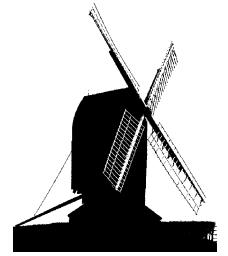


Rolvenden Parish Council



Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in St Mary the Virgin Church, Rolvenden on 21st May 2024 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr A Hinge (Chairman), Cllr S Bryant (Vice Chairman), Cllr C Balch, Cllr E Barham, Cllr M Gilchrist and Cllr J Green.

In attendance: Julie Flenley, Locum Parish Clerk

19 Members of the public were also in attendance

Locum Clerk: 2 Farm Cottages
Combe Court Farm
Prestwick Lane
Chiddingfold
Surrey, GU8 4XW
Email:
rolvendenclerk@gmail.com

Public participation:

A resident raised the issue of the meeting dates changing and the difficulty in coordinating the meeting dates with the police schedule to facilitate their attendance. Clerk acknowledged and noted for the record. Another resident noted that the parish council's Asset Register may be to be redressed to acknowledge the Lavell post cards value. Clerk noted for the record.

A further resident noted that under the previous parish council, weekly checks were undertaken by councillors on the playground and recreation grounds and queried when this would restart. Cllr Hinge noted that the council was very new and that issues were being addressed when they arose. Inspections and associated paperwork would resume as soon as practicable.

A resident noted that Ashford Borough Council had recently completed a 'Call for Sites' in the borough to coincide with the formation of their new Local Plan. It was noted that the Neighbourhood Development Plan was still current and it was an important document when considering planning applications.

1031. To elect the Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2024/25 and to receive the declaration of acceptance of office:

Cllr Hinge proposed Cllr Barham as Chairman. Cllr Barham removed himself from the process. Cllr Balch proposed Cllr Hinge. Seconded by Cllr Gilchrist. Agreed by majority, abstention from Cllr Barham. Cllr Antony Hinge was duly elected as Chairman to Rolvenden Parish Council for 2024-2025.

1032. To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the municipal year 2024/25 and to receive the declaration of acceptance of office:

Cllr Gilchrist proposed Cllr Bryant as Vice Chairman of Rolvenden Parish Council. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed unanimously, Cllr Bryant was duly elected as Vice Chairman to Rolvenden Parish Council for 2024-25.

1033. To appoint the Proper Officer to the Council:

The Clerk noted that she was the Proper Officer to the Council and would sign any paperwork deeming the same.

1034. Apologies for absence:

There were no apologies for absence.

1035. Declarations of interest:

- **Disclosable Interests:** Under the Localism Act 2011 to be made relating to items on the agenda.
- **Other Significant Interests:** Under the Code of Conduct adopted in May 2021 by the Parish Council, to be made relating to items on this agenda.
- **Other Interests:** not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b) but voluntary announcements made only for transparency reasons.

Cllr Barham noted that he had an interest in planning matters in the parish as he had submitted land in the Ashford Borough Council 'Call for Sites'. Cllrs Hinge and Barham noted that they had an interest in agenda item 1048 as trustees of the War Memorial Trust

1036. Minutes:

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th April 2024 were submitted, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. Clerk to hold on file.

1037. To receive a report from the Ashford Borough Councillor

Cllr Kate Walder noted that she had spoken to Kent Police on recent criminal activities in Rolvenden and that an apprehension had been made. The suspect was going to be interviewed in the near future with regards to the issues. Cllr Walder reminded residents to be vigilant and report any further activities to the police. It was also reported that leaflets were due to be delivered shortly on the draft Local Plan for Ashford Borough Council – the public consultation was due to commence soon.

Cllr Walder further noted that there had been significant issues with bin collection in the borough which had resulted in residents household waste and recycling bins being missed of the schedule. She noted that due to the widespread issues in the borough, Ashford Borough Council were considering levying fines on Suez for non-provision of essential services. She strongly encouraged residents to report issues to both her and to ABC in order for them to understand where the issues were occurring. Cllr Walder to update at next meeting.

1038. Planning:

Planning application PA/2024/0685 – 25 & 27 High Street, Rolvenden – Installation of electric front gates to front 25-27 High Street.

Resolved: Councillors noted that they had no issue with the principle of gate installation at the application site, however, the scale of the gates was not in keeping with the Conservation Area and it was felt that it would set a dangerous precedent along the High Street should the gates be approved. Councillors suggested that smaller, more suitable gates be installed which would be sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area. Clerk to write.

Planning application PA/2024/0887 – Great Maytham Hall, 2 The Clock House, Maytham Road, Rolvenden, TN17 4NE – Listed Building Consent for proposed lift and associated structural/building works; removal and insertion of internal walls; raising the kitchen floor and new bespoke secondary glazing.

Resolved: councillors motioned no comments.

1039. Standing Orders:

Cllr Hinge proposed that the Standing Orders be accepted. Seconded by Cllr Balch. Councillors agreed unanimously to agree the Standing Orders for 2024/25. Clerk noted for the record.

1040. Financial Regulations:

Cllr Hinge proposed that the Financial Regulations be accepted. Seconded by Cllr Balch. Councillors agreed unanimously to agree the Financial Regulations for 2024/25. Clerk noted for the record.

1041. Code of Conduct:

After discussions, Cllr Balch proposed that the Code of Conduct be postponed to the June agenda to allow councillors to give it due consideration. Seconded by Cllr Green. Agreed unanimously, Clerk noted for the June agenda.

1042. General Risk Assessment:

After discussions, Cllr Balch proposed that the Risk Assessment be postponed to the June agenda to allow councillors to give it due consideration. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed unanimously, Clerk noted for the June agenda.

1043. Asset Register:

Councillors noted the Asset Register which was agreed by the Internal Auditor. Cllr Hinge noted that the gavel was not included in the list of parish assets and that it ought to be included. Cllr Hinge proposed that the Asset be agreed as updated with the parish gavel. Seconded by Cllr Balch. Agreed unanimously. Clerk noted and agreed to update the register to include the gavel at a notional figure of £1 and recirculate the Asset Register accordingly.

1044. General Power of Competence:

The Clerk noted that the council could not adopt the General Power of Competence due to the volume of unelected councillors through co-options. This would remain the case until the next parish council elections. Councillors noted for the record accordingly.

1045. Report of the Independent Internal Auditor:

Cllr Barham expressed concerns that the numbers which had been agreed by the Internal Auditor did not reflect the sums of funds paid out by Ashford Borough Council as a result of the council’s banking issues (inability to pay invoices as mandate cannot be finalised and sent to Unity Trust). Cllr Barham proposed that the Locum Clerk check the position, report back to the council and include the AGAR on the June agenda. The Clerk noted that it must be agreed at this point. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed unanimously. Clerk noted the AGAR for the June agenda and agreed to check the position with the former clerk and internal auditor and report to council.

1046. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

Staff costs	£1,203.83
HMRC	£420.02
Litter picking – April 2024	£120.00
KALC Annual Subscription	£716.32
Rolvenden Village Hall (annual Insurance)	£952.13
Tompsett Landscaping (April grass cutting)	£1,988.02
D Ward Electrical	£193.81
H J Hoad – Internal Audit	£190.00

N.B. Bank mandate outstanding with Unity Bank, awaiting signatures of former councillors to allow access to new councillors.

Resolved:

1. to authorise the payment of the items in the schedule of payments with the exception of the invoice from A Hoad on the Internal Audit – pending clarification on the outstanding amount owed to ABC and it’s inclusion on the AGAR.
2. To request Ashford Borough Council to effect the payments on behalf of the Parish Council as the formalities for the change of signatories are incomplete.

1047. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023-2024:

- a) Councillors noted comments at agenda item 1045; Cllr Balch requested that the AGAR Section 1 be deferred to the June meeting. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed Unanimously. Clerk to carry item forward.
- b) Councillors noted comments at agenda item 1045; Cllr Balch requested that the AGAR Section 2 be deferred to the June meeting. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed Unanimously. Clerk to carry item forward.

1048. Appointments to outside bodies:

The Parish Councillors noted that Cllrs Hinge and Bryant were Trustees of the Committee. It was agreed that the Trust would continue with the existing other members but the item would be postponed to the June meeting where further clarification would be provided as to the number of parish councillors required to be involved in the Trust.

The parish councillors agreed to appoint Cllr Hinge as the person to attend the Village Hall Management Committee meetings.

Cllrs Gilchrist and Green agreed to become the appointed persons to attend meetings of the Kent Association of Local Councils and disseminate information to councillors.

1049. Meetings:

The Parish Council is asked to determine the date for the June meeting of the Parish Council and future meeting dates to inform both councillors and residents of when the parish council are going to meet.

Resolved: The June meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 20th June in Rolvenden Village Hall and meeting dates thereafter will be finalised in the June Full Council meeting once discussions with the Village Hall Committee on regular bookings has concluded. It was noted that the Village Hall was the preferred option for meetings as it offered both Wi-Fi and better acoustics for residents to hear. Cllr Hinge to update on venue.

1050. Appointment of New Clerk:

The Locum Clerk noted that 3 applications had been received by the council and that a move to sift the applications for shortlisting and interviewing. It was agreed that Cllrs Hinge, Balch and Gilchrist would shortlist (4th June) and interview the candidate/s (date TBC) and an update would be given at the June Full Council meeting of the outcome.

1051. Other items for information:

- Cllr Barham wished to thank Renzo Medafor his assistance in fixing a sign in the village.
- Cllr Barham agreed to report a large pothole on B3286.
- Co-optees to be invited to the June meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:11pm