

ROOKLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE JUNE MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, 4TH JUNE 2025
At 7.30 PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL, HIGHWOOD LANE, ROOKLEY,
ISLE OF WIGHT PO38 3NN

PRESENT: Chair: Cllr C Willis
Cllrs: E Wills, Ian RigaudBarrett
Parish Clerk: S Woods
Ward Cllr Caroline Gladwin
5 members of public

QUESTIONS:

The Chairman welcomed the newly elected Ward Cllr, Chairs and members of both Godshill, and Chillerton and Gatcombe PCs.

Question asked about the closure of Rookley PO - due to close on 13th June 2025.

Rookley PC had written to the PO and their reply stated they have previously approached nearby businesses to see if they would apply to operate the PO but not received any applications. They had completed a review of the services in the area and the nearest alternative full time PO is at Godshill, just over 2 miles away from Rookley. Unfortunately, they do not have a mobile van service on The Island. Apologised for any inconvenience this closure may cause to people locally.

Reply to PCs email to MP gave a link to the Mobile Post Office Service. Asks to be let known what happens with asking for a reversal of the closure and if Rookley is able to secure an alternative PO through funding, so she can discuss with MP.

Community Action – Clerk did phone and speak to Chief Executive who said he did not feel there was enough justification for a mobile PO on The Island and if not located at the Co-op, felt a PO would struggle. Could cost PC a lot of money if they helped to finance. Community Action split the loss of Totland and Godshill PO with their respective PCs.

Discussion around the financial aspect of the PO. Noted Godshill currently pay £7,000 p.a. (was 4k) towards the running of their PO.

Rookley PO was useful for banking and obtaining cash, as no ATM in the village.

Ward Cllr Gladwin had written to the Chief Executive of the PO asking for the closure to be reversed. She had started an on-line petition, as well as setting these up at The Griffin, Chequers Inn and the Co-op. She had spoken to users of both Rookley and Godshill PO and would be writing to The Observer. Number of users for Rookley PO unknown. She had also spoken to the owners of the current building and said it was still available. Suggested building be ‘moth balled’ until Postmaster found. She stressed she does want the PO to reverse their decision and is standing up for the community.

Noted, that at present there were no staff to run Rookley PO. The person would need to be qualified. Also, the building and security needed updating. Security costs would need to be met by the person running it. The retiring Postmistress had been trying to retire for four years and tried to find a replacement all that time.

Discussion around accessibility, fact PO do collect parcels and drop box can be used Agreed people to be made aware of closure and fact they can personally object and comment.

Link to Post Office: comments@postoffice.co.uk

307/25-26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr I Leah

308/25-26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION:

1. **To receive any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests:** Cllrs Willis and Wills declared an interest in Rookley Village Hall/Association, as they are Trustees. It was noted Cllr Leah is also a Trustee. Agreed this declaration, to cover all three Cllrs, go in future Minutes.
2. To receive and consider any written requests for dispensation: none received.

309/25-26 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

After an alteration had been made to a typo, by the Chairman on page 2, under Greening Campaign, to change 'as' to 'is'. Cllrs **resolved** the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held 21st May 2025 be approved and signed.

Cllr Rigaud-Barrett asked the Clerk to send the Annual Parish Meeting Minutes to Cllrs, and these go on the next meeting agenda, to be noted. **Action: Clerk**

310/25-26 TO RECEIVE REPORTS/INFORMATION FROM:

1. **The Clerk:** the Clerk's report was noted, and will be attached to the Minutes, for information.

Co-option of Cllrs – the Clerk had prepared and printed a notice advertising the three Parish Councillor vacancies, and Cllr Wills agreed to display this on the PC noticeboard.

Annual Leave – It was noted the Clerk would be on leave from Friday 13th June until Monday 23rd June 2025.

Two members of public left the meeting.

2. **The Chairman:** Dog poo – he had requested the Clerk email the Environment Officer for an update, which she had done, no reply as yet. Cllr Wills pointed out different Officers do cover Rookley.

3. Parish Councillors:

Cllr Wills – She asked it be noted and Cllrs agreed it be Minuted, that the Postmistress was extremely upset, and profoundly shocked by the reaction of some, to the closure of the Post Office. She had held off retiring for some years trying to find a solution to keep the Post Office running and find a replacement Postmistress. The PC were disappointed by the negative comments she had received.

Cllr Gladwin informed the meeting that the Post Office guidelines were that only 3 weeks notice had to be given before the closure of a Post Office. Noted some people had been told, in confidence, before this. The link to the Post Office, to object to the closure, was earlier in the Minutes.

Village Green – Cllr Wills commented that E Read had done a great job on the Green.

Cllr Willis commented that the 'muddy patch' created by Dares, still looked awful, he would monitor.

Standing Orders – it was agreed the PC look at using the NALC version of these.

Ward Councillor: It was noted that in future the Clerk would add this to the agenda, for the Ward Councillor to either give a report in person, or send in a written one.

311/25-26 FINANCES:

1. Annual Governance Review –

- i) **To declare Rookley PC is exempt from the requirement for a limited assurance review and agree Chairman and RFO sign Certificate of Exemption:** The Parish Council agreed to declare Rookley PC is exempt and the Chairman and RFO signed the Certificate of Exemption.
- ii) **To note the Annual Internal Audit Report:** This was noted.
- iii) **To consider and approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement and sign as necessary:** The Parish Council approved Section 1 of the AGAR and the Chairman and RFO signed as necessary.
- iv) **To consider and approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance Statement and sign as necessary:** The Parish Council approved Section 2 of the AGAR and the Chairman and RFO signed as necessary.
- v) **To note Bank Reconciliation for year:** Noted.
- vi) **To note the dates of the Exercise of Public Rights as 6th June – 17th July 2025:** Noted.
- vii) **To note the variances in the Accounting Statements for 2024-25:** Noted.
- viii) **To discuss the Internal Audit Report/recommendation of Internal Auditor:**
 - a. **That the PC have a stand alone website:** Noted, and fact there would be an increased cost. To be discussed.
 - b. **Update Standing Orders, Risk Assessment and Management Scheme, GDPR Policies and Publication Scheme:** Risk Assessment and Management Scheme on agenda. The other policies will go on future agenda to be reviewed.
 - c. **Ensure the AGAR is approved in the correct format:** Done.
 - d. **Implement 2024 pay rise for Clerk and ensure uplist is recorded in the Minutes each year:** Done.

2. To note the bank reconciliation to the end of May 2025: Noted.

Current Account - £ 2,162.14

Deposit Account - £14,126.56 = £16,288.70

3. To approve payments and note receipts:

The Accounts for payment sheet for the June meeting had been circulated to Cllrs. **Resolved payment be approved.**

JUNE MEETING - ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT			£
9	Lloyds Bank	Monthly service charge	4.25
10	Sally Woods	May Salary + Backdate pay + stationery etc.	737.23
11	Playsafety Ltd	RoSPA Safety Inspection Recreation Ground	115.20
12	Rookley Village Assoc.	Hall Hire 2024/25	250.00
13	E Read	May – 2 cuts to Green grass	170.00
TOTAL			£ 1,276.68

It was noted that the hall hire fees are paid a year in arrears.

312/25-26 PLANNING

1. Updates:

Approved by IWC:

25/00527/HOU Corithea, Main Road, Rookley – Demolition of conservatory & utility, proposed single storey rear extension, proposed loft conversion & roof lights & dormer window on NW elevation.

2. **To agree comments on applications (for each application 5 minutes are allowed for applicant/objector etc. to comment):** None.

313/25-26 TO NOTE THE ROSPA PLAY SAFETY INSPECTIN REPORT FOR THE RECREATION GROUND AND AGREE ANY ACTION NECESSARY:

The Parish Council agreed the Clerk send the report to John Cattle for comment/action plan regarding the Skate Park.

Action: Clerk

It was noted the swings had been mentioned in the report and Cllrs agreed to monitor these.

Action: Cllrs

314/25-26 TO REVIEW THE PARISH COUNCIL RISK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE:

The Clerk had circulated existing copy to Cllrs. There were several issues which needed to be addressed. These were discussed, noted and agreed as follows:

The PC would need to find cover if the Clerk was off for any length of time.

Legal documents are held by Glanville Solicitors.

Microsoft Cloud will be used as back up once new laptop in place.

Budget is placed on website.

Wight Trash is used for Skate Park repairs.

Village Green policy is in hand.

Noticeboard repaired May 2025.

Benches – to be monitored and repaired as necessary.

Financial Regulations have been reviewed, Standing Orders will be, and all policies to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Stand alone website to be discussed.

Agreement between PC and outside maintenance contractor will be drawn up by Clerk and she will obtain copy of insurance cover.

It was confirmed that RVA own the field and hall. Legal ownership passes to new Trustees as they come on board. RVA to discuss drawing up an agreement giving PC permission to use part of field for swings and skate park and PC be responsible to maintain.

The Clerk will update and circulated to Cllrs in due course, and also publish on the website.

Action: Clerk

Discussion - Chair of Godshill PC said it had been an interesting meeting. He realised there were issues which were common to local PCs, and it would be good to work together.

Noted the Parishes of Arreton, Godshill, Chillerton and Gatcombe and Rookley all in the same Ward.

Noted Arreton does not have a Post Office.

Speedwatch – gone quiet for Rookley volunteers though Arreton had quite a few.

315/25-26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 2nd July 2025 at 7.30 pm.

Future Agenda items:

To review the Standing Orders.

To adopt a Village Green Policy.

To review Document Retention Policy.

The meeting close at 8.55 pm.

JUNE CLERKS REPORT

Election Expenses/Register of Interest forms – sent to IWC and once back, duly signed, will put the Register of interest forms on the PC website.

VAT Claim – pulled figures together and made a claim of £300.

Greening Campaign – emailed Chillerton and Gatcombe Clerk – she is going to raise with her Council again and get back to me.

Rookley Post Office – emailed MP and Post Office. Acknowledgement of email from MP's office. Post Office reply circulated to Cllrs.

Member of public also emailed Clerk with her concerns re the closure, and Clerk sent the Post Office public reply.

Microsoft Outlook – emailed Island Webservices who confirmed PC could retain current email address if use Classic Outlook and not the latest version.

Will liaise with the Chairman regarding this, and purchasing of new laptop.

Highwood Grove footway – emailed the Ward Cllr on this just before the meeting. Cllr Gladwin confirmed she had already emailed Planning and asked them to chase.

Websites – there had been emails sent between Clerks and IWALC, who had spoken to Val Taylor, who highly recommends Vision ICT whose prices she says are reasonable (Val suggested £950 for a small website).