

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
held at the Old Grammar School Room, Church Road, Rolleston on Dove
on Monday 27 April 2026 commencing at 7pm

Present

Councillor Stewart (in the Chair)

Councillors Appleby, Badcock, Gallone, Houston, E McManus, S McManus, Robson, Sanderson and Storer

ESBC Councillors Lock and Smedley

18 Members of the public

Mary Danby, Parish Clerk

1. Councillor Stewart welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Rollestonian of the Year 2025**

Councillor Stewart presented the Rollestonian of the Year 2024 award to Lee Cooke.

The award was given due to Lee's ongoing commitment and dedicated service to the village over a sustained period of time is inspiring and cannot be overstated. Much of what Lee does goes unseen, as she works diligently behind the scenes coordinating services, arranging visiting clergy, organising events and promoting them on social media and ensuring everything runs smoothly. Over the past year in particular, with no rector in post, she has played a crucial role in making sure church events and services have continued without disruption. The church is a vital part of Rolleston's community life and losing it would mean losing a true cornerstone of the village. Lee's dedication and commitment have helped protect and sustain that foundation. Lee reaches out constantly to the community to make sure the church is seen as a welcoming beacon in the community. As Bell Tower Captain, she keeps the team of bellringers focused on providing bells for celebrations and for memorials and works hard to draw in members of the community to share the weekly coffee morning so they have a special place to enjoy regular company.

In accepting the Award, Lee thanked everyone for the nomination and said that the work at St Mary's Church is a team effort.

3. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 28 April 2025 were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters arising**

None raised.

5. **Chairman's Review of Parish Activities**

As always writing this review for the Annual Parish Meeting of 2026 offers an opportunity to reflect back over the last year and be aware of how our village life continues to evolve and grow and to recognise how much residents care and are proud of it. There are many thriving different organisations and groups, all of which help to make Rolleston on Dove such a positive and pleasant village, with many varied activities for all different age ranges. I for one continue to be so grateful that all our volunteers put in hours and hours of hard work and effort, for which we thank them wholeheartedly. I will repeat, as I do each year in my report, how fortunate we are to live in such a lovely village with all our open spaces and facilities to enjoy - Craythorne playing fields, Tafflands, the Jubilee and Platinum Orchards, The Croft,

our various play areas, the Jinny Trail and other well used footpaths, Brook Hollows and the much-valued allotments.

For the Parish Council (PC), as usual it has been another busy year with completion of some of our longer running projects and the start of new ones. We have again been successful in receiving grants from the Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Councillors grant fund scheme. Thank you to those who have spent considerable time and effort on these applications.

Flooding continues to be a major issue for residents. The PC continues working proactively with the Environment Agency (EA), SCC and our MP to escalate the urgency of moving forward with potential options, raising its priority and offering support to residents where possible. A meeting organised by the Environment Agency (EA) and the Parish Council together with other relevant authorities and chaired by our MP, Jacob Collier was held in February for the properties directly affected by flooding from the Brook. In addition, residents who fall into the 1:100 year identified properties were also invited to the following meeting to discuss any concerns they might have. The EA advised that the findings from their early-stage business case (Strategic Outline Case) suggested that Property Flood Resilience (PFR) is currently the preferred option to take forward for further development. As part of this assessment, they considered a range of other potential measures including traditional flood defences, upstream storage, de-silting and weir removal, and Natural Flood Management. Each were evaluated against technical feasibility, environmental considerations and value for public money. PFR includes measures designed to help reduce the impact of flooding on individual properties, such as flood doors, barriers and other resistance or resilience features. However, due to government funding rules, the EA are only able to offer PFR to those properties identified as being at the highest level of flood risk. Residents within this higher risk area have been contacted separately to invite them to register their interest in a potential scheme. The PC understands that Jacob Collier will be writing to all residents in Rolleston on Dove with an update about flooding matters.

Clare Stewart continued in post as Chairman, supported by Andy Peirce as Vice Chairman. The PC is fortunate to have had a full council of 11 councillors, as many Parish Councils are struggling for councillors. In addition, we are also delighted to have two Youth Representatives who are working on various projects. I would like to thank all Councillors and our Clerk Mary for their invaluable time and support chasing issues, helping residents to contact relevant bodies, reporting problems and working on the village open spaces and assets.

Just some of the many highlights of 2025 are:

- Installation of a Speed Indicator Device (SID) on Knowles Hill. Multiple concerns have been raised by residents to Parish, Borough and County Councillors regarding the speed of vehicles using this road over many years. After due consultation with SCC, a solar powered SID on the grass verge was installed. Rolleston Civic Trust Society fully supported this project and donated a significant sum of money towards the purchase of the device. Speed data collected has been shared with SCC for their consideration for possible future traffic calming measures and with the police. The volume and speed of traffic have been both surprising and alarming. For example, in March 2026 34,350 vehicles came down Knowles Hill into Rolleston! Around 30% of cars break the speed limit, many of these would face points on their licenses and even disqualification in some cases. Even worse is the fact that despite seeing their speed displayed, many don't

attempt to slow down and with the impact of the downhill actually speed up as they pass the device.

- The PC's successful application to the Staffordshire County Council (SCC) 2025 Community Fund (supported by Councillor Philip White), part funded work to repair the surface of the section of the Jinny Trail path (from the steps to the Rolleston/Stretton boundary gate). Over the last couple of years with the help of several grants from ESBC and SCC, and monies from the PC project reserves pot, it has now been possible to repair this part of the footpath surface, to replace the ageing steps and handrails on both sides of the Trail leading up to the fields behind Craythorne Farm and up to the path alongside Blue Cross, and to rebuild and repair the historically important cattle dock wall, plant around and on top of it with native species, wildflowers and bulbs and install new interpretation panels.
- The strong working relationship continued with Stretton PC on matters that are of relevance to both parishes such as Craythorne Road, the Jinny Nature Trail and planning applications, This is vital now that applications for large scale housing developments are being put forward, which will have significant impacts on both villages.
- Progression of the Sports England (SE) Monies project continued and after several meetings and calls with ESBC, we have now been informed that the proposed variations will be accepted – namely the replacement of the zip wire at Tafflands, installing outdoor gym equipment and conducting drainage works on the pitches.
- Whilst footpaths and stiles around the village are predominantly on private land the PC actively continued to work with landowners to maintain and repair these.
- The Diamond Jubilee and Platinum Jubilee Orchards are blooming and the newer trees at the Platinum Jubilee Orchard survived the drought well, thanks mainly to Cllr Billy Storer for his regular watering of these! The sharing shelf installed on the Diamond Jubilee Orchard gate continues to be very popular with many donations of produce, spare plants and seeds left ready to go to new homes. Thank you for all the donations, the hours of help from volunteers, and to Cllr Mike Robson for organising the regular working parties.
- A new Perspex bus shelter and extended hard standing on Station Road opposite Needwood Avenue was installed. This was jointly funded by SCC and the PC with a kind donation from Bellway. The original suggestion for this additional hardstanding and shelter was made by one of the PC Youth Representatives and we are grateful for their thoughtful contributions to this project.

The Station Heritage Group have spent many hours and care encouraging the wild flower beds and the spring planting never fails to gladden the heart when you walk through! The rebuilt historic cattle dock located part way along the nature and the landscaping of it has now blended in so well it is as if it was always like this.

The Friends of Brook Hollows Group continues to improve this area, such maintaining and working on laying barrow loads of chippings on paths, tree maintenance through to providing nesting platforms. Fishing platforms have now been installed and new trees planted after tree maintenance works have taken place.

RODSEC continued to hold small events such as live and local sessions and organise trips to musical events for residents to attend, which are well supported.

The Civic Trust continues to work hard organising various events which range from quizzes and talks to history walks (these are very popular indeed now!), plant sales, managing the

delightful wild flower meadow area at the top of Knowles Hill and holding a fun run to list but a few.

Looking to the future - opportunities and challenges

Looking ahead for 2026 moving through to 2027 the Parish Council has a number of projects to complete delivery of, as well as commencing new ones. These include:

- Progression of the remaining S106 Sports England (SE) monies project implementing the proposed variations to the original conditions project that ESBC have in principle agreed to – the first priority is the installation of the new zip wire at Tafflands to replace the very tired existing one.
- Using the remainder of monies donated from the Transport Festival 2024 to put towards materials. Parish Councillors and resident volunteers will continue to clean and paint the white railings alongside Burnside, the bridges across Brookside and around the village sign area and the pedestrian bridge from Burnside to The Croft.
- Completion of the Jinny Nature Trail footpath resurfacing project (subject to successful grant application).
- Consideration of and installation in agreed village locations of further poles to house the SID device from Knowles Hill.
- Picking up the review of the tired and dilapidated Elizabeth Avenue play area equipment, seeking views from John of Rolleston Primary School pupils and residents.
- Further program of tree management on the Jinny Trail and Tafflands and replacement of the diseased Limes located alongside The Croft boundary with the brook.
- On-going footpath and stiles maintenance either on PC land or working with private landowners.
- Continued collaboration with Stretton Parish Council on matters that are of relevance to both parishes e.g. Craythorne Road, the Jinny Nature Trail, planning applications.

So, it will - as it is always - be another busy year for the PC Council and no doubt all other village organisations!

6. ESBC Councillors report (Cllr Russell Lock, Cllr Chrys Smedley, Cllr Simon Gaskin)

Your borough councillors, of which there are three of us for this area liaise and help with issues arising from the parish council meetings that are borough responsibilities. We enjoy a close working relationship with Rolleston on Dove Parish Council and have assisted in handling numerous issues over the past year, including the ongoing situation with variations to the Sports England S106 agreement, supporting call-ins for planning applications, grave digging, tree related mishaps and Brook Hollows.

In addition, we have dealt directly with many parishioners and local community groups directly on matters involving Allotment contracts, missed bin collections and planning applications.

We would like to emphasise that there are grants available up to £1500 for local groups, from the community councillor funds. We have had considerable success in the Ward with these this year, including awards for Rolleston WI, Rolleston Transport Festival, Rolleston Play Group & Friends of Brook Hollows. Details can be found on the ESBC website or indeed please contact one of the councillors for guidance.

Finally, it has been a very unsettling time for councillors as we are awaiting final announcements from the government as to whether devolution of councils will take place and as to what areas will be decided.

If devolution does happen, local councillor representation will certainly be reduced.

7. Reports of village organisations

Reports had been received from:

Rolleston Choral Society
Rolleston Civic Trust
Rolleston on Dove Station Heritage Group
Rolleston WI
RoDSEC

The reports were included in the Agenda; the Agenda is also available to view on the Parish Council's website.

Rolleston Almshouses Trust

Steve Sanderson, Committee Chairman said he was pleased to report that it had been a fairly steady year. He said that one of the residents is employed by the Trust to maintain the grass and flower bed at the front of the property where the footpath used to be.

Two Trustees had left this year, Mike Robson and Beryl Toon. The Committee remains quorate but an invitation will be included in the next Rollestonian asking for people to come forward to fill the two vacancies.

The Almshouses were last modernised in 1966 but recent works have seen four completely refurbished, the remaining two have some works still to be completed. The Committee continues to deal with day to day issues as they arise.

Mr Sanderson said that he was sad to see that RoDSEC had closed, they had been great supporters of the Trust.

8. Open Forum

No comments or issues were raised.

9. Vote of thanks

Councillor Sanderson thanked the Borough Councillors for their support to the Parish Council.

Councillor Sanderson gave a vote of thanks to Councillor Stewart and the Clerk on behalf of the council for the hard work and support they give to the Parish Council.

The meeting closed at 7.32pm

Signed

Date