



Rolvenden Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 16 July 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr. A. Hinge (Chairman), Cllr. C. Balch, Cllr. S. Bryant and Cllr. G. Hodge.

In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk and 5 members of the public

Louise Goldsmith Parish
Clerk
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Headcorn
Kent
TN27 9AZ

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1501. Administration

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones.

1502. Apologies for Absence:

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Wayne Chapman and Councillors Gilchrist, Geerts and Walker and the reasons for absence were accepted.

1503. Intention to record the Meeting:

There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1504. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Bryant noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust.

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

1505. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 18 June 2026

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 18 June 2026 be approved and confirmed as a true record subject to the addition of the word 'Vice' in agenda item 1480.

1506. Ward Member

There was no report.

1507. County Councillor Report:

A report from County Councillor Wayne Chapman was noted and will be placed on the website.

1508. Chairman's Report

Cllr. Hinge reported that it has been another quiet month. Cllr. Hinge referred to the annual inspection of the allotments which was reported on at the last meeting and advised that there is an allotment plot available. Cllr. Hinge recently hosted a daytime event for the Gardening Society. Cllr. Hinge reported that Rolvenden Pre-School and Rolvenden Primary School are investigating the feasibility of opening a school-based nursery provision on the Primary School premises. This project is being explored as part of Phase Three of the Department for Education School-based Nursery Capital Grant for 2027 to 2030. Both the Pre-School and Primary School are currently consulting on the proposal which is a requirement for the application. The proposal is to move the Pre-School to the Primary school in 2028. Cllr. Hinge reminded Members that more volunteers are required to support various roles in the village hall to include the bookkeeper role.

1509. Clerk's report: Nothing additional to report.

1510. Open Session:

A member of the public suggested that a 'blue plaque' or something similar is displayed on the Thoburn land to mark the generous bequest of Ms Thoburn.

A member of the public suggested that it would be helpful to have a plan of all the walks displayed in the village.

A member of the public requested that the Parish Council investigates reducing the speed limit on the A28 to 20mph through the village.

Chairmans signature.....

1511. Vacancy on the Parish Council

The Clerk advised Members that as ABC have not received requests from ten electors for an election to take place the Parish Council can go ahead and co-opt a replacement Member for Streyte. The Clerk will advertise the vacancy.

1512. Planning:

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

PA/2026/1009: 4 Nursery Cottages, Thornden Lane, Rolvenden

Lawful Development Certificate: Proposed - Erection of a shed/workshop

Resolved: No comment.

PA/2026/1048: Land south of, Sandhurst Lane, Rolvenden

Lawful Development Certificate: Proposed hardstanding.

Resolved: No comment.

PA/2026/1189: Oakfield Lodge, Hastings Road, Rolvenden

Lawful Development Certificate: Change of use of the land to residential garden, siting of storage container, erection of summerhouse and greenhouse.

Resolved: No comment.

b) **To consider any approvals:** *(RPC recommendation in italics)*

PA/2026/0152: Little Halden Farm, Tenterden Road, Rolvenden

Change of use of building and land within its curtilage to a dwelling house following the demolition of Atcost and hay barns, with the introduction of a 1.5 storey car barn with ancillary and incidental space - Self build.

Resolved: Support in principle subject to a condition that the car barn is used as ancillary.

PA/2026/0524: 9 Maytham Road, Rolvenden

Proposed garden building following removal of the existing garden shed and conservatory.

Resolved: Support.

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

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

e) **Changes to the Planning Process:** The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (the Act) gives new powers to the Secretary of State to set out which planning functions should be delegated to Planning Officers for decision and which should go to a Planning Committee. These are defined as Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 items, with Schedule 1 items to be determined by Planning Officers (the items cannot go to the committee) and Schedule 2 to be determined by Planning Officers, unless the nominated Member and Officer consider it needs to go to committee. ABC will be releasing further information on the impact of the changes.

1513. Parish Matters.

a) **Local Government Reorganisation**

The Clerk reported that the Government announced its decision on the number of Unitary Authorities for Kent that morning. Earlier in the year the fourteen leaders put forward five options for the Government to choose from based on geography and population size and growth. The Government has selected Option 4b. Option 4b would be made up of: Dartford, Gravesham and Medway in the north; Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells in the west; Swale, Ashford and Folkestone and Hythe in the middle of Kent and Canterbury, Thanet and Dover in the east. In the short-term, key services such as bin collections, tips, libraries, Highways and social care, will stay the same for residents but work will now start on finding the most effective way to run them under the new system. Cllr. Hinge suggested that Parish Councils might end up running more services.

b) **Proposal to host a screening of the 'People's Emergency Briefing' film**

Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of public to speak. The meeting resumed.

Resolved: The Clerk to investigate the feasibility of the Parish Council holding a screening of the 'People's Emergency Briefing' film. The Clerk to register for a screening and to find out if neighbouring parishes would be interested in attending.

c) **1 Sparkeswood Avenue**

It was noted that the property is now occupied. Concern was expressed about the length of time it took for ABC to refurbish and re-let the property.

d) **Neighbourhood Plan**

The Clerk read out an update from Denise Curtain, the Chair of the Steering Group. ABC has advised that an SEA/HRA screening will not be required. ABC has forwarded the draft Neighbourhood Plan to other agencies and the draft plan is now subject to a five week consultation period with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. This consultation will end on the 4 August 2026. In the meantime, the Steering Group are in the process of doing some final tidying up to ensure that the document is ready to be submitted to the Parish Council for approval. The Steering Group will then start planning for the public consultation stages.

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

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

Kent Police have recently arrested a motorist for drink driving on Rolvenden Road. £5000.00 worth of items were stolen from the village shop on the 5 July 2026. Sadly, the Birch tree on St Mary's Green opposite the entrance to the Village Hall car park has been vandalised and has sustained a large section of damage to its trunk, namely the removal of a complete section of bark about 6" wide around the trunk. Sylvia Kellett has confirmed that this removal requires quite a determined effort and has ring barked the tree but fears that it will be fatal for the tree as water cannot be transported up nor sugars down. Quad bikes have been seen been ridden illegally on roads in the village. Sian Reeves reported that at the Ashford Neighbourhood Watch meeting held on the 19 June 2026 Inspector Simon Johnson gave a good presentation on catapults and knife crime and encouraged residents to report any sightings.

Ongoing and new Fraud/Scams to be aware of:

Information in my monthly Rolvenden Parish magazine article and sent to Rolvenden Neighbourhood Watch members.

Argos online shopping scam; fake Nationwide fraud scam; increase in phishing emails claiming urgent action required; impersonating family members' scam; fake Barclays account scam; mis-sold car finance scam; social media scam; employment scam; romance fraud; fake Vodafone scam.

1514. HIGHWAYS/PROW

a) **Highways Improvement Plan**

It was noted that the meeting with the Community Engagement Officer to discuss any new priorities that was due to take place on Friday 17 July 2026 has been cancelled. KCC have advised that due to staff shortages they have reluctantly had to pause all meetings with the parishes for at least 12 weeks.

b) **Faults**

Damaged road sign on the Layne field, Thornden Lane: The Clerk has reported on behalf of a resident.

A28 Benenden Road Finger Post: It was noted that Tompsetts have carried out some short term repairs to the finger post.

Maytham Road: Clerk to report again potholes that have not been filled.

Sparkeswood Avenue: Clerk to report a large pothole near to the entrance of the village hall.

Sparkeswood Avenue/High Street: Damaged knee-high rails. Cllr. Bryant suggested that the Parish Council arranges and pays for the repairs. The Clerk reminded Members that Ward Member Guy Pullen is in negotiations with ABC about getting them repaired and that the Parish Council does not have a budget or any reserves to fund the works.

BT Box in the village centre: Cllr. Bryant requested that the artwork is removed from the BT Box. The Clerk advised that this request would need to be an official agenda item for the next meeting and that consideration also needs to be given to the future use of the BT Box.

1515. Finances

a) **HMRC Mileage Rate increase:** It was noted that the per mile rates for cars and vans for the first 10,000 miles will be increased from 45 pence per mile to 55 pence per mile. The Clerk reported that the increase is retrospective taking effect from the 6 April 2026 but that she will only apply the increase from the 1 July 2026.

b) **Unity Trust Bank Mandate**

Resolved: To add Cllr. Geerts and remove Jacob Green from the bank mandate.

c) **To receive the accounts as at the 30 June 2026**

The accounts as at the 30 June prepared and circulated by the Clerk were received.

d) **To receive the bank reconciliation as at the 30 June 2026**

The bank reconciliation as at the 30 June 2026 was noted. The reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr. Balch in accordance with the financial regulations.

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

Cllr. Bryant checked the invoices against the payment schedule, (appended to the minutes), and it was **resolved** for Cllrs. Balch and Hinge to authorise the payments online. The authorised schedule was initialled immediately below the last item by Cllr. Hinge in accordance with the financial regulations.

1516. External Meetings

a) **Thoburn Trust Meeting:**

It was noted that CLM have now received the approved quote for the proposed works to the Thoburn land from the Clerk and have submitted an application for SFI26 grant funding and will be submitting an application for a Government Capital Grant when the window opens later this month. Cllr. Hodge offered to investigate grant funding opportunities with the High Weald Trust Fund.

b) **Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group**

There has been no meeting. See agenda item 1513 (d).

c) **Rolvenden Village Hall:**

Cllr. Hinge advised Members that a Management Committee meeting was held this morning. Cllr. Hinge reported that the Farmers Market continues but more stalls are required to increase the footfall. See agenda item 1508 for a further update.

d) **KALC Ashford Area Committee:**

There has been no meeting. The next meeting is due to take place on the 29 July 2026.

1517. Items for the next meeting:

Knee-high railings.
BT Box: request to remove the artwork.
Monypenny update

1518. Correspondence/Consultations:

Consultation on a proposal for the Pre-School and Rolvenden Primary School to open a school-based nursery provision on the primary school premises

1519. Confidential Item: There were none.

1520. Date of the next Parish Council Meeting:

Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 17 September 2026 at 7.30pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.36pm

Signed: Date:

BACS Payments for Approval July 2026

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
18/26	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses June	74.40
19/26	MI Payroll		Payroll Services July	25.00
20/26	Tompsetts	3843	Grounds Maintenance	1988.02
21/26	SLCC		Membership	192.10
DD	Unity Trust		Monthly Charge	7.00
DD	Hugo Fox		Website	11.99
DD	Hugo Fox		Email Accounts	20.99
DD	HMRC		Clerks Tax and NI (paid quarterly)	340.58
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary June	439.65
		Total		3099.73

Receipts: None

Bank Reconciliation as at 30 June 2026

Opening balance	£18,365.92
add receipts	£21,500.00
	<u>£39,865.92</u>
less payments	£13,075.57
Balance	<u>£26,790.35</u>