



Rolvenden Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall on Thursday 17 September 2026 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr. A. Hinge (Chairman), Cllr. H. Back, Cllr. C. Balch, Cllr. S. Bryant, Cllr, Cllr. M. Gilchrist and Cllr. G. Hodge.
In attendance: Louise Goldsmith, Parish Clerk
Ward Member Guy Pullen and 10 members of the public

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

clerk@rolvendenparishcouncil.gov.uk

1521. Administration

Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones.

1522. Apologies for Absence:

An apology for absence was received from County Councillor Wayne Chapman and the reason for absence was accepted.

1523. Intention to record the Meeting:

There were no intentions to record the meeting.

1524. Declarations of interest:

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

1525. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 16 July 2026

Resolved: That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 16 July 2026 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

1526. Ward Member

Ward Member Guy Pullen reported on the recent update on Local Government Reorganisation and advised Members that the Local Plan consultation is expected to commence in November 2026. Ward Member Guy Pullen mentioned his disappointment with some of the recent reports on social media regarding a proposal from ABC to change the parking charges in Tenterden. Ward Member Guy Pullen advised Members that a decision has been deferred by Cabinet to the January meeting and that ABC have not increased the charge yet as reported on social media. A discussion was held about parking charges generally in Tenterden.

1527. County Councillor Report:

A report from County Councillor Wayne Chapman was noted and has been placed on the website.

1528. Chairman's Report

Cllr. Hinge reported that it has been another quiet month and that the agenda covers all the items to be reported on.

1529. Clerk's report:

Notice of conclusion of the audit: The Clerk reported that the Notice has been placed on the website and noticeboards following the conclusion of the audit. The Completion Letter from the external auditor will be considered at the next meeting.

Resignation of Cllr. Linda Walker: The Clerk reported that a resignation letter was received from Linda Walker on the 16 September 2026. The resignation letter was forwarded to ABC and an official Notice for the resignation has been issued. The Clerk has placed this Notice on the noticeboards and website. If an election is not called by ten or more electors by the 9 October 2026 the Parish Council can co-opt to fill the vacancy for Streyte..

1530. Open Session:

A member of the public enquired about the funding of the proposed replacement knee high fencing in the High Street. A member of the public asked if the flag could be removed which is adjacent to the BT Box in the High Street. A member of the public offered to refurbish the finger post in West Cross.

Chairmans signature.....

A member of the public advised that the Church is looking to reintroduce welcome packs for new residents.
 The owner of Cornex Garage advised that the site which has planning permission to be converted into residential dwellings is currently under offer.
 A member of the public enquired about the restrictive covenant for the car park associated with the old Labour Club.
 A member of the public raised some concerns about a proposal to remove the artwork from the BT Box stating a preference for it not to be removed.
 A member of the public asked if the Parish Council could find out ABC's plans for The Old Vicarage site.
 The applicant for proposal PA/2026/1436 and PA/2026/1460 spoke in support.
 The applicant for proposal PA/2026/1443 spoke in support.
 The agent for the applicant for proposal PA/2026/1593 spoke in support.

1531. Vacancy on the Parish Council

The Clerk advised Members that to date there has been no applications to co-opt a replacement Member for the existing vacancy in Strete. The Clerk will continue to advertise the vacancy.

1532. Planning:

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

PA/2026/1436: Halden Place, Halden Lane, Rolvenden

Single-storey side extension and cellar extension, including the formation of ramped and stepped access to the garden following the demolition of the existing garage.

Standing Orders were lowered to allow the applicant answer a question. The meeting resumed.

Resolved; Support.

PA/2026/1470: Halden Place, Halden Lane, Rolvenden

Listed Building Consent for a single-storey side extension; refurbishment and internal alterations, including the installation of a platform lift, removal and erection of partition walls, reinstatement of a cupboard at first floor level and formation of new access doors to bedrooms. Works also include the installation of a soil vent pipe through the internal valley and roof, rebuilding of the existing external staircase, raising of the existing terrace to improve ground floor access, repair of the existing timber porch and re-establishment of the historic driveway following the demolition of the existing garage.

Resolved: In principle support but leave to Planning Officer to determine.

PA/2026/1443: Lambsland Farm, Maytham Road, Rolvenden

Single storey side extension to North elevation, two storey extension to East elevation, first floor terrace to South elevation. Conversion of existing outbuilding to residential, relocation of principal entrance and changes to fenestration following demolition of existing Eastern wing.

Resolved: Support

PA/2026/1593: Geddesden, Freizingham Lane, Rolvenden

Proposed one and a half storey extension, proposed swimming pool and realignment of the driveway, following the demolition of existing conservatory.

Standing Orders were lowered to allow the applicant's agent to answer a question. The meeting resumed.

Resolved: Support.

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

PA/2024/2337: Proposed Agricultural Building, Alders Lane Fruits, Hastings Road
 Erection of an agricultural barn.

Resolved: The Parish Council object to the application on the grounds that the site is within the High Weald AONB and the site is not an agricultural holding.

c) To consider any refusals: *(RPC recommendation in italics)*

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

Lawful Development Certificate: Proposed - Erection of a shed/workshop. *Resolved: No comment.*
 To note planning permission is required.

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

e) **Changes to the Planning Process:** The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 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. The Clerk advised Members that 'call-in powers for Ward Members are to be removed and that there is also no automatic referral of applications once a certain number of objections have been received

4 members of the public left the meeting

1533. Appointment of a Parish Clerk

a) **To receive the resignation of the Clerk dated 29 July 2026**

A letter dated the 29 July 2026 from the Clerk offering her resignation was received.

Members noted that the Clerk is contractually obliged to give 3 months notice and has offered to remain in post until a suitable replacement has been found.

b) **To approve the job description and person specification**

Resolved: To approve the job description and person specification.

c) **To ratify a decision between meetings to advertise the post**

Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings to advertise the post on the KALC website, Parish Council website and in the parish magazine.

A member of the public left the meeting

d) **To agree the interview panel**

Resolved: Cllrs. Hinge, Back and Gilchrist to form the interview panel. Cllr. Hodge to be on standby if required. The Clerk to attend and support the interview panel.

e) **To agree the interview questions**

Resolved: To agree the interview questions

f) **To set the interview date**

Resolved: Interviews to be carried out on Thursday 1 October 2026.

g) **To agree which candidates to interview**

Resolved: To discuss this as a confidential agenda item.

1534. Parish Matters.

a) **Local Government Reorganisation**

The following briefing from The Leader of ABC has been circulated. The Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Angela Rayner, has announced a pause to the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) programme in Kent and Medway while Ministers undertake a review of the decisions made in July 2026. Kent and Medway Councils have been advised that the review will consider all aspects of the proposals currently under consideration. At this stage, MHCLG has not provided any indication of how long the review will take or what impact it may have on the overall programme timetable. As a result, the geographies of any future unitary authorities in Kent and Medway will not be confirmed until the Government's review has concluded. Although the programme has been paused, Councils across Kent and Medway have been advised that they may wish to continue with some 'option neutral' preparatory work that will benefit the borough while further information is awaited. The Government's announcement does not affect the Council's day-to-day operations or the services provided to residents, businesses and communities across the borough. The pause in the process provides an opportunity for ABC to undertake further consideration of its proposed interim warding arrangements. Therefore, the warding arrangements have been withdrawn. Further consideration of the Council's approach will take place once additional information is received from Government regarding the next steps in the Local Government Reorganisation process. The Government has confirmed that local elections scheduled for May 2027 will proceed using existing council boundaries. While the pause is an unexpected development, the work undertaken by Councils across Kent and Medway as part of the Local Government Reorganisation programme has not been wasted. The process has strengthened relationships between Councils, enabled the sharing of knowledge and best practice, and provided a greater understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with future local government arrangements.

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

Standing Orders were lowered to allow a member of the public and Ward Member Guy Pullen to speak.

The meeting resumed.

The Clerk reported that ten residents had responded to an initial request to attend a screening of the 'People's Emergency Briefing' and that the neighbouring parishes would assist with advertising the event. Ward Member Guy Pullen and a member of the public, Sian Reeves, offered to take on the responsibility of organising a screening.

Resolved: The Parish Council supports the screening of the 'People's Emergency Briefing' film.

c) **Mildred Trust**

Cllr. Hodge reported that representatives from the Mildred Trust would like to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss working together. It was agreed that Cllr. Hodge should invite them to a future meeting.

d) **South East Water**

Members discussed their disappointment with the ongoing issue of the supply of water to the parish. It was agreed that Cllr. Hinge should draft a letter for the Clerk to send to the Chief Executive of South East Water, John Halsall, outlining that there has been a number of episodes with no supply, or very reduced supply with some of the periods lasting for several days to a week. Cllr. Hinge was asked to remind South East Water that the village has a significant number of elderly and vulnerable residents for whom this causes great distress, hygiene risks and practical difficulties. In addition the shortage of water has had a detrimental effect on hospitality businesses that were forced to shut and livestock farmers whose animals were at risk. It was agreed that the Parish Council should ask the CEO to hold a public meeting to hear the concerns of residents and to update residents on the plans South East water has in place to minimise any future disruption.

e) **Knee high wooden rails in High Street**

Ward Member Guy Pullen has advised Members that ABC will be repairing all the damaged knee high rails in both the High Street and on Sparkeswood Avenue.

f) **Meeting Dates**

At the request of Cllr. Hinge it was agreed to move the dates of the October and November meetings. The Clerk to notify the village hall manager.

Resolved: The October meeting will take place on Thursday 22 October 2026 and the November meeting will take place on the 26 November 2026.

g) **BT Box in the High Street:**

At the previous meeting Cllr. Bryant put forward a proposal that the artwork in the BT Box is removed and that the BT Box is used for another purpose. The Clerk reminded Members that the BT Box was adopted by the Parish Council and is a Listed Building. Members discussed the possible rehoming of the Mr Doodle artwork that is currently in the BT Box and the possible future use of the BT Box. It was suggested and agreed that residents should be consulted on the proposal before a decision is made by the Parish Council.

Resolved: The Clerk to prepare and issue an online survey for residents to comment on whether the artwork should remain in the BT Box and to suggest the possible future use of the BT Box. It was agreed for Cllr. Bryant to remove the flag adjacent to the BT Box.

Ward Member Guy Pullen left the meeting

h) **Neighbourhood Plan**

The Clerk advised that the outcome of the Screening determination report is that a full Strategic and Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment is not required for the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan 2025 – 2042. Cllr. Hinge read out an update from Denise Curtain, the Chair of the Steering Group, which provides details of the anticipated schedule for the remainder of the process.

October 2026: Parish Council to review the draft document.

October/November 2026: Regulation 14 Consultation will commence and will run for 6 weeks

December 2026/ early January 2027: Finalise the Regulation 16 version and supporting documents.

Mid-January 2027: Submit Plan and supporting documents to ABC

February 2027 / March 2027: Regulation 16 Consultation

April 2027: External Examination period

Referendum: Summer 2027

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

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

Nuisance motorbikes and bikes have been present on the roads in Rolvenden one of which was reported as stolen in Maidstone and found at a property in Sparkeswood and two teenagers were arrested. High speed checks were recently carried out in Tenterden and a number of motorists were stopped for a number of offences. Sian reported that last year there was £93.8m of fraud theft with older people being disproportionately affected. Kent Police remain keen for residents to sign up for My Community Voice. Sian Reeves is writing an article on cohesive control for the next edition of the parish magazine.

Ongoing and new Fraud/Scams to be aware of:

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

TV licence scam; iPhone 18 scam; PayPal scam; Halifax scam; Royal Mail; O2 Scam; Farm GPS thefts on the increase.

1535. HIGHWAYS/PROW

a) **Highways Improvement Plan**

It was noted that only the Clerk managed to attend a meeting with the Community Engagement Officer that morning to discuss the current and new priorities in the Highways Improvement Plan.

Cllr. Geerts offered to send some photos to the Clerk to forward to KCC to explain the problem at the Regent Street/A28 junction.

The Clerk has placed a copy of the updated Highways Improvement Plan on the website.

Priority Location	Concern	KCC Comments
Hastings Road/Tenterden Road	Concerns about speed of traffic in both directions	Parish council to provide locations for SID KCC to enquire if other funding available to assist the Parish Council.
Sparkeswood Avenue	Concerns about speed of traffic in both directions	No evidence of speeding here. Speed kit would be helpful. PC to advise where they would site a banner.

Priority Location	Concerns	KCC Comments
Regent St/A28 junction	Request for hatch markings	No PIC's here, this is more a driver behaviour. Limited options as need to ensure appropriate manoeuvring space for large lorries. Highway Operations to refresh the road markings and tidy this up, to include the reinstatement of the hazard warning triangle road marking here.
Rolvenden Hill	Request for speed reduction	Compass data shows average driven speeds in the derestricted zone of 46mph in both directions. Could consider reducing 60mph to 50mph, however this would require repeater signs. In addition, our experience has taught that drivers tend to drive at posted speed limit, so this may actually increase driven speeds here. Remaining speeds limits are appropriate to DfT criteria. No further action required, KCC to provide a written explanation for the Clerk to forward on to the resident who requested a speed reduction.

b) **Faults**

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

Maytham Road junction with Frensham Road: The Clerk to report the pothole.

Sparkeswood Avenue: Clerk to re-report a large pothole near to the entrance of the village hall which has been painted white but still not filled.

9.30pm: In accordance with the Standing Orders the Chair checked with Members and It was agreed to continue with the meeting.

1536. Finances

a) **Backdated Pay Award to the Clerk**

Members noted that a National Pay Award of 3.3% has been agreed. The Clerk advised that the payment needs to be back dated to the 1 April 2026. The payroll provider has applied the backdated payment to the current payrun.

b) **Proposal to submit a claim for S106 funding for capital works to the Thoburn Land.**

The Clerk has received communication this evening that the Parish Council has been successful in its bid for a Government Capital Grant which will be reported at The Thoburn meeting due to be held after this meeting. It was therefore agreed to defer a discussion about whether to submit a claim for S106 funding.

c) **Review of GDPR Policies**

Resolved: To adopt the updated GDPR Policies namely the Privacy Policies, Data Breach Policy and Procedure, Data Protection Policy and Record of Processing Activities.

d) **To receive the accounts as at the 31 August 2026**

The accounts as at the 31 August prepared and circulated by the Clerk were received.

e) **To receive the bank reconciliation as at the 31 August 2026**

The bank reconciliation as at the 31 August 2026 was noted. The reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr. Balch in accordance with the financial regulations.

f) **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.

1537. External Meetings

- a) **Thoburn Trust Meeting:** It was noted that CLM has advised that an application for SFI26 grant funding has also been successful and will be discussed at the next meeting.
- b) **Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group:** There has been no meeting. See agenda item 1534 (h).
- c) **Rolvenden Village Hall:** There has been no meeting. Cllr. Hinge reported that the Farmers Market is still struggling with the number of stall holders and attendees. It was noted that the meat stall has moved from the Church to the hall.
- d) **KALC Ashford Area Committee:** A meeting was held on the 29 July 2026 but the minutes have not yet been received.

1538. **Items for the next meeting:**
Monypenny update

1539. **Correspondence/Consultations:**
None to consider.

1540. **Confidential Item:** See below

1541. **Date of the next Parish Council Meeting:**
Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 22 October 2026 at 7.30pm

Confidential Item

Part 2 Exclusion of Public and Press – In accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act 1960), the public and press be excluded from the meeting by the reason of its confidential nature.

The meeting closed to the public at 9.45pm

To agree which candidates to interview
Resolved: To interview three of the five applicants.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.59pm

Signed: Date:

DRAFT

BACS Payments

Ratification of August Payments

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
22/26	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses August	62.30
23/26	St Mary The Virgin		Ground rent for village hall	25.00
24/26	Tompsetts	3892	Grounds Maintenance	2184.82
25/26	Playsafety Limited	100178	Annual RoSPA inspections	228.00
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 August	439.65
		Total		3320.33

Approval of September Payments

Reference	Payee	Invoice	Description of Transaction	Gross
26/26	Louise Goldsmith		Expenses September	74.40
27/26	MI Payroll		Payroll Services August and September	50.00
28/26	Tompsetts	3843	Grounds Maintenance	1988.02
29/26	Rolvenden War Memorial Trust		Rent for play areas	30.00
30/26	KALC	13434356403	Training Course	60.00
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)	419.81
SO	Louise Goldsmith		Salary September	526.29
		Total		3188.50

Receipts

Date		Amount
01/09/2026	Lloyds Bank	200.00
		200.00

Bank Reconciliation as at 31 August 2026

Opening balance	£18,365.92
add receipts	£21,500.00
	<u>£39,865.92</u>
less payments	£16,856.06
Balance	<u>£23,009.86</u>