RUCKINGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council

Held at Ruckinge Village Hall

12th March 2026 at 7.30pm

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks, Apologies, and Approval of Absences

The Chair, Cllr Hewson, opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed those present.

Present:

Cllr S Hewson (Chair)

Cllr T Cliffe-Harrison (Vice Chair)

Cllr L Sharpe

Cllr P Sillibourne

Cllr D Archer

Apologies:

None received. All Members were present.

In attendance:

Cllr L Harman (Ashford Borough Councillor)

Peter New (Neighbourhood Watch)

Members of the Public: 4

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2. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interests in relation to items on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 19th February 2026 were considered.

Members noted that Appendix B had been prepared to provide additional detail in relation to the Chairman's Report from that meeting. It was confirmed that the appendix does not alter any decisions and provides additional narrative only.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2026, together with Appendix B, be approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Appendix A – Playpark Equipment Removal

Members noted that Appendix A is to be added to the Minutes of 11th December 2025 to clarify the difference between the cost recorded in the minutes and the final contractor invoice.

It was confirmed that a single combined invoice totalling £528 was issued, covering all removal works.

Resolved:

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That Appendix A be appended to the Minutes of 11th December 2025.

5. Public Forum

Representatives from Bromley Green Residents Association attended and spoke about the Village Hall and car park.

They explained the financial pressures they are under, including maintenance and the need to hold reserves, and raised concerns about the condition of the car park and the loss of previous funding.

Members acknowledged the concerns raised and explained the current financial position of the Parish Council, including the need to balance spending against the precept and prioritise essential works.

It was agreed that better communication and joint working going forward would be beneficial.

A resident also raised concerns regarding activity on a nearby field, including the installation of a gate and recent works. It was suggested this may require further investigation.

Noted.

6. Planning

a) Planning Applications for Consideration

PA/2026/0241 – Littlehaven, Bromley Green Road

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Single storey side extension and dormer extension with boundary wall.

Members discussed the application and noted the comments from Kent Highways.

Resolved:

No objection.

b) Planning Applications and Decisions for Noting

PA/2026/0208 – Oakdene – Under consultation

PA/2026/0064 – Mulberry House – Under consultation

PA/2026/0050 – Wey Street Farm – Under consultation

NOT/2026/0042 – Canal Farm – Prior approval granted

PA/2026/0022 – Fairfield – Under consultation

PA/2025/2225 – Willow Tree Hair & Beauty – Approved with conditions

Noted.

7. Reports from the Kent County Councillor, Ashford Borough Councillor, and Neighbourhood Watch

Members received a report from Cllr Harman including updates on regeneration and planning matters within the Borough.

Peter New provided an update on Neighbourhood Watch matters, including rural crime, fly tipping and community safety, and offered support in relation to fire safety at the Village Hall.

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Noted.

8. Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a verbal update covering ongoing parish matters, including highways issues and wider pressures on local government funding.

No decisions were taken under this item.

9. Finance

a) Schedule of Payments

The bank balance as at 28th February 2026 was £19,559.52.

Members reviewed the schedule of payments for February.

Resolved:

That the payments be approved and ratified.

b) Establishment of a Fixed Payroll Date

Members discussed establishing a fixed payroll date for the Clerk.

Resolved:

That the Clerk's salary be paid by standing order on a fixed monthly date.

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c) Bank Signatories and Financial Controls

Members considered the current bank signatory arrangements.

It was agreed to leave the current arrangements unchanged at this time.

d) Clerk's Expenses

Clerk's expenses totalling £249.99 were presented.

Resolved:

That the Clerk's expenses be approved.

10. Bromley Green: Car Park and Carters Field

An update was received on the car park and Carters Field.

Members discussed the need for contractor-led works and the importance of continuing to work with the Residents Association.

Resolved:

- That quotations be obtained for car park works

- That liaison with the Residents Association continue

11. Ruckinge Village Hall: Planning Application

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Members considered the proposal to submit a planning application for the Village Hall to enable use as a pre-school alongside continued community use.

Discussion included the benefits to the community and the need to progress the application without delay.

Resolved:

- To approve submission of the planning application

- To approve expenditure up to £700

12. Annual Meeting of the Council

Members discussed arrangements for the Annual Meeting.

Resolved:

That the Annual Meeting of the Council be held in May 2026, with the date to be confirmed.

13. Correspondence

Correspondence was received including a boundary-related matter from Ashford Borough Council.

Noted.

14. Date of Next Meeting

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9th April 2026 at 7.30pm at Ruckinge Village Hall

Meeting closed at: _____

Signed: _____

Cllr S Hewson, Chair

Date: _____

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