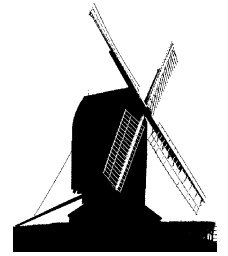


Rolvenden Parish Council



Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall, Rolvenden on 20th June at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr A Hinge (Chairman), Cllr S Bryant (Vice Chairman), Cllr E Barham, Cllr M Gilchrist and Cllr J Green.

In attendance: Julie Flenley, Locum Parish Clerk

21 Members of the public were also in attendance

Locum Clerk: 2 Farm Cottages
Combe Court Farm
Prestwick Lane
Chiddingfold
Surrey, GU8 4XW
Email:
rolvendenclerk@gmail.com

Public participation:

A resident raised a question relating to the recent planning application PA/2024/0685. The Locum Clerk noted that a response had been submitted to Ashford Borough Council and confirmation that it would be considered by the Case Officer had been received. The application had since been determined, with consent subject to conditions.

A resident noted that the Annual Governance and Accountability form did not include figures which had been paid out by Ashford Borough Council following on from the council's inability to pay its invoices. Cllr Hinge noted that the Section 2 numbers were correct; the Locum Clerk had been in contact with the outgoing Clerk and the Internal Auditor who confirmed that the accounts had been prepared on a receipts and payments basis. That the Locum Clerk had also been keeping records on what was paid by Ashford and what was outstanding which would be forecasted for going forwards as ABC were only settling urgent invoices.

A resident noted that the website needed to be updated to reflect councillors in the Layne Ward. Clerk noted for the record and to amend.

A resident noted that the motion of No Confidence at agenda item 4 had provoked much feeling in the village. The residents wished to thank the former Parish Clerk, Peter Setterfield for his hard work in the parish. She noted that the parish council was capable of good things and improved behaviour and requested that the councillors in question undertake appropriate training to ensure that they understand the required conduct for representing public office. Cllr Hinge noted that he would have a direct conversation with Cllrs Barham and Bryant.

A resident noted that the play area inspections (item 14 on the agenda) and defibrillators required regular inspections to ensure that they were fit for purpose. They were historically checked weekly by a resident/former councillor. Cllr Hinge noted that that the playground has already been inspected by the council and that works were required (swing needed to be fixed and additional work chippings). Cllr Hinge noted that he was investigating costs for the works and that regular inspections would be undertaken. New ropes for the swing would be purchased once access to Unity Trust Bank was established. Hedges had also been cut back following reports.

A parishioner advised that there was speedwatch session coming up and that more volunteers to assist with the scheme would be welcome.

1052. Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Councillor Balch. Cllr Walder from Ashford Borough Council sent apologies due to other Borough commitments.

1053. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Barham noted an interest in agenda items 4 and 15. Cllr Bryant noted an interest in agenda item 4 and the War Memorial Trust. Cllr Hinge noted an interest in the War Memorial Trust. Cllr Walker (post co-option) noted an interest in item 15. Locum Clerk noted for the record.

1054. Minutes:

Councillors approved the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21st May 2024 with minor amendments. Locum Clerk to retain for the record.

1055. To propose a motion of No Confidence in Cllrs Barham and Bryant

Cllr Hinge noted that a member of the public had requested that a motion of No Confidence be raised against Cllrs Barham and Bryant. Cllr Hinge proposed a motion of No Confidence in Cllrs Barham and Bryant. No councillors voted in favour of the motion. All councillors (with one abstention) voted against the motion. Motion rejected by the council. Locum Clerk noted for the record. In accordance with Standing Order 9 (h) the reason for rejection of the motion by the council was to allow the council to move forward.

1056. Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:

Cllr Walder was unable to attend. No report was given.

1057. Planning:

To consider any planning applications received prior to the meeting.

- **Planning application [OTH/2024/0898](#) - 9, Maytham Road, Rolvenden, TN17 4NS.** Details submitted pursuant to condition 2 (joinery details) of Listed Building Consent PA/2023/2377. Councillors discussed the proposals and had no comments on the application. Locum Clerk noted for the record.

1058. General Risk Assessment:

Councillor Hinge proposed that the General Risk Assessment be adopted for 2024-25. Seconded by Cllr Barham. Agreed unanimously, motion carried. Locum Clerk to note for the record.

1059. Code of Conduct:

Councillor Hinge proposed that the Code of Conduct for 2024-25 be approved by the council. Seconded by Cllr Gilchrist. Agreed unanimously, motion carried. Locum Clerk to note for the record.

1060. Asset Register:

Cllr Barham noted that there were a number of perceived omissions from the Asset Register which included the bus shelter on the high street, the village hall car park (freehold and leasehold), and the bus shelter in Rolvenden Layne. He requested that the situation be checked and the items added as necessary. Cllr Barham proposed that the Asset register be agreed as it is, in its current form and reviewed in the future once the situation was resolved regarding the proposed additions. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed unanimously, motion carried. Locum Clerk to check the position and amend as necessary.

1061. Report of the Independent Internal Auditor:

Cllr Hinge proposed that the council agrees the report of the Independent Internal Auditor. Seconded by Cllr Gilchrist. Agreed unanimously, motion carried. Locum Clerk to note for the record.

1062. Statement on Internal Control:

Cllr Hinge read through each Governance statement in Section 1 of the AGAR. Councillors voted accordingly with the Locum Clerk noting the responses to each section and Cllr Hinge noting the responses on the AGAR form. The Locum Clerk noted that the period of the Exercise of Public Rights was from 24th June – 2nd August 2024. Section 1 was duly agreed and completed, Locum Clerk to complete finalities for the External Auditor (Mazars) and send accordingly.

1063. Statement of Accounts:

Cllr Hinge noted that the numbers on Section 2 of the AGAR had been checked with the outgoing Clerk and the Internal Auditor and were confirmed to be correct. Cllr Hinge proposed that the council agree the

Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. Seconded by Cllr Gilchrist. Agreed unanimously, motion carried. Locum Clerk to complete finalities for the External Auditor (Mazars) and send accordingly.

1064. To Co-opt Councillors to Rolvenden Parish Council:

Cllr Hinge noted that 4 applications have been received, and the councillors would therefore vote for new members of Rolvenden Parish Council. Councillors voted to co-opt Mike Geerts, Hayley Toni-Back and Linda Walker (casting vote) to Rolvenden Parish Council. Cllr Hinge requested that the remaining candidates details be kept on file for consideration in the future. Locum Clerk noted the vote for the record and agreed to contact the successful new councillors with the requisite paperwork.

1065. To note the condition on hedges on Maytham Road and further actions.

Councillors noted that the hedges had been discussed previously and that the Thorburn Land Trust trees required a cut back. Locum Clerk to investigate, and establish costings if necessary.

1066. Finance:

Schedule of payments:

- Hole Park (APM refreshments)	£73.20	Inv. SI26500
- Star Inn (APM refreshments)	£200	Inv. PC-STR05-24
- Tompsett Landscapes (May grass cutting)	£1,988.02	Inv. 2295
- Hugo Fox (Website)	£11.99	inv. 5466
- Maureen Brookes (Litter picking)	£120	N/A
- SLCC – Locum Fees, April 2024	£950.68	Inv. 756

Councillors agreed the payment schedule for July 2024. Locum Clerk to arrange payment of essential invoices with Ashford Borough Council and note the non-essential payments for clearance once access to Unity Trust Bank has been re-established.

1067. Appointment of Clerk & RFO to Rolvenden Parish Council:

Cllr Hinge noted that the application process and interviews had been concluded to appoint a replacement Clerk and RFO to Rolvenden Parish Council. 3 applications had been received, two were shortlisted and one failed to attend the interview. Louise Goldsmith attended an interview, and it was felt that she was well qualified and experienced Clerk to other local parishes. Louise would be resigning two of her parishes to work in Rolvenden and it would be for an initial 20 hours per week for 6 months, reducing to 15 hours per week beyond that point at an agreed salary scale point. Start date was provisionally mid-July with a 2-week handover with the Locum Clerk.

Cllr Gilchrist proposed that Louise Goldsmith be recruited as Clerk and RFO to Rolvenden Parish Council on the advice of the temporary Staffing Committee. Seconded by Cllr Hinge. Agreed unanimously, motion carried. Clerk to prepare contracts, obtain references and initiate a handover.

1068. Meeting dates for 2024/25:

To agree meeting dates for 2024/25 according to the schedule subject to agreement with the Village Hall.

20 th June 2024	19 th September 2024	2 nd December 2024	20 th March 2025
18 th July 2024	17 th October 2024	16 th January 2025	17 th April 2025
15 th August 2024	21 st November 2024	20 th February 2025	

1069. Other items for information:

- Layne Playing field had issues with loud music being played and low-level antisocial behaviour. It was agreed to keep a watching brief on this.
- Tyres had been dumped in a layby at Hexstead Bridge. Cllr Hinge to report to ABC.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:06pm