

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL  
ON TUESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023 AT 7.30 pm**

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**CONFIRMED**

**Present:**

Cllr Mike Salmon (MS) – Chair, Cllr Andy Pickett (AP), Cllr Ann Edney (AE), Cllr Pat Restorick (PR), Cllr Peter Travis (PT), Cllr Jonathan Bowler (JB) and Cllr Moira Punt (MP)

**In attendance:** Hugh Williams – Clerk, Cllr Dawn Denton (County Councillor) and 1 parishioner.

**1. Parishioners Participation:** There was still speeding up Straight Lane and a request was made to extend the 20mph speed limit beyond the Crooked Lane junction. The 20mph limit had been agreed to cover the village and the TRO to do so was due to be raised within a couple of weeks. The Chair reported that extending the 20mph limit further up Straight Lane had been raised with Somerset in the past but rejected on the grounds this was a rural road and could set a precedence for all rural roads in Somerset. However, it was agreed to approach Somerset again about extending the 20mph limit. A request was made for the SID to be put up again on Straight Lane near The Mead.

Concern was expressed that there was no strimming of the edges of the playing field when the grass was being cut. The frequency of cutting was erratic and members of the PC requested to see the contract with Eagle Grounds Maintenance along with areas that should be cut. (Clerk agreed to circulate).

**2. Apologies for absence:** Cllr J McAuliffe and Cllr A Boyden (County Councillor)

**3. Approval of the minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May were approved.

**4. Declarations of interest:** None.

**5. Actions from previous meeting:**

- i. **Christchurch graveyard grass:** Contact with PCC still had to be made for a contact at the Diocese to discuss the grass cutting frequency which was currently too frequent.
- ii. **Hoedown:** The Hoedown on 28<sup>th</sup> May had again concentrated on litter picking and weeding of the Memorial Hall car park and cutting of grass at Rode Hill junction. A full report should go in The Link along with reminder of the next Hoedown planned for 25<sup>th</sup> June.
- iii. **Defibrillator:** Concern had been expressed this was not working properly. The Clerk agreed to contact Lizzy Etheridge. (Clerks Note: New pads have been ordered and should be installed in a few days.)

**6. County Councillor's Report:** Cllr Dawn Denton said she had circulated an update to the PC but the main issue was the formation of the LCNs (Local Community Networks). The first meeting was due to be held in July and there was to be a premeeting this Friday and she asked for issues to raise. The Chair said that he was concerned that initial contact had been made to Parish Clerks and not to the Parish representatives on the LCNs. There was still little clarity about what the LCNs were going to do but of greater concern was the Parish Council representation. Meetings up to now had had a decreasing number of Parishes represented as Frome dominated the meetings with many representatives present all of whom could speak. Although Frome and the Parishes had only one vote each, in reality, Frome dominated the meetings; possibly only one person from each parish/town should be allowed to speak at each LCN meeting. Cllr Denton agreed to take these concerns to the premeeting.

**7. Climate Change Group:** Thanks were expressed to Jim McAuliffe for arranging the speakers for this Saturday and the open houses for Sunday. There would be three speakers in the Memorial Hall this Saturday and people were encouraged to attend. It was hoped donations would cover the programme leaflet printing costs.

### **8. Highways:**

- i. 20mph speed limit and village gates:** The Chair had spoken to Sara Davis (Somerset Highways) and agreement from Beckington for the location of the gates had been finalised. Autograph Homes were to be contacted to ensure they paid for the gates as previously agreed. TRO for speed limit should be raised in two weeks.
- ii. Bradford Road/Rode Hill junction:** Somerset had confirmed that work should start during w/c 26 June with the installation of rumble strips. This would be followed by the installation of vehicle activated signs.
- iii. Street Lights:** The Clerk reported that the information had finally been sent to the Traffic Management section of Avon and Somerset Police and response was awaited. The Clerk was asked to chase this up in the near future.
- iv. A36 Slip Road:** Cllr Denton reported that Somerset was still chasing this up with National Highways.

### **9. Planning:**

#### **i) New applications:**

**2023/0919/TCA:** To fell elder and ash situated on top of wall – 36 High Street. No objections.

**2023/1015/HSE:** Single storey rear extension – 1 Fairfield. No objections.

#### **ii. Somerset decisions:**

**2023/0625/TPO:** To reduce the height of oak tree by 1.5m and branches by 2.5m and two ash trees by 1.5m in height and branches by 1.5m – Langham House. Approved.

**10. Buses:** The flat rate £2 fare had now been extended until the end of November and it would then rise to £2.50 until November 2024. This was good news and it looks as though relatively low bus fares will be maintained. It was also reported that Somerset had agreed that should fares rise 18 to 25 year olds would be protected with continued low fares; this would only be implemented if general bus fares rose. The meeting again thanked Peter Travis for all his work on ensuring a good bus service for the village.

### **11. Paths**

- i. Path round children's play area:** The Clerk reported that he had had a quote (£6,000) to put in a permanent gravel path. However, the meeting agreed this cost was too high and with possible redevelopment of the pavilion and general play area this should not be done. It was however, agreed that the situation would be reviewed in September/October to possibly put down wood chippings to ensure the path could still be used.
- ii. Path from Church Farm:** There was concern over the maintenance of this path beyond the Church Farm estate area. The question was raised should the Church Farm Management Committee maintain it. Somerset had indicated that there was no legal action that could be taken to improve the path, however it was agreed Cllr Denton would ask Somerset about its ongoing maintenance.
- iii. Path from allotments to Barrow Farm:** It was agreed to approach Matthew to cut this path.
- iv. Path 13/1:** It was reported this was blocked. Inspection has revealed that the path is still useable but it has been altered now so that it enters the Church Farm development at the rear and not by the A361. Part of the original path is now cultivated but the new route is fine.
- v. Verge by Church Farm:** Andy Fussell would be approached to trim this and also cut back the hedge on the A361 again, but this would have to wait until August.

**12. David Warburton MP:** The Clerk had sent an email to David Warburton again but had had no response. It was agreed that another final attempt should be made to get him to meet with Councillors. (Clerk's Note: David Warburton has now resigned as MP for Somerton and Frome).

**13. Conservation and Neighbourhood Plans:** AP said he still had to speak to Peter Harris about listed buildings and requested this was delayed for 3 months.

**14. Bluebell Wood Solar Farm:** There were mixed feeling from Parishioners on this proposal. The largest concern had been over the possible location on the triangular field on Bradford Road, although Low Carbon had indicated this might be removed from the final proposal. There was concern over the grading of the agricultural land on which the Solar Farm would be built and this would be key to the viability of the proposal. The official planning application was awaited.

**15. Financial matters:**

**i. Income and expenditure:** The income and expenditure for 2023-24 had been circulated and was approved.

**ii. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23 Form 3:** Section 1, Annual Governance Statement was approved and signed off.

**iii. AGAR Section 2, Accounting Statements 2022/2023:** This was approved and signed off. It was agreed to submit this return to PKF Littlejohn for external auditing.

**iv. Payments:** The following payments were agreed:

BHIP (Parish Council insurance)	£717.00
A Aked (internal auditor)	£30.00
SALC (training)	£30.00
Eagle Grounds Maintenance	£792.00
Clerk Salary	£254.35
HMRC PAYE	£60.40

**16. Any other business:**

**Truespeed:** The Clerk reported he had been approached by Truespeed regarding using a pole on Parish Council land to bring fibre broadband to Rode. Truespeed said work to bring the infrastructure to Rode should start in 2 to 4 months. There was no need for residents to commit to fibre to their homes before Truespeed went ahead.

**17. Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting would be held in the Committee Room at the Memorial Hall on:

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm**

**(Note meetings are moving to Mondays)**

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

Print .....

Website: [rodevillage.com/parish-council](http://rodevillage.com/parish-council)