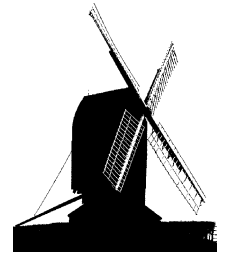


Rolvenden Parish Council



Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 17 April 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr A. Hinge (Chairman), Cllr. C. Balch, Cllr. E. Barham, Cllr. S. Bryant, Cllr. L. Walker.

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk

5 members of the public were also in attendance

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

clerk@rolvendenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Administration:

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones.

1229. Intention to record the meeting

There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1230. Apologies for Absence:

An apology for absence was received from Ward Member Kate Walder, Cllrs: M. Gilchrist and M. Geerts and the reasons for absence were accepted

1231. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Bryant noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.
Cllr Hinge noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.
Cllr. Balch noted an interest in planning proposal PA/2025/0538.
Cllr. Barham noted an interest in planning proposals PA/2025/0554.

1232. Minutes of the meeting of the 20 March 2025

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 20 March 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

1233. Ward Member's Report:

There was no report. The Clerk was asked to contact the Ward Member and request that a written report is provided when possible.

1234. Chairman's report:

The Parish council has been involved with a number of activities. The Neighbourhood plan has progressed through the Steering Group. The Group has self-determined that it will be a community led body and has elected its own chairperson and secretary. A number of councillors remain as active participants. This will ultimately be signed off by the council once it has been completed. The Plan continues to be very ably developed under the professional guidance of Alison Eardley.

The Rolvenden Allotments had their AGM at Moneypenny. Reports from the officers were given, and a voting process for election of officers determined. The vote was by ballot which concluded 2 weeks later, the result being the re-election of the existing officers. This attended by myself together with the ballot count overseen.

The Village Hall continues to struggle with insufficient trustees, in particular the resignation of the treasurer, which is a critical position. The upgrade of the heating system has been given the go ahead and contractors quotation accepted. We are now waiting on an installation date. The funding will be largely met by grants which have been obtained.

Thoburn Trust has now gained full bank account control in line with regulatory guidance. We continue to pursue the correct registration of the land title via the solicitors originally involved. A variety of registrations to allow for correct management and grant application have been put in place and we continue to monitor the opportunity to apply for grants as they become available. This will allow for fencing, tree maintenance and other environmental improvements.

The audit has been carried out with reports to follow.

Chairmans signature.....

1235. Clerk's report:

Agenda: The Clerk apologised for an error with the issue date on the agenda posted on the noticeboards.
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.

1236. Open Session:

A member of the public has contacted the Clerk expressing concern about people taking their dogs into the play area at Rolvenden Layne.

1237. Planning:

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

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

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

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

Resolved: Support, subject to a condition that the proposed car barn does not become separate ancillary accommodation.

Cllr. Barham returned to the meeting.

PA/2025/0673/PA/2025/0618: Barge Cottage, Maytham Road, Rolvenden

Listed Building Consent for the removal of the rear porch, part of the rear wall and modern flat roof dormer, replacement with partial ground and first floor extension, alterations to the roof form of the existing single storey elements, alterations to fenestration and internal alterations to the first floor to create an en-suite bathroom.

Resolved: Support.

PA/2024/2266: 47 Maytham Road, Rolvenden

Installation of EWI (External Wall Insulation) and roof extension.

Resolved: Support.

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.

Resolved: Support.

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.

Resolved: Support.

Cllr. Balch declared an interest and left the meeting

PA/2025/0538: The Water Tower, Hastings Road, Rolvenden

Proposed lower level single storey extension and infill extension. Erection of balcony to serve first floor level.

Cllr. Balch returned to the meeting.

Resolved: Support.

b) **To consider any approvals:** None to consider

c) **To consider any refusals:** None to consider.

Withdrawn: None to consider.

1238. Parish Matters.

a) Proposed dates of meetings 2025-2026

Resolved: To adopt the dates of the meetings circulated by the Clerk noting that the next meeting, the Annual Parish Council Meeting, will be held on the 22 May 2025.

b) The Gibbons Educational Trust:

Cllr. Hinge explained that The Gibbons Educational Trust has suggested transferring its assets to the War Memorial Trust and is seeking the permission of the Parish Council. The Trust holds just a small amount of capital that produces an income of approximately £250.00 per year. The ongoing cost on running The Trust is making it increasingly not viable for it to exist as an independent charity. Members discussed this proposal. Cllr. Barham suggested that the Gibbons Educational Trust consider transferring the funding to the school and disbanding. It was agreed that the cost of merging the two Trustees could be prohibitive. Cllr. Bryant reported that the school is actively seeking funding for the current building works. Cllr. Hinge agreed to discuss this suggestion with The Gibbons Educational Trust.

c) Annual Parish Meeting (APM) Thursday 24 April at 7.30pm

The Clerk advised that invitations to attend and report at the APM have been sent out to all relevant bodies. The Clerk will arrange some drinks and The Star Inn will be providing some light nibbles. MP Katie Lam is unable to attend the APM but will send a report. County Councillor, Mike Hill will be attending and it was noted that Mike Hill will not be standing for election on the 1 May 2025. It was agreed that Cllr. Barham, as the Councillor who has known Mike Hill the longest, formally thanks him at the APM on behalf of the Parish Council for all his services over a number of years.

d) **Thoburn Land Trust:**

The Trust is not currently registered with the Charity Commission because it did not meet their minimum annual income threshold of £5,000.00. However, the Clerk is hopeful that the S106 grant will be accepted as income meaning that the Trust could be registered with the Charity Commission.

Resolved: The Clerk to begin the process of registering the Thoburn Land Trust with the Charity Commission.

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

Sian Reeves, Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch, sent her apologies and Cllr. Hinge read out the following report.

Report from 20 March 25 meeting updated below – this will be detailed in the Parish magazine

Further to a member of the public reporting anti-social behaviour at the council meeting on 20 February 2025: pellets smashing a window, likely to be catapulting; I passed this on to Ashford Neighbourhood Watch volunteer, Peter New. He met with one local MP and has requested another meeting. This problem persists across the whole Ashford district area including villages. I encourage you to sign this petition:

Make the sale of catapults/ammunition and carrying catapults illegal

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/701064> Update: At the time of writing (17 April 25), it has over 20, 864 votes which means there will be a government response. Please sign and share widely with friends and family. If you see anyone using a catapult, report it with the date, day, time, location, information about the culprits: gender, approximate age, physical description (height, weight, hair colour, complexion, including any special features, clothes and if there were any other witnesses. Once you sign the petition, you will receive an email to verify your signature.

E-scooters: These 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 own an e-scooter, you can only use it in on private land, such as in a garden but you must have the permission of the landowner to do so. If you see anyone riding an e-scooter on the pavement or road, please report this. Further advice regarding e-scooters is available via the link below <https://www.kent.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rs/road-safety/advice-escooters/>

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, Ticket fraud, Romance scams, Blue badge scams, Rogue traders – be wary of cold callers, Charity fraud, HMRC scams, Voice cloning to commit fraud, Courier fraud (posing a police officers), QR code scams (search for this in your browser rather than scanning a QR code), Bank branch closure scam, Stop! Think Fraud campaign.

1239. 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 should be installed in a few months.

Priority 2 Hastings Road, Rolvenden: KCC has advised that they will be carrying out both pedestrian and traffic surveys after the Easter holidays.

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: Concern was expressed about the number of potholes on roads within the parish and the time it is taking for them to be repaired. The Clerk advised that KCC have been given funding from Government and as they did last year will be carrying out a pothole blitz. It was suggested and agreed that The Clerk should advise County Councillor Mike Hill of the Parish Council's concerns about the number of potholes in the parish.

c) **New Faults**

Potholes: Clerk to re-report various potholes on: Halden Lane, A28 Hastings Road, Maytham Farm, Benenden Road and Sparkeswood Avenue.

Rolvenden Layne Playground: The Clerk to source a sign to advise no dogs allowed in the play area.

1240. Finances

a) **To receive the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2025**

Members noted that the Clerk had circulated the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending the 31 March 2025.

b) **To receive the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2024/2025**

It was noted that the Internal Auditor inspected the accounts on the 10 April 2025 and found the financial records to be up to date and accurate. It was noted that the Internal Auditor has given a negative response to internal control objectives (m) and (n) due to failure of the Parish Council to publish the exercise of rights within the correct timescale. The Clerk reminded Members that Mazars, the external auditor, when undertaking the review of the 2023/24 Annual Governance and Accountability Return noted that the Parish Council has not met the requirements

of the 2015 Accounts and Audit Regulations to provide electors with a period of 30 working days including the first 10 working days of July, to inspect the accounts. This was due to the notice of public rights not being uploaded to the Council's website until the 8 July 2024. It was noted that the Clerk had written a report to Full Council for the meeting held on the 17 October 2024 outlining all the matters that had come to the attention of the external auditor and detailing the corrective measures. The Clerk will ensure that the required Notice period is given in future years.

c) To approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)

Members discussed each statement and agreed that statements 1-3 and 5-8 have been met. In accordance with above it was agreed that statement 4, which covers the exercise of elector's rights, had not been met for the 2023/2024 audit for the reasons outlined above. The Clerk was asked to circulate a copy of all the supporting papers that will be submitted with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 to the external auditor.

Resolved: That statements the Annual Governance Statement 2024-2205 be approved and for the Clerk/RFO and Chair to sign.

d) To approve the Accounting Statements 2024-2025 (Section 2):

Resolved: To approve the Accounting Statements 2024-2025 and for the Chair to sign.

e) To set the commencement dates for the exercise of Public Rights:

Said dates are the 3 June 2025 to the 14 July 2025 and the announcement will be made on the 2 June 2025.

f) Annual Insurance

It was noted that the Parish Council is in a long term agreement with Zurich and that the premium for the year commencing the 1 May 2025 is £

g) Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2025/2026

It was noted that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government has increased the limit for Section 137 expenditure for Parish and Town Councils for the financial year 2025-2026 to £11.10 per elector, up from £10.81 in 2024-2025.

h) Proposal to purchase a new laptop for the Clerk (budgeted expenditure)

Members considered some options for a new laptop circulated by the Clerk. The Clerk advised that there is £750.00 for a new laptop and software in the budget for 2025-2026.

Resolved: The Clerk to purchase an Acer Aspire 5 Laptop for a purchase price of £549.99 and a one year licence for Microsoft Office and Norton.

i) To receive the accounts

The accounts dated the 31 March 2025 were received.

j) To receive the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2025

The bank reconciliation as at the 31 March 2025 was noted. The bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr. Balch in accordance with the financial regulations.

k) 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 Balch to authorise the payments online. The authorised schedule was initialled immediately below the last item by the Chair in accordance with the financial regulations.

1241. External Meetings

a) Thoburn Trust Meeting:

The draft minutes of the meeting held on the 10 April 2025 were noted. Cllr. Hinge advised that the solicitor, Wellers, has now reviewed the files and the AS1 Forms to register the parkland to the Parish Council were not submitted to the Land Registry in 2022. Wellers have advised that the AS1 Forms need to be redrafted and then signed. Copies of the new forms will be sent to the executors and Parish Council for signing. Cllr. Hinge advised that the Parish Council has an obligation to pursue any monetary value from a covenant for use/access of the car park which should possibly have been paid by the new owner.

b) Neighbourhood Development Plan:

See agenda item 1234.

c) Rolvenden Village Hall:

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 March 2025 were noted. Cllr. Hinge advised that the Management Committee may need to employ a Treasurer/bookkeeper if nobody comes forward as a volunteer. If more Trustees are not appointed Cllr. Hinge suggested that the hall may need to close or come under the wing of the Parish Council. Cllr. Walker complained about the cleanliness of the hall at a recent event.

d) KALC Ashford Area Committee:

The draft minutes of the KALC Area Committee meeting held on Wednesday 26 March 2025 were noted.

1242. Items for the next meeting

To agree arrangements for the safekeeping of passwords and login details used by the Clerk in the event the Clerk is unable to carry out the duties.

1243. Correspondence/Consultations

Local Government Reorganisation: Covered under agenda item 1241 (d).

KALC Help Shape the Future of NHS Services in your Community: The Clerk to send a response.

KALC Community Award: It was noted that winners of the KALC Community Award have been invited to attend a presentation event organised by KCC to be held on Wednesday 14 May 2025.

1244. Any Confidential Items:

There were none.

1245. Date of the next meeting:

Annual Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 22 May 2025 at 7pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.08pm

Signed: Date:

BACS Payments for Approval April 2025

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
01/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	86.85
02/25	Tompsetts	3315	Grounds Maintenance	1988.02
03/25	Hole Park	SI28492	Litter Picking	325.20
04/25	Viking	5491033	Stationery	69.36
05/25	Jordan Prince		BT Box repairs	220.00
06/25	Zurich Insurance	542935792	Annual Insurance	940.11
07/25	MI Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
08/25	KALC		Annual Subscription	773.75
09/25	The Star	STR-WHUB-04/25	Warm Hub reimbursement	305.00
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	6.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	11.99
DD	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI	369.36
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	1045.15
		Total		6165.79

Receipts April 2025: There were none

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2025

Opening balance	£81,535.03
add receipts	£77,906.02
	<u>£159,441.05</u>
less payments	£145,465.29
Balance	<u>£13,975.76</u>

Chairmans signature.....