



Rolvenden Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Rolvenden Parish Council held in Rolvenden Village Hall, Rolvenden on 19th January 2024 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr E Barham, Cllr S Bryant, Cllr J Kelly and Cllr K Walder.

In attendance Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk

Also present approx. 50 residents.

985. **Current status of the Parish Council:**

Following the resignations of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and three other councillors at the December meeting there are currently four councillors remaining. Whilst the minimum number for a meeting to take place is three there could be situation where a declaration of interest has been made that the number present falls below the minimum resulting in the Council being unable to make a decision.

Ashford Borough Council issued notices to seek if the electorate wanted a by election to fill the vacant seats, the results from this were that the minimum number of 10 had not placed a request therefore the Parish Council is now able to advertise the positions to be filled by co-option.

It was proposed that the position of Chairman should be filled temporarily by the 4 councillor's present by alphabetical rotation until such time as there are more councillors present to put forward a permanent chairman in accordance with standing orders, to be elected at the May Annual Parish Council meeting.

Whilst the Parish Council has met on the third Thursday of the month for some time it is suggested that a full calendar of meetings is not compiled until such time as additional councillors are in position and the best day for all can be selected as two of the current councillors have difficulty with Thursdays due to work commitments.

Resolved: to appoint a Chairman on an alphabetical basis on a monthly rotation commencing with Councillor Barham.

986. **Apologies for absence:**

There were no apologies for absence.

987. **Declarations of interest:**

- a. **Disclosable Interests:** Under the Localism Act 2011 to be made relating to items on the agenda.

None.

- b. **Other Significant Interests:** Under the code of conduct adopted in May 2021 by the Parish Council, to be made relating to items on this agenda.

Cllr E Barham trustee of Basil Russel Trust, trustee of the Windmill Trust, Royal British Legion,
Cllr S Bryant, Rolvenden War Memorial Charity

- c. **Other Interests:** not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b) but voluntary announcements made only for transparency reasons.

Cllr K Walder as employer of Cllr J Kelly

Cllr J Kelly as employed by Cllr K Walder

Cllr K Walder as a member of the Ashford Borough Council Planning Committee would not take part in the Planning item of the agenda.

988. **Public Participation:**

A resident enquired about the promised highways work being completed and that the funds were not being diverted elsewhere.

The Parish Clerk will contact Kent Highways to ascertain the up to date situation.

A number of residents asked why so many councillors resigned in December.

The Chairman responded that he was not answering the questions.

Cllr Walder responded to questions on the process of co-option and stated that all of this was being looked at extremely closely by the Elections Officer and Monitoring Officer and that legislation would be applied.

A number of residents left the meeting.

989. **Ashford Borough Councillor's Report:**

Cllr Walder stated that the Parish Council is functioning although there are some things that we need to work through. There are two people who have suffered throughout this process, the previous Chairman who was an impressive public servant and the Clerk who has endured an unpleasant barrage of accusations. According to the Kent Association of Local Councils he is one of the most qualified and impressive clerks in the country.

In closing Cllr Walder asked Cllrs Barham and Bryant you two broke it how are you going to sort it.

The Chairman did not respond.

990. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th December were submitted, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

991. **Planning:**

Planning application PA/2023/2376 – 9 Maytham Road, Rolvenden – Changes to fenestration and replace windows to side and rear elevations.

Resolved: The Parish Council supports the application.

Planning application PA/2023/2377 – 9 Maytham Road, Rolvenden – Listed Building Consent for creation of new external door to front elevation, replace door and window with newly positioned door on side elevation, replace window with doors to rear elevation.

Render side wall. Replace windows on front side and rear elevations. Removal and insertion of internal walls.

Resolved: The Parish Council supports the application.

992. **Bank account signatories:**

Councillors are asked to nominate a minimum of two signatories to replace those members who resigned their position of councillor at the December 2023 meeting.

Resolved: to nominate councillors Barham and Kelly to be signatories on the Parish Council bank account.

993. **Finance:**

Schedule of payments to be made when confirmation is received from the Bank that all formalities for the new signatories are complete.

Staff costs £1,455.65

Litter picking £150.00

KPC Maintenance £11,400.00 (VAT £1,900.00)

KPC Maintenance £11,400.00 (VAT £1,900.00)

Resolved:

1. **To receive and note Report RPC/23/18**
2. **To receive and acknowledge the financial movements for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st December 2023.**
3. **To authorise the payments in the schedule of payments.**

994. **Request for the release of s106 funds:**

A request has been received from the football club for the release of £5,350.00 from the s106 funds for the purchase of a toilet block and associated effluent tank.

Resolved: to defer decision pending the receipt of further information from the Football Club including the plans.

995. **Play area repairs:**

Quotations for the work are still being sought.

996. **Electric Vehicle Charging Point:**

Ashford Borough Council has been successful in securing an allocation of the UK Government's Rural England Prosperity Fund of £443,381.00. The Borough Council is running three grant schemes using this funding, one being the Ashford Rural Electric Vehicle Charging Points Grants.

The Grant Scheme will provide grants up to £12,000 to support the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points at publicly accessible parking sites in rural areas of the borough.

Ashford Borough Council will fund the install of the EV Charging Point and then hand over ownership of the charger to the organisation who applied.

The funding will contribute towards the capital costs of installing an EVCP including:

- Purchasing the EVCP(s) and associated equipment
- Installation costs
- Electricity Network connection costs
- Other capital costs directly associated with the installation phase.

Due to the capital nature of the Rural England Prosperity Fund, some costs associated with installing EVCP(s) may not be eligible for this grant. The applicant will need to show these costs have been considered and they are able to fund these separately. These include but are not limited to:

- Planning or legal fees
- Electricity supply costs
- Insurances and ongoing maintenance costs
- Ancillary work to improve the accessibility of the site
- Applicant's admin costs

Applicants are required to provide a fully costed quote of the works being proposed. The assessment will consider this and, if successful, applicants will receive a grant equivalent to 80% of the costs of the works. The maximum level of grant allowed under this scheme is £12,000.00.

Applications will open in rounds, with the first closing on 4 February 2024.

Information and evidence required to apply:

- A completed application form
- Evidence that:
 - The applicant is the freeholder or leaseholder or where written consent from the site owner to carry out the work, has been obtained and submitted
 - The applicant has the funds available for their share of the project costs (20%)
 - The applicant should demonstrate they have considered the Planning Guidance in relation to their project and have submitted a Planning Application where necessary
- A completed site survey showing the viability and the type of connection that is possible
- At least three fully costed quotes for the work, including at least three quotes for the EVCP equipment from the approved OZEV model list and at least three quotes for the installation from the approved OZEV installer list
- Details of any grants or funding received from a public authority in the previous three years
- Recent photos of the site, clearly showing the location proposed for the EVCP and access.

Resolved: to not proceed with a Electric Vehicle Charging Point at the present time.

997. **Streaming of future Parish Council meetings:**

Cllr Walder spoke of the possibility of streaming future Parish Council meetings in order to reach a larger proportion of the electorate.

Resolved: that Cllrs Walder and Kelly would research the matter further and come to a future meeting with an outline plan together with costings for consideration.

998. **Other items for information:**

The date of the next meeting was provisionally agreed as Tuesday 20th February as two councillors cannot make Thursday's, subject to approval this will be held in the Church.

The Parish Council representatives on the Rolvenden War Memorial Trust remain until the annual Parish Council meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:30pm.