolvenden

T1 Fir Tree – reduce the height of the tree from approximately 80ft to 24ft for safety reasons due to tree damage.

Resolved: Support.

PA/2025/1010: Oakfield Lodge, Hastings Road, Rolvenden

Variation of condition 4 (approved plans and documents) of planning permission 19/00931/AS for “Proposed new garage/workshop” to allow changes to scale, layout and fenestration to include garage/store room/home studio/gym and office.

Support.

Resolved: Support.

PA/2025/0769: Hexden Marsh, Hastings Road, Rolvenden

Extension to existing aircraft hangar including two-storey extension to include facilities and viewing platform and construction of helicopter landing area.

Resolved: We would like a condition set that the number of helicopter movements will be monitored.

- b) **To consider any approvals:** None to consider.
- c) **To consider any refusals:** None to consider.
- d) **Withdrawn:** None to consider.

1320. Parish Matters.

a) **Monypenny Proposals**

An update from Mark Bawden, Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager at ABC, who attended the last meeting and listened to all of the concerns raised was read out by Cllr. Hinge. ABC had intended to submit a planning application by now but have delayed doing this to reconsider what could be done reduce the impact that any redevelopment would have on the residents. ABC is exploring whether this is the right time to redevelop Monypenny and the option to 'do nothing' is definitely being considered. ABC needs thoroughly assess the condition of the current building to forecast the cost of maintenance over the future years to assess whether any redevelopment project could be delayed. ABC is also reviewing whether phasing the redevelopment is possible, thereby avoiding the need for most residents to move twice. It is though that the current location of the drainage system to the current Monypenny buildings would make phasing the project impossible. ABC is considering a number of options to avoid what has been called "the double move". ABC has started the process of assessing what could fit onto the Vicarage site on its own, separately from Monypenny. ABC is also still considering what might be feasible in terms of rehoming residents at Glebe Field and technical surveys are currently being conducted. If ABC can build new bungalows on this site it would potentially help with temporarily rehoming residents if the decision is to redevelop Monypenny. ABC has also assessed the Cornex Garage as an alternative to Monypenny but are not pursuing this on the basis that the site would not enable ABC to deliver the right housing that is needed and would also be prohibitively expensive. ABC is also not pursuing the option of installing temporary static homes on Glebe Field due to the fact that many residents have limited mobility. ABC has advised that they are committed to trying to minimise the impact on the residents whilst also trying to address the unmet local housing need.

b) **Local Plan**

The Clerk advised that the Regulation 18 Local Plan identifies the overall housing target that will need to be met in the period 2024 – 2042. Five key spatial character areas within the borough have been identified, Ashford Town Centre, Ashford Urban Area, Edge of Ashford, Tenterden, and the Villages. A more detailed policy intention is to be shared for Ashford Town Centre and Tenterden. In these areas, specific housing targets and sites have been identified for housing growth. For the remaining character areas, a broad housing range has been identified and the Regulation 18 Local Plan sets out the favoured direction of travel. The consultation commenced on Monday 18 August and will run until 5pm on Monday 13 October 2025 (eight weeks). A series of exhibition events will also be held in various venues across the Borough to provide residents with the opportunity to 'drop-in' and find out more about the Regulation 18 consultation. Officers from the Plan Making and Infrastructure Team will also be at the sessions to help answer any questions about the Local Plan process. Officers will then digest the responses received and move the plan into a more detailed stage. A series of informal consultations are then likely to take place over the winter months.

c) **Vacancy on the Parish Council**

Cllr. Hinge reported that following the resignation of Edward Barham ABC has not received any requests for an election and that the Parish Council can now go ahead and co-opt a replacement Member. The Clerk will place details about the vacancy on the website, noticeboards and social media.

d) **Tree Walkabout**

Cllr. Hinge, the Clerk and Sylvia Kellett, the Tree Warden conducted a walkabout on the 24 July 2025 to assess the condition of the trees on Parish Council and ABC owned land. The Clerk has since submitted a report to ABC regarding suggested works to a number of trees on Sparkeswood. The Clerk has reported the damaged knee-high fencing around Sparkeswood. The Clerk has also reported that the main pond on Sparkeswood needs some attention. Cllr. Bryant offered to provide to some assistance if a working party is formed to tidy up the pond. The Clerk was asked to find out if ABC would be happy for a group of volunteers to undertake this work.

Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to speak

Concern was expressed that if the knee-high fencing is removed on Sparkeswood that this would encourage motorists to park on the verges.

The meeting resumed.

e) **Neighbourhood Watch/Kent Police Update**

Peter New, (Ashford Community Neighbourhood Watch, gave the following report.

Peter New explained to Members that he has done a considerable amount of work to try and prevent catapult incidents. It was noted that Kent Police and Peter New recently discussed the concerns about catapulting on both National BBC TV and Local BBC TV news and that a further documentary is expected in September 2025. Peter New helped run a government petition to change the law on catapults. A joint letter from Kent Police and MP Sojan Joseph has been sent to all the schools and messages have been sent out via My Community Voice to raise the

awareness of catapulting and to encourage reporting. Peter New urged members of the public to continue to report any incidents to Kent Police and explained that this is essential to inform their intelligence.

One member of the public left the meeting

PS Daniel Edge gave the following report.

PS Edge advised that the Beat Officers have been told that there is an expectation for them to attend Parish Council meetings on a quarterly basis. The Beat Officers are not expected to change their hours to make the meetings. If a Beat Officer cannot attend a report will be provided. The expectation is that the Beat Officer will attend the beginning of the meeting to provide their input and to answer any questions put forward and then leave. PS Edge explained that there will be occasions where Beat Officers will be abstracted to support calls that pose an immediate risk to an individual's safety or property. In this instance an alternative Beat Officer from the CSU may be asked to attend a Parish Council meeting. PS Edge explained that he is happy to be contacted directly if there are any issues. PS Edge also thanked Peter New from Ashford Neighbourhood Watch for attending the Parish Council meetings and providing the CSU with crime safety advice and updates in the absence of the local Beat Officers. PS Edge explained that the CSU for Ashford applied for funding from Government for an additional four officers and that these are currently been deployed to target crime in the town centre. PS Edge advised that this has brought about a welcome increase in the visibility of officers in the town centre and that Kent Police will look to deploy these officers to the rural parishes in the future.

One member of the public left the meeting. Standing Orders were lowered to allow questions to be asked.

In response to question about a recent tractor theft PS Edge explained that the report has been filed because the tractor when found was so badly burnt out that forensics could not find any evidence. PS Edge agreed that historically there have not been many arrests or prosecutions following the theft of agricultural machinery and explained that this is often due to a lack of evidence. PS Edge explained that Kent Police do offer crime prevention advice when these incidents occur.

Sian Reeves, Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch, gave the following report.

There was a theft from a car parked at Cornex Garage. There has been further reports of catapulting in Tenterden and Wittersham involving wildlife.

Ongoing and new Fraud/Scams to be aware of

Information in my monthly Rolvenden Parish magazine article and sent to Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch members. SIM swapping; EE scam; Parking Fine scams; Pink Salt Diet scam; British Gas scam; Mobile phone scam; Blue Badge application scam; Fuel allowance fake text; rogue traders at doors – never buy from people at your door. If you think you have been a victim of identity fraud contact your bank immediately by calling 159.

MP Katie Lam and two members of the public left the meeting.

1321. HIGHWAYS/PROW

a) Highways Improvement Plan

Priority 2 Hastings Road, Rolvenden: Pedestrian and traffic surveys took place the w/c 2 June 2025 for one week. The Community Engagement Officer has analysed the data and has advised that the number of vehicles versus pedestrians and the speed of the traffic is far below the criteria needed to install a controlled pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the school. KCC will therefore not be pursuing this as an option.

Priority 3: Speeding Traffic, Hastings Road, Tenterden Road: The Parish Council will continue to investigate ways of funding a Speed Indicator Device Scheme on the A28 throughout the village

b) Reported Faults

Various potholes: It was noted that various pothole repairs and surface dressing repairs have been carried out across the parish and that more are planned. The Clerk was asked to re-report the potholes in Rolvenden Laye.

1322. Finances

a) S106 Funding update:

It was noted that the Clerk has requested S106 funding to support both the football club and tennis club. ABC has advised that both requests fall under capital expenditure and not maintenance. The Clerk advised that there is not enough funding to support both projects and that a revised application has been submitted for the tennis club.

b) Neighbourhood Development Plan:

The Clerk reminded Members that the Government has withdrawn all funding for the development of Neighbourhood Plans. The Clerk explained that the remaining consultancy fees amount to £4,900.00. Ward Member Kate Walder had agreed to provide £1,000.00 from her Member Grant. The Cricket Club and the Tennis Club are both likely to donate £250.00 and the War Memorial Trust is considering a donation of £1,000.00. This would leave a shortfall of approximately £2,400.00 and the Steering Group have asked if the Parish Council could fund this. Cllr. Hinge commented that any contribution from the Parish Council could be spread over two financial years.

Resolved: The Clerk to submit an application to ABC for a £1,000.00 Member Grant and to advise the Steering Group that the Parish Council could provide funding from reserves, if required, up to a maximum of £2,500.00.

c) **Clerks Appraisal:**

It was noted that Cllr. Geerts carried out an appraisal with the Clerk on the 23 July 2025.

d) **Clerk's Pension**

It was noted that the Clerk has been made aware again that the Parish Council has a duty to offer a pension scheme. It was noted that at the moment the Clerk does not wish to take up the offer of a personal pension scheme

e) **To receive the accounts**

The accounts dated the 31 July 2025 were received.

f) **To receive the bank reconciliation as at 31 July 2025**

The bank reconciliation as at the 31 July was noted. The bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr. Balch in accordance with the financial regulations.

g) **To receive a list of payments for approval**

Cllr. Hinge checked the invoices against the payment schedule, (appended to the minutes), and it was **resolved** for Cllrs. Balch and Hinge to authorise the payments online. The authorised schedule was initialled immediately below the last item by the Chair in accordance with the financial regulations.

1323. External Meetings

a) **Thoburn Trust Meeting:**

It was noted that there will be a meeting after the Parish Council meeting.

b) **Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group**

It was noted that Members of the Steering Group are working hard to progress the project.

c) **Rolvenden Village Hall:**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13 August 2025 have been circulated. It was noted that three new Trustees have been appointed and that Cllr. Hinge has stepped up to be the current Chair and the Clerk remains as the Secretary. A bookkeeper has been appointed and a new cleaner and the new heating system which is linked to the booking system is working well. The shed has been cleared out by the Clerk and a couple of Trustees and has been handed back to the pre-school and the Clerk has tidied up the kitchen cupboards and redundant appliances have been removed.

d) **KALC Ashford Area Committee:**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30 July 2025 have been circulated.

The Clerk reported that there were presentations on the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation and on the Community Governance Review. Tracey Kerly, CEO for ABC, gave a presentation on the Local Government Reorganisation. KPMG has now been appointed as a strategic partner, following a competitive procurement exercise. KPMG recently attended an initial meeting with the Kent Leaders and Chief Executives and this will be followed by a visioning event in September 2025. KPMG will work on the business case for the future structure of local government in Kent. An awareness campaign will be launched to inform residents and other stakeholders. The deadline for the full proposal to be sent to Government is the 28 November 2025. Early 2026 the Government will confirm the choice of model for Kent and they may indicate a timescale for Devolution. Tracey Kerly was keen to stress that all staff will be transferred to the new Unitary Authorities and are protected by TUPE regulations. All contracts will also transfer to the new Unitary Authorities.

1324. Items for the next meeting

Nothing additional.

1325. Correspondence/Consultations

a) National Highways and Transport Network – Public Satisfaction Surveys: Noted.

1326. Any Confidential Items:

There were none.

1327. Date of the next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 18 September 2025 at 7.30pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed: Date:

Chairmans signature.....

BACS Payments for Approval August 2025

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
27/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	85.40
28/25	Tompsetts	3486	Grounds Maintenance	1988.02
29/25	Viking		Stationery#	71.33
30/25	M I Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
31/25	KALC		Training Courses	120.00
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	6.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	11.99
DD	Hugo Fox		Email Accounts	20.99
DD	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI (paid quarterly)	427.63
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	1044.95
		Sub total		3801.31

Receipts July 2025: None

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 July 2025

Opening balance	£13,975.76
add receipts	£20,250.00
	<u>£34,225.76</u>
less payments	£20,346.73
Balance	<u>£13,879.03</u>

Chairmans signature.....