



Rolvenden Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 19 June 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr A. Hinge (Chairman), Cllr H. Back, Cllr. S. Bryant, Cllr. M. Geerts, Cllr M. Gilchrist, and Cllr J. Green

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk,
County Councillor Wayne Chapman

29 members of the public were also in attendance

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

clerk@rolvendenparishcouncil.gov.uk

1270. Administration:

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones.

1271. Intention to record the Meeting:

There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1272. Apologies for Absence:

An apology for absence was received from Ward Member Kate Walder and Cllrs. Balch, Barham and Walker and the reasons for absence were accepted

1273. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Bryant noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

Cllr Hinge noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

Cllr. Back declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 9 (e).

Cllr. Geerts declared a pecuniary interest in planning proposal NOT/2025/0931.

1274. Minutes of the meeting of the 12 May 2025

Resolved: That the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on the 12 May 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

1275. Ward Member/County Councillor Report:

County Councillor Report: Wayne Chapman gave the following report.

Highways Update

Brook Street: KCC Drainage is investigating before any repairs can proceed.

Appledore Road: Continuing discussions with KCC Highways to clarify responsibilities and ensure the road is maintained to a proper standard.

Cranbrook Road: KCC Highways and Drainage are assessing the surface water issues that are causing highway erosion. Once investigations are complete a full plan will be put forward to carry out the appropriate remedial works.

Tenterden High Street: The marked lines at East Cross and West Cross will be scheduled as overnight works to minimise disruption.

Benenden Road/ Halden Lane: Pleased to see that patch and strip repairs have been carried out.

Woodchurch – Highway Concerns

I met with a local resident on the 17 June 2025 to discuss concerns about the proposed highway works relating to The Limes and the Vistry Homes development. Topics include the placement of pedestrian crossings, bus stops and the protection of trees with preservation orders.

Tenterden Mayor and Councillors

A constructive meeting to discuss a wide range of issues took place on the 29 May 2025. I met with Tenterden Mayor Andrew Holcombe and Deputy Mayor Jane Mills and the previous Mayor Sue Ferguson. I hope to support the communities and Town and Parish Councils in progressing their issues wherever possible.

Solar Farm Proposal – Legge Farm

I took part in a community walk which took place on the 8 May 2025 from Legge Farm, Woodchurch to Kenardington. The proposed solar farm for this site would mean the loss of high-grade farmland for forty plus years. I view this as a serious concern and will continue to monitor the situation.

Tenterden Social Hub – 45th Anniversary

I attended the 45th Anniversary of the Tenterden Social Hub on the 18 June 2025. There was entertainment and a showcase of the Social Hub's past and future work.

Monypenny Rolvenden Resident Letter

See agenda item 1278. The residents of Monypenny have contacted me for my help and support.

Visit to Homewood School

On the 25 June 2025 I will visit Homewood School for an event organised by the Town Councils Business and Tourism Officer to tour the facilities and explore how the school and local community can work more closely together.

Spirit of Tenterden Festival

I have donated some of my Member grant towards the Spirit of Tenterden Festival.

Contact Information:

I am available by email wayne.chapman@kent.gov.uk

1276. Chairman's report:

During May and June I attended a number of meetings and have carried out various interviews and appraisals.

On behalf of the village hall the Clerk and I repeated the appraisal of the Hall Manager in line with accepted practice.

This was constructive for both parties and cleared the way for improved management of the Hall. This led to the general acceptance of a new and more robust and detailed contract which will better meet the demands of the position as it has evolved over time. The contract was drawn up by experienced legal HR from OUTSET.

I also interviewed in person, with the Clerk, three candidates for the position of bookkeeper. The job was offered to a lady from Rye who offered sufficient experience as a suitably qualified person at a reasonable cost. She has accepted the position and a handover will be arranged shortly with the existing Treasurer.

I am in the process of interviewing a number of local persons for cleaning responsibilities at the hall and should have a person appointed who will take over from contract cleaners at the end of the three month required notice period.

I have attended two training sessions for local Councillors, one online concerning the skills and tips required for good chairmanship, and the other an in-person lecture at Appledore village hall on understanding and implementing the Codes of Conduct, also attended by Councillor Geerts.

Both gave a few pointers on improved understanding and assistance with the standards necessary that we aspire to manage and work to.

I have also attended a community meeting with the residents of Monypenny to better understand their point of view and the proposed plan that ABC are considering. This will be covered in greater detail further in the meeting.

1277. Clerk's report:

Sparkeswood Avenue: The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has reported concerns about alleged illegal planting outside a property on what is thought to be Borough owned land.

Exercise of Public Rights: The period for the Exercise of Public Rights commenced on the 3 June 2025 and ends on the 14 July 2025. The Clerk has placed the Notice on the website and noticeboards.

Gateways: The Clerk reported that the gateways on Hastings Road have now been repaired and thanked Tompsetts for all their hard work.

Allotments: The annual inspection of the allotments is due to take place on Thursday 17 July 2025. The Clerk and Cllr. Hinge will attend along with members of the Allotment Committee.

MP Katie Lam has confirmed that she will be attending the Parish Council meeting due to be held on the 21 August 2025.

1278. Open Session:

A representative for the residents of Monypenny gave the following report:

Back In 2023, ABC presented the residents with shock proposals to demolish and redevelop Monypenny and the bungalows and replace these with a new Independent Living Building of one and two bedroom flats and 14 Affordable General Needs Houses. The proposed design incorporated the adjacent Vicarage site purchased by ABC for an estimated sum of £1.6 million and left unoccupied since 2021. Despite multiple requests by residents and our Independent Living Officer residents have not been kept updated as promised by ABC. This uncertainty has resulted in lots of worry and mental stress for the residents. At a meeting held on the 7 May 2025 ABC presented the residents with new proposals for the redevelopment of the Monypenny Independent Living Scheme incorporating the purchased Vicarage site. The meeting was attended by Officers Anthony Crossley and Mark Bowden from ABC, architects and representatives from the Development Team. The new proposal is to demolish the Vicarage and Monypenny buildings and the six bungalows and replace them with a new Independent Living Residential Building, consisting of one and two bedroom flats. If the planning application for the proposal is approved ABC will revoke all the existing tenancy agreements and all residents will be relocated elsewhere to unknown accommodation in Ashford. Residents will then need to bid again to be relocated back to Monypenny when the works are completed. Residents feel that this proposal will result in a further three to four years of disruption and uncertainty. Residents are also upset about the lack of empathy from the ABC Officers. There seems to be no consideration given to the personal or social needs of the elderly residents who simply want to spend their remaining years in relative peace and tranquility in Monypenny as their Tenancy documents state. In view of the present shortage of Independent living housing in the

borough the residents are concerned about moving away from Monypenny for a few years. Many residents are quite frail and unwell and anxiety about these proposals is not helping. A petition has been started and the residents are seeking support and help from all bodies to include the County Councillor and Ward Member and would like the support of the Parish Council.

Many members of the public expressed their disappointment with the proposal to move all of the residents out of Monypenny and felt that the build could be conducted in a way that the residents could stay on site.

Sian Reeves advised that the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch Scheme will support the Monypenny campaign. The agent for planning application PA/2025/0936 and PA/2025/0961 gave some background information on the proposals and asked if the Parish Council could request that the applications are determined by the ABC Planning Committee should the Planning Officer be minded to refuse them.

1279. Planning:

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

PA/2025/0936: 34 Maytham Road, Rolvenden

Erection of replacement single storey side and rear extension, following the demolition of bay window and existing rear extension. Erection of ancillary garden building. Erection of storage shed with open fronted garden room, along with 2 new bin storage buildings.

Resolved: Support subject to a condition that the garden building is ancillary accommodation to the main house. In addition, should the Planning Officer be minded to refuse the proposal to request that the Ward Member asks for it be considered by the Planning Committee at ABC.

PA/2025/0961: 34 Maytham Road, Rolvenden

Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey side and rear extension following the demolition of the front bay window/porch and existing rear extension. Amendments to fenestration including the reinstatement of sash window to front elevation. Internal alterations including removal of partition walls to create doorways and associated works,

Resolved: Support.

Cllr. Geerts declared a pecuniary interest and left the meeting.

NOT/2025/0931: Little Forsham Farm, Wassall Lane, Rolvenden

Prior Notification for general purpose agricultural building.

Resolved: Support.

Cllr. Geerts returned to the meeting.

County Councillor Wayne Chapman and 3 members of the public left the meeting.

b) To consider any approvals:

c) **PA/2025/0603: Annexe at Mill House, Benenden Road, Rolvenden**

Single storey garden room extension to the western elevation of the existing annex.

PA/2025/0659: Annexe at Mill House, Benenden Road, Rolvenden

Listed Building Consent for single storey garden room extension to the western elevation of the existing annex.

PA/2025/0554: The Old Workshop, 2 Thornden Farm Cottages, Thornden Lane, Rolvenden

Proposed double-bay car barn, replacing the existing Builders Store.

PA/2025/0410: Waterloo House, 56-58 High Street, Rolvenden

Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans & documents) of planning permission PA/2023/0095 for proposed garden room and greenhouse to allow for changes to materials.

PA/2025/0507: Silver, Rolvenden Hill, Rolvenden

Single-storey extension and remodel existing roof space with new roof lights and dormer to rear elevation.

New roof over garage with gable end to match existing, adapt existing hardstanding to form new turnaround area following the demolition of the existing rear extension.

PA/2025/0156: Rolvenden Primary School, Hastings Road, Rolvenden

Proposed single storey rear and side extensions and permission to use part of a field as a temporary car park during the construction works.

d) To consider any refusals: None to consider.

e) **Withdrawn:** None to consider.

1280. S106 Funding

Members considered the request from the football club and tennis club for S106 funding. The Clerk advised that there is £13,043.78 S106 funding remaining for outdoor sports capital expenditure and £14,868.41 for outdoor sports maintenance. The tennis club has a number of projects that could qualify for either the maintenance or capital funding available. These include replacing the fencing on the lower court at a cost of £9,363.00 (excluding VAT), repainting the lower court surface at a cost of £3,595.00 (excluding VAT) and marking out the Pickleball courts a cost

of £800.00 (excluding VAT). A total cost of £13,758.00 (excluding VAT). The football club have requested the sum of £4,000.00 (excluding VAT) for the additional and unexpected legal fees incurred in preparing the new lease. It was noted that the S106 team at ABC has advised that in principle it would be acceptable to spend some of the remaining outdoors sports capital contributions on the additional legal fees incurred by the football club. The Clerk suggested that the request for funding from the tennis club could qualify for the outdoor sports maintenance allocation. Cllr. Bryant advised that he would like to see more Junior tennis sessions at the club.

Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to speak to explain the membership rates and arrangements for Juniors.

Resolved: The Clerk to submit a S106 Claim for £4,000.00 to be paid from the remaining outdoor sports capital expenditure contribution and to submit a S106 Claim for £13,758.00 for maintenance works at the tennis club to paid from the remaining outdoor sports maintenance contribution.

1281. Parish Matters.

a) Monypenny Redevelopment Proposals

Members discussed the comments made by many members of public in the Open Session on a proposal to relocate the current residents at Monypenny while the building works take place and the lack of engagement between ABC and the residents over the last two years. It was noted that the Clerk and Cllr. Hinge attended a meeting with the residents of Monypenny on Tuesday 10 June 2025 to discuss their concerns. Members were in agreement that they shared the concerns about the proposals and the effect these will have on the wellbeing of the residents. Members agreed that the works need to take place but that the needs and wants of the residents need to be addressed in a more sensitive manner.

Resolved: The Clerk to write to Tracy Kerly, Chief Executive Officer at ABC, Simon Cole, Assistant Director Planning and Development at ABC and MP Katie Lam requesting their support for a meeting to be held with ABC, the residents at Monypenny and the Parish Council to discuss their concerns.

5 members of the public left the meeting.

b) Gibbons Educations Trust

Cllr. Hinge explained that The Gibbons Educational Trust had suggested transferring its assets to the War Memorial Trust but is now considering transferring the funding to the school and disbanding. A final decision is awaited.

c) Local Government Reorgansation

It was noted that the Clerk had attended an Extraordinary General Meeting that afternoon to discuss the implications of the proposed Local Government Reorganisation for Parish Councils. The Clerk advised Members that the 14 current authorities have to submit their thoughts to the Government on whether Kent should have 3 or 4 Unitary Authorities by the 28 November 2025. There seems to be support for both a 3 and 4 Unitary Authority Model for Kent. Early 2026 the Government will confirm their choice of model for Kent and it is anticipated that Elections could take place for the Shadow Unitary Authorities in May 2027 which is also when Local Elections are due. In other areas that have gone through this process the Local Elections were postponed. Kent will receive £0.5m of government funding to assist with buying in professional help to prepare the paper due on the 28 November 2025. There is no funding to manage the transition which is forecasted to cost in the region of £20m. When the Unitary Authorities are established they will undertake a Community Governance Review to decide how they will operate which will include a review of the role of Parish Councils.

d) Neighbourhood Watch/Kent Police Update

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

The next article in the Rolvenden Parish Magasine will focus on fire prevention and arson. There has been reports of catapulting in Tenterden and Wittersham. A journalist would like to hear about any incidents of catapulting for a news article they are preparing – contact Sian Reeves for more information. Locally there has been an incident of petty theft involving milk being stolen from a doorstep. E-Scooters are classed as motor vehicles under the Road Traffic Act 1988. This means the rules that apply to motor vehicles, also apply to e-scooters including the need to have a licence and insurance. If you see anyone riding an e-scooter on the pavement or road, please report this.

Ongoing and new Fraud/Scams to be aware of

Information in my monthly Rolvenden Parish magazine article and sent to Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch members. Investment scam, Mobile phone scam, WhatsApp scam with people posing to be a friend or family member, Ticket fraud, Romance scams, Charity fraud scam in the parish, Voice cloning scam, QR code scams (search for this in your browser rather than scanning a QR code), M&S scam.

Reporting Crime: Sian Reeves urged residents to report any crime as this informs Kent Police intelligence. The CSU has recently arrested 5 people for crimes involving weapons.

1282. HIGHWAYS/PROW

a) Highways Improvement Plan

Priority 1 Maytham Road, Rolvenden Layne: The Clerk advised that the proposed gateways for both entrances to Rolvenden Layne on Maytham Road are scheduled to be installed on the 15 July 2025.

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 advised that the results will be shared in a few months.

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 have been carried out on roads to include Halden Lane, Maytham Road, A28 Hastings Road and Cranbrook Road. Carriageway repairs are due to be carried out on Sparkeswood on the 24 June 2025. A surface dressing treatment is due to take place on Benenden Road from the 25-26 June 2025 from the A28 to Stepneyford Lane. The Clerk was asked to report that various potholes need to be repaired on Benenden Road between Mount Lodge Farm and Little Halden Place Farm.

1283. Finances

a) **To receive the accounts**

The accounts dated the 31 May 2025 were received.

b) **To receive the bank reconciliation as at 31 May 2025**

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

c) **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. Hinge and Green to authorise the payments online. The authorised schedule was initialled immediately below the last item by the Chair in accordance with the financial regulations.

7 members of the public left meeting.

1284. 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**

The following report was sent by Denise Curtain and read out by the Chair.

At a virtual meeting held on the 30 May 2025 Denise Curtain was elected chair of the steering committee and Andy Barwise vice- chair.

As no one individual volunteered to be a Minute taker it was agreed this task would be undertaken on rotation. However, if somebody would like to volunteer for that duty alone, with no further involvement in the steering committee, we would be very grateful.

Updates were received on the progression of tasks allocated at the previous meeting – some have been completed, others were works in progress and others had stalled due to a lack of helpful information from outside sources e.g. the strategic housing numbers required by ABC's Local Plan.

One area of concern is the lack of engagement by residents. Judy Vinson and Denise Curtain volunteered to undertake various initiatives to try to boost the numbers of surveys being completed. This has included social media engagement, posters and a physical presence at different points/events in the village, handing out flyers and explaining the importance of the Plan. It would also be helpful if the information about the survey could be prominently displayed on the Parish Council website.

Since the meeting we have received the bad news that the recent government spending review has withdrawn all funding for Neighbourhood Plans so we have been considering ways to overcome this blow since the Parish Council budget does not include a designated sum for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Alison Eardley, Planning Consultant, has looked at the figures and estimates we will need £5560.00 to complete the work. Allocating sites could potentially push those costs up, given the current unknown ABC stance on sites. This may mean we refresh the Plan as is but with a few new policies. We have the option of ABC doing any actual allocating rather than through the NP, which would save our costs, but we would need to be fully involved in that.

The contents of the Ashford Local Plan are due to be presented to ABC Cabinet at the end of July 2025 and then go out for consultation. This may give us more idea about housing within villages as the Local Plan will identify a range of settlements within the villages that could accommodate growth but is unlikely to specify a housing number per parish.

Costs could be reduced further if the Steering Committee undertake all the community engagement which is feasible if committee members can make themselves available.

Either way we need to source funding to complete the Plan. The Clerk has been asked to enquire about the County Members Grant. Cllr Kate Walder has been asked about her Ward Members Grant and any other possible pots of money available via ABC. We have approached the former fete committee to consider if their remaining funds could be used for the village in this way, in the absence of anyone wishing to continue with the fete.

The next meeting will take place on the 24 June 2025.

- c) **Rolvenden Village Hall:**
See agenda item 1276. Cllr. Hinge reported that the new bookkeeper will be overseen by an Honorary Treasurer Trustee and that it is hoped to have a new independent cleaner in place to replace the contracted cleaning company. Cllr. Hinge thanked local resident Kevin Johnson for his support in helping with recruitment. Cllr. Hinge advised that the new heating system is currently been installed. The heating control will be linked to the booking system so that hirers can also arrange, if required, for the heating to be on for their session. The new heating system, which was in the main funded by a grant from ABC, should substantially reduce the heating bill.
- d) **KALC Ashford Area Committee:**
The minutes of the KALC Area Committee meeting held on Wednesday 28 May 2025 were noted and that Tracy Kerly, CEO at ABC and Charlotte Hammersley, Head of Policy and Performance at ABC will be attending the next meeting due to be held on the 31 July 2025 to discuss both the Local Government Review and the Community Governance Review.
- e) **KALC/ABC Code of Conduct Training:** Cllr. Hinge and Geerts attended the training organised by KALC and ABC on the Code of Conduct.

1285. Items for the next meeting

Appraisal and review of contractual hours for the Clerk.
Desk name plates for Councillors – the Clerk to source.

1286. Correspondence/Consultations

It was noted that the Clerk will be attending the following KALC courses which have been paid for by Capel Parish Council: 16 July 2025, Transfer of Assets; 31 July, Contract Management; 8 September 2024, Procurement.

1287. Any Confidential Items:

There were none.

1288. Date of the next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 17 July 2025 at 7.30pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.25pm

Signed: Date:

BACS Payments for Approval June 2025

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
18/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	95.30
19/24	Tompsetts	3315	Grounds Maintenance	1988.02
20/25	Rolvenden Village Hall		Insurance contribution	1000.00
21/25	M I Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	6.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	11.99
DD	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI (paid quarterly)	427.63
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	1044.95
		Sub total		4598.89

Receipts June 2025:

Date	Amount
	0.00

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 May 2025

Opening balance	£13,975.76
add receipts	£20,250.00
	<u>£34,225.76</u>
less payments	£11,315.62
Balance	<u>£22,910.14</u>

Chairmans signature.....