



Rolvenden Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 18 September 2025 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr S. Bryant (Chairman for this meeting), Cllr H. Back, Cllr M. Gilchrist, Cllr. J. Green, Cllr. G. Hodge, Cllr. L. Walker.
In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk
County Councillor Wayne Chapman, 7 members of the public.

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

clerk@rolvendenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Intention to record the Meeting: There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1328. Apologies for Absence:

An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. Balch, Geerts and Hinge and the reasons for absence were accepted.

1329. Co-Option: The Chairman proposed that Mrs Virginia Hodge be co-opted to fill a casual vacancy.

Resolved: To co-opt Mrs Virginia Hodge to fill a casual vacancy.

The declaration of acceptance of office was read out and signed by Cllr. Hodge. Cllr. Hodge has been issued with a copy of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct and will complete a Declaration of Interests

1330. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Bryant noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

1331. Minutes of the meeting of the 21 August 2025

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 21 August 2025 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

1332. Ward Member/County Councillor Report:

It was noted that a by-election to fill the vacancy is due to be held on Thursday 25 September 2025.

County Councillor Report:

County Councillor Wayne Chapman reported that Members at KCC have rescinded a 2019 climate change policy which will save taxpayers money. County Councillor Wayne Chapman advised that KCC continues to be committed to climate change but will introduce more initiatives when the financial situation has improved. County Councillor Wayne Chapman advised that the funding that has been saved will be put to good use.

Highways

Appledore Road, Tenterden: A Section 278 agreement between Vistry and KCC has now been signed. The plans show resurfacing from the bottom of Beacon Oak Hill, past the Vistry development and most of the stretch of the road from Vistry to William Judge Close. These works must be completed before any dwellings are occupied but cannot start until UK Power Networks make the new streetlights live.

Cranbrook Road & Rolvenden Hill, Tenterden: Residents and the Kent & East Sussex Railway have raised concerns about inadequate road and crossing signage. This was reviewed by Tenterden Town Council and KCC Highways, but as the improvements are not deemed essential, they would need to be funded by Tenterden Town Council if pursued.

High Street, Tenterden: Resurfacing works from West Cross to Station Road are scheduled overnight between 24 September and 3 October 2025 (8pm–5am, excluding weekends).

Devolution & Local Government Reorganisation

Discussions continue between KCC, Medway Council, and District and Borough Councils regarding the different options for local government reorganisation.

1333. Chairman's report:

Cllr. Bryant thanked everyone involved in making the recent flower show a successful event. Cllr. Bryant reported that the bench at Gatefields has been refurbished. Cllr. Bryant also thanked a local resident who now regularly litter pickers around the village. Cllr. Bryant commented positively on the recent refurbishment of the village shop and noted that potholes were finally being repaired.

1334. Clerk's report: Nothing additional.

Chairmans signature.....

1335. Open Session:

Two members of the public raised some concerns about the alleged premature removal of a Notice relating to the diversion of public footpath AT41.

1336. Planning:

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

b) NOT/2025/1611: 66-72 West House, High Street, Rolvenden

T1: Walnut to have an overall reduction of 3m and crown lift to 4m.

T2: Crab apple to have an overall crown reduction of 1m.

Resolved: Support so long as the reduction of the Walnut is done whilst it is dormant and before the sap rises in the Spring.

c) To consider any approvals:

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.

d) To consider any refusals: None to consider.

e) Withdrawn: None to consider.

1337. Parish Matters.

a) Monypenny Proposals

The Clerk reported that Mark Bawden, Housing Strategy and Partnerships Manager at ABC, has advised that ABC has been exploring all of the options but that further work is required before they are able to indicate which options are being taken further. Mark Bawden has advised that ABC is committed to trying to minimise the impact on the residents whilst also trying to address the unmet local housing need and that an option to 'do nothing' is definitely being considered.

b) Local Plan

The Clerk reminded Members that the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation commenced on Monday 18 August and will run until 5pm on Monday 13 October 2025 (eight weeks).

Infrastructure Needs/S106 Considerations

It was agreed for the Clerk to prepare a draft Infrastructure Needs report to include suggestions for S106 funding for consideration at the next meeting. The Clerk will seek appropriate funding requests from the local organisations.

c) RoSPA Annual Inspection

The Clerk advised that the annual inspection of both playgrounds is due to take place Tuesday 30 September 2025.

d) Neighbourhood Watch/Kent Police Update

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

A car was stolen from outside the Lamb and Ewe public house on the 1 September 2025 and hub caps were recently stolen from a car parked at the Cornex Garage. Sian Reeves advised that the local priorities for Kent Police continue to be addressing anti-social behaviour issues such as catapulting, drug dealing and criminal damage. Sian Reeves urged members of the public to continue to report any incidents to Kent Police and reminded everyone that this can be done anonymously. Sian Reeves advised that she will be attending a self defence course organised by Kent Police.

Ongoing and new Fraud/Scams to be aware of

Information in my monthly Rolvenden Parish magazine article and sent to Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch members. Employment fraud; Courier Fraud; investment scam alleged to be celebrity endorsed; mis-sold car finance scam; Parking Fine scams; Skimming Device scam.

1338. HIGHWAYS/PROW

a) Highways Improvement Plan

It was agreed that the Clerk should arrange a virtual meeting with the Community Engagement Officer to review the Highways Improvement Plan and to consider some new priorities.

b) Reported Faults

Various potholes: It was noted that various pothole repairs and surface dressing repairs have been carried out across the parish. The Clerk was asked to re-report the potholes in the vicinity of Maytham Farm. Cllr. Walker raised again concerns about the perceived lack of action by South East Water in tackling the major water leak outside The Star on the A28 which started on the 8 September 2025. Cllr. Walker raised concerns about the damage the water is doing to the A28. The Clerk will raise this issue as a concern with MP Katie Lam. County Councillor Wayne Chapman advised that this and similar issues with South East Water are in the process of being addressed by KCC. The Clerk will also raise this issue at the Highways and Transportation Seminar due to be held on the 2 October 2025.

1339. Finances

a) **To note the completion of the limited assurance review year ending 31 March 2025**

Members were pleased to note that the External Auditor has completed the review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) and have concluded that the information is in accordance with Proper Practices and that no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Members noted the following comments from the External Auditor, which had not affected their opinion, and agreed the recommendations below will be addressed before the next review.

In undertaking the review of the 2024/25 Annual Return it came to our attention that the Council had not met the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 in providing electors with a period of 30 working days to inspect the accounts. The Council correctly answered no to the relevant assertion in the 2024/25 Annual Governance Statement and has complied with the regulations in 2025.

In undertaking the review of the 2024/25 Annual Return it came to our attention that the Council asserted 'No' to assertion 9, indicating it had not met put in place arrangements to discharge its accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. In future, the Council should ensure it put in place arrangement to ensure such responsibilities are effectively discharged.

The Council asserted in its Annual Governance Statement that it did not put in place arrangements to discharge its accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. However, the Internal Audit Report contains 'Yes' to control objective O, indicating that the Council has experienced no weaknesses in internal control. In future, the Council should ensure that the Internal Audit report is consistent with the Annual Governance Statement.

b) **Notice of Conclusion of Audit**

The Clerk has arranged for the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit to be displayed on the website and noticeboard along with the relevant sections of the AGAR.

c) **S106 Funding update:**

It was noted that the Clerk has requested S106 funding to support both the football club and tennis club. The Clerk advised that ABC has requested a virtual meeting to discuss the application from the football club for financial assistance with legal fees. Cllr. Hinge, Walker and the Clerk will attend the meeting,

d) **Annual Review of the Risk Assessment Policy.**

Resolved: To adopt the Risk Assessment Policy.

e) **Policies: Equality and Diversity Policy**

Resolved: To adopt the Equality and Diversity Policy.

f) **National Pay Award for the Clerk**

Members noted that a National Pay Award of 3.2% has been agreed. The Clerk advised that the payment needs to be back dated to the 1 April 2025. The payroll provider has applied the backdated payment to the next payrun.

g) **Neighbourhood Development Plan Funding**

The Clerk advised that in between meetings an application for a grant of £1,000.00 from former Ward Member Kate Walder had been made, agreed and paid. The Clerk also reported that the Tennis Club has donated £250.00 and the War Memorial Trust has donated £1,000.00. This will leave a shortfall of approximately £2,000.00 which the Parish Council has agreed to fund.

h) **To receive the accounts**

The accounts dated the 31 August 2025 were received.

Cllr, Walker asked if the Parish Council could consider at the next meeting whether to fund any shortfall for funding the Warm Hub initiative this winter. County Councillor Wayne Chapman offered to donate £500.00 to the Warm Hub initiative from his Member Grant subject to the scheme meeting the criteria. The Clerk was asked to obtain and submit a grant application form.

i) **To receive the bank reconciliation as at 31 August 2025**

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

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

Cllr. Green checked the invoices against the payment schedule, (appended to the minutes), and it was **resolved** for Cllrs. Balch 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.

1340. External Meetings

a) **Thoburn Trust Meeting:**

Cllrs. Hinge, Geerts and the Clerk had a site meeting with CLM on the 27 August 2025. CLM will now prepare a draft outline management plan and capital works plan. The Clerk reported that the Charity

Commission has requested some further information to support the application to register The Thoburn Trust as a charity to include a copy of the will.

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 Clerk reported that the Village Hall Management Committee has successfully opened new bank accounts with Unity Bank and are in the process of transferring everything across from HSBC. The bookkeeper is now using Xero as a more effective accounting package. The next meeting is due to be held on the 9 October 2025.

d) **KALC Ashford Area Committee:**

It was noted that the next meeting is due to be held on Wednesday 24 September 2025.

1341. Items for the next meeting

Warm Hub.
Christmas Tree and lights and tractor run.

1342. Correspondence/Consultations

Leader Briefing: Local Government Reorganisation: Noted
KALC AGM 22 November 2025 Call for Motions: Noted.
Parish Forum 24 November 2025: Noted.

1343. Any Confidential Items:

There were none.

1344. Date of the next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 16 October 2025 at 7.30pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.32pm

Signed: Date:

BACS Payments for Approval September 2025

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
32/25	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	85.40
33/25	Tompsetts	3486	Grounds Maintenance	2072.02
34/25	Ina Hemsley		Share of cost of bin	62.00
35/25	M I Payroll		Payroll Services	25.00
36/25	Louise Goldsmith		Reimbursement Defib Supplies	83.94
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)	528.73
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary and backdated pay award	1214.33
		Sub total		4110.40

Receipts: None

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 August 2025

Opening balance	£13,975.76
add receipts	£20,250.00
	<u>£34,225.76</u>
less payments	£23,699.42
Balance	<u>£10,526.34</u>

Chairmans signature.....