

Rolvenden Parish Council



Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 21 November 2024 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr A. Hinge (Chairman), Cllr. S. Bryant, Cllr. M. Geerts, Cllr M Gilchrist,

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk

7 members of the public were also in attendance

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

rolvendenclerk@gmail.com

Administration:

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones.

1140. Intention to record the meeting

There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1141. Apologies for Absence:

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

1142. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Bryant noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

Cllr. Hinge noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

1143. Minutes of the meeting of the 17 October 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 17 October 2024 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

1144. Borough Councillor's Report:

It was noted that Ward Member Kate Walder had intended to attend the meeting to give a report but had unfortunately become unwell that afternoon.

1145. Chairman's report:

Cllr. Hinge reported that it has been a relatively quiet month. The Trustees of The Thoburn Land Trust met on the 22 October 2024 and agreed to give Notice to the current tenant stating that they would not be offering an extension of tenure after the 31 December 2025. The Trustees have met with a land agent to obtain a quote for the future management of the land and to assist with identifying grant funding opportunities. Cllr. Hinge explained that parishioners would be consulted on any proposals for the land. The Village Hall Management Committee met on the 7 November 2024. Cllr. Hinge advised that new Trustees are desperately needed. The current Trustees are reviewing the heating system in the hall which has been badly planned and now proving to be not cost effective. Cllr. Hinge and another Trustee met with representatives from the Northiam Village Hall Committee who have recently installed a new zoned heating system which integrates with the booking system and has resulted in a 30% saving on the heating bill. The company they used also assisted with the funding. The Village Hall Management Committee now plan to meet with the company that installed it.

1146. Clerk's report:

It was noted that the shop owner has kindly moved the vapes on sale to the back of the shop.

1147. Open Session:

No comments made.

1148. Planning:

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

PA/2024/1952: 20 Frensham Road, Rolvenden

Listed Building Consent: To replace the existing external painted softwood doors and windows like for like.

Resolved: Support.

PA/2024/1909: 2 Thornden Farm Cottages, The Old Workshop, Thornden Lane, Rolvenden

Lawful Development Certificate: Existing use as a residential dwelling for a period in excess of 4 years

Resolved: No objection.

Chairmans signature.....

- b) **To consider any approvals:**
PA/2024/0009: 2 Fairview Cottages, Hastings Road, Rolvenden
 Conversion of redundant poultry building to single residential dwelling with associated landscaping, amenity land and parking.
PA/2024/0156: Little Halden Farm, Barn at Tenterden Road, Rolvenden
 Change of use of building and land within its curtilage to a dwelling house following part demolition of Atcost and hay barns.
OTH/2024/1700: The Water Tower, Hastings Road, Rolvenden: Various treeworks.
NOT/2024/1672: The Well House, Frensham Road, Rolvenden: Various treeworks.
- c) **To consider any refusals:** None to consider.
- d) **Withdrawn**
 PA/2024/0495: Land adjacent to Alders Fruit Farm, Alder Lane, Rolvenden
 Erection of an agricultural barn.
- e) **Neighbourhood Plan:**
 Cllr. Hinge advised Members that a resident with a background in this area has tentatively offered their services but that the Parish Council will still need to engage a planning consultant to help with the process. The Clerk is in the process of setting up a virtual meeting with a KALC recommended planning consultant.

1149. Website Domain and Email addresses

The Clerk advised that HugoFox has now registered the Parish Council domain on the Nominet account and are in the process of making some adjustments to the system to allow them to redirect all the old domain traffic to the new gov.uk domain. As soon as this is done the new website will go live and .gov.uk email addresses will be issued.

1150. Parish Matters

- a) **RoSPA Annual Inspection of Playgrounds**
 The Clerk has circulated two quotes obtained for the remedial works identified in the reports following the recent RoSPA inspection of both the playground in Maytham Road and Rolvenden Layne. The Clerk reminded Members that no works have taken place since the last inspection in 2023 resulting in more remedial works being required than in a normal year.
Resolved: The Clerk to appoint Tompsetts to carry out the remedial works at a total cost of £3,077.00 (excluding VAT).
- b) **Christmas Tree and Lights**
 Cllr. Bryant reported that Hole Park has kindly offered to donate the Christmas Tree to the parish this year and will arrange for both the installation and removal. Cllr. Bryant and Barham have arranged for the tree and lighting to be installed on Friday 29 November 2024. The Clerk was asked to thank Cllr. Barham for this kind gesture.
- c) **ACRK Village Hall Files Retrieval**
 Following the closure of Action with Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK), Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) are assisting with the distribution of Village Hall files from ACRK's office. It was noted that the Clerk has collected the files relating to Rolvenden Village Hall which were previously held by ACRK.
- d) **Warm Hub:**
 Deferred to the next meeting.
- e) **Neighbourhood Watch/Kent Police Update**
Standing Orders were lowered to allow Sian Reeves, Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch, to speak.
 Sian Reeves advised that copies of the ABS survey (anti-social behaviour) survey will be available both online and on paper. Sian Reeves will place paper ones in the shop and church for residents to collect and post back in the same place in a sealed container. Sian Reeves reported that PC Darren Laker has been excellent at communicating and there has been more police presence which residents have advised is reassuring. Sian Reeves urged people to complete the ASB survey and to keep reporting any incidents.
The meeting reconvened.

1151. HIGHWAYS/PROW

- a) **Highways Improvement Plan**
 The Clerk reported back from a virtual meeting held with the Team Leader for the Community Engagement Officers which took place on the 12 November 2024.
 Priority 1 Maytham Road, Rolvenden Layne: KCC will provide a further quote for the provision and installation of gateways on Maytham Road where the 30mph speed restriction comes into force. The Clerk reported that KCC has suggested that they can probably fund one or both gateways.
 Priority 2 Hastings Road, Rolvenden: KCC has agreed to carry out both pedestrian and traffic surveys in Spring 2025 to ascertain both the need and feasibility of installing a crossing outside the school.
 Priority 3: Speeding Traffic, Hastings Road, Tenterden Road: The Clerk explained how the SID (Speed Indicator Device) Scheme works. The Clerk to explore the possibility of finding three locations for a pole to be installed within the 30mph zone. It was noted that the scheme would cost in the region of £9,000.00.

The Clerk advised that the VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) on Tenterden Road is working but is only activated at speeds over 46mph. KCC has advised that these types of signs are designed to be activated at the enforcement threshold which is 10% plus 2mph which for a 40mph limit is 46mph. KCC has agreed to service the sign.

Priority 4: Sparkeswood Avenue: KCC has advised that they have considered data they hold and that there is no evidence of speeding on Sparkeswood Avenue. KCC to provide a 30mph toolkit which will contain bin stickers and posters to give out to residents to educate motorists.

8.30pm Cllr. Geerts left the meeting

b) **Reported Faults**

The Clerk has reported a number of potholes around the village.

c) **New Faults**

Benenden Road: Side of the road is breaking away.

Lambslad Farm, Maytham Road: Potholes to be reported

Benenden Road: Potholes to be reported.

Gateway on Hastings Road: The Clerk advised that the Parish Council will consider the cost of renovating this gateway when setting the budget for the next financial year.

8.39pm 2 members of the public left the meeting

d) **Consultation on the proposed diversion of public footpath AT41**

The Clerk advised that an application to divert part of Public Footpath AT41 has been received by KCC. ABC has granted approval for the 'Erection of 8 no. detached dwellings with associated landscaping, car ports and access'. Planning Reference : 21/01826/AS. KCC has advised that the proposed diversion is considered necessary to enable the approved development to take place because the development will result in the path becoming unavailable for public use.

Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public to comment.

The meet reconvened.

Members discussed both the current and proposed route.

Resolved: We do not believe that the definitive route shown on the plan is correct. If the said route is to be moved we are unclear about the the access arrangements to the proposed site. We also seek clarification on how the proposed diverted route is going to be surfaced and maintained.

1152. Policies

- a) To approve a Grants Application Policy and Form

Resolved: To adopt the Grant Application Policy and Form.

- b) To approve a revised Health and Safety Policy.

Resolved: To adopt the revised Health and Safety Policy.

- c) To consider the appointment of a Data Processing Officer.

It was noted that Cllr. Gilchrist might be interested in being appointed as the Data Processing Officer. The Clerk will discuss the role further with Cllr. Gilchrist and will investigate what training is available.

1153. Finances

- a) **Grounds Maintenance Contract 2025-2028**

Members considered the draft tender documents prepared and circulated by the Clerk.

Resolved: To post the tender documents on Contracts Finder with a deadline of midday on Wednesday 18 December 2024. The Clerk will ensure that the tenders are opened in accordance with the Financial Regulations and will prepare a report for the meeting due to be held in January 2025.

- b) **Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2024-2025**

Members noted that a pay agreement for 2024-2025 has now been agreed and that the Clerk is due a backdated payment for the increase from the appointment date. It was noted that the Clerk will not be claiming a backdated payment.

- c) **Clerks Remuneration and end of Probationary Period**

It was noted that the Clerk's probation period ended on the 16 October 2024. It was also noted that the Clerk was employed on a 20 hour per week basis to the 16 January 2025 and on the basis of 15 hours per week thereafter.

Resolved: To confirm the contract of employment for the Clerk as permanent following a successful probation period. To agree to accept the Clerk's offer to reduce the working hours to 15 per week from the 1 December 2024 and for the payments to the pension to commence.

- d) **Proposal to use a payroll company**

Members considered a request from the Clerk, in the interests of transparency, to engage a payroll company, MI Payroll and Bookkeeping Services. The Clerk explained that engaging a payroll provider will ensure that all employer and employee contributions are kept up to date. The service charge is £25.00 per month.

Resolved: To engage MI Payroll and Bookkeeping Services to run the payroll.

- e) To receive the accounts
The accounts dated the 21 November 2024 were noted.
- f) To receive the bank reconciliation as at 21 November 2024
In the absence of a second signatory to the bank account being present at the meeting the bank reconciliation as at 21 November 2024 was noted and signed by Cllr. Hinge.
- 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. Green 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.

1154. External Meetings

- a) Thoburn Trustees Meeting: It was noted that the minutes of the meeting held on the 22 October 2024 have been circulated. Cllr. Hinge reported that a quote from a land agent has now been received and will be considered by the Trustees at the next meeting due to be held on the 11 December 2024. The Clerk is finding out if S106 funding can be used to pay these fees.
- b) Rolvenden Village Hall: Cllr. Hinge reported that the Management Committee met on the 7 November 2024. The Clerk who is also now the Secretary to the Management Committee has circulated a copy of the minutes. The heating system needs updating and the Committee is exploring different options. Cllr. Hinge advised that more Committee members and Trustees are urgently needed.
- c) KALC Area Committee: It was noted that the next meeting is due to be held on the 27 November 2024.

1155. Items for the next meeting

Nothing additional.

1156. Correspondence/Consultations

Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings. The Clerk advised that the Government has launched a consultation in respect of the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England. It was agreed that the Clerk should submit a response on behalf of the Parish Council stating that hybrid meetings would be preferable to ensure inclusivity.
Auction of Promises: Cllr. Bryant advised that an auction of promises is due to be held in the village hall at 7.30pm the 29 November 2024 in aid of the school.

1157. Any Confidential Items: None

1158. Date of the next meeting: Thursday 12 December 2024 at 7.30pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed: Date:

BACS Payments for Approval November 2024

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
47/24	Maureen Brooks		Litter Picking	150.00
48/24	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses	113.98
49/24	Playsafety Ltd		RoSPA inspections	450.00
50/24	Tompsett Landscaping	3176	Grounds maintenance	1988.02
51/24	Tompsett Landscaping	3174	Bench and Gateway repairs	444.00
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	5.40
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	11.99
DD	HMRC		Tax & NI	1284.24
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary	1365.51
		Sub total		5813.14

Receipts November 2024

Date		Amount
01/11/2024	PCC St Mary The Virgin	2865.60
01/11/2024	War Memorial Trust	274.00

Bank Reconciliation as at 21 November 2024

Opening balance		£ 81,535.03
add receipts		£ 62,129.01
		£ 143,664.04
less payments		£ 108,450.49
Balance		£ 35,213.55

