

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL (via ZOOM) MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY 2nd FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

Cllr Peter Travis – Chair (PT), Cllr Ann Edney (AE), Cllr Elaine Butler (EB), Cllr Steve Eyles (SE), Cllr Pat Restorick (PR), Cllr Jim McAuliffe (JM), Cllr Andy Pickett (AP), Cllr Mike Salmon (MS)

In attendance: Cllr B Lund, Hugh Williams – Clerk, and 7 members of the public

1. Public Participation:

Before opening the meeting to Parishioners the Chair, on behalf of the PC, wished to express his thanks to Clive Harrington and Ben Vowles for the work they were carrying out cleaning the roads and pavements around the village. The improvements had been significant.

It was reported that someone had fallen on ice on Clay Lane which had been caused by the water run-off from the adjoining fields. It was agreed that salt and grit would be put down on this, even though this could get washed off by the running water it should reduce the chance of ice forming. However, it was noted that the nearest grit bin on Church Lane had not been filled, the Clerk agreed to chase this up.

Comment was made that DLA Piper's fees although good for fighting the development proposed for Merfield/The Mead site made by a comment at the Hearings that possibly encouraged development on Barbara's Field. The Chair said that although this had been unfortunate the main thrust by DLA Piper had been to challenge extra housing in any of the three villages, concentrating on Mendip's proposed sites which was for the Merfield/The Mead site in Rode.

Comment was made that the plans for development of Barbara's Field were inaccurate and concerns were raised that if this went ahead further green land could be built on in a domino effect. Many of the letters sent expressed the same concerns as those expressed over the Merfield/Mead application.

The PC was encouraged to look into speeding in the village.

Comment was made over support for the Barbara's Field development published in The Link and a question raised whether any costings had been carried out.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr L Oliver

3. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th January 2021 were approved with the following amendment to 5th line in Minute 8, which should read:

'Cllr Lund pointed out that Somerset and Mendip who had buildings and controlled roads etc. and **had resources to do a baseline assessment found the assessment of their carbon baseline to be complex.**'

4.Declarations of interest: SE and AP declared an interest in planning application 2021/0071/OTS. It was noted that little or no discussion would take place at this meeting, given that there were going to be other parish council meetings in the next week to consider this issue.

5. Report from County Councillor: The report sent in had been circulated to all.

6. Report from District Councillor: Cllr Lund reported that Mendip had three new temporary priorities in response to the Covid19 outbreak; these were: vaccinations, delivering services in particular to homeless and waste services, and supporting the economy. She added that the Green Party would be pushing for a green economy when the recovery starts and not 'business as usual'. Waste collections would now be starting at 6.00am and not 7.00am so people were encouraged to put their waste out the night before.

7. Actions from the previous meeting:

- i. **Weed control:** 'Scrubbing' had now been carried out on a number of the roads and hand clearance was now in progress. It was agreed to approach Ben Vowles to become Rode's legthsmen.
- ii. **Drainage Survey:** JM said the programme had been outlined in the February edition of The Link, with the work being funded by Somerset Rivers Authority through Mendip who had employed Calm Engineering to do the work.
This would be done in two stages – the first was a survey of all the gullies and drains in the village. Some of this would involve the removal of drain covers and putting cameras down them, therefore there would be a requirement to move some cars. This work should start once approval for road closures had been granted, hopefully later this month. The second phase was to contact parishioners and to get feedback on flooding issues. A letter outlining all of this would be sent to every household and feedback would be either online or by return to the Post Office.
The results should result in remediation work which would be carried out over the next two or three years.
- iii. **Website accessibility:** This was still to be progressed and the Clerk and Chair would put together a proposal for approval by the PC but this might not be until April meeting.
- iv. **Riverside walk:** The current signs about passes to use the walk were now out of date. It was agreed that SE would get three new signs prepared with contacts as Caro Smith and the Clerk.
- v. **The Sportsman:** Information from Somerset County Council indicated that the adoption of this was not going to happen for some time with priority being given to new sites and those under construction that supported the economy.
- vi. **Marsh Road:** It was hoped that the drainage gully would be part of the Calm Engineering survey; there were a number of drives that appeared to block the gully. It was agreed that County Roads should be asked to look at the road, pavement demarcations and drives to determine who was responsible for what as currently this was unclear.
- vii. **Covid19 and Buddy Scheme:** MS reported that he had had only one request to reinstate a Buddy. He had spoken to a number of Buddies and most reported that they had continued being Buddies even when lockdowns had been relaxed. Therefore, the scheme appeared to be still working well.
- viii. **Cheap Street tree:** The Clerk reported that to pollard the tree it would cost £300. It was agreed to proceed after written approval had been given by the neighbouring resident.
- ix. **Lower Street:** Clearance near the pump had revealed a broken fence which had now been repaired; the ownership of this fence was unclear. The Bench required replacement and a quote would be sought to buy one. A quote of £190 had been given to build a new one. A further quote would be sought to repaint the pump.
- x. **The Bell:** EB said that the manager had reported that someone was interested in renting it. However, he had agreed to send someone to look at it given the concerns over its current poor state of repair.

8. Climate Emergency: JM reported that the Working Group (WG) had still to be formed, he said few from the current 'Rode has a Climate Emergency Group' had joined the WG, mainly due to other commitments. A request for people to join the WG would go into the March Link and onto the Rode Facebook. It was important to get an environmentally active Chair. Cllr Lund reported Norton St Philip would be willing to share ideas with Rode and it was currently looking at: hedgehogs, electric cars, and energy surveys for homes along with solar streets, the latter having 12 interested properties in Norton and Rode.

9. Highways: SCC had asked for feedback on areas where road markings were more than 80% worn. Councillors agreed to take specified areas to collate data for submission before end of March. PT said he had spoken to the Traffic Consultant about traffic through the village and also the possible need for traffic report with regard to the Barbara's Field planning application. The Consultant would be able to provide a report on traffic in response to the planning application before the end of February, if required. It was agreed to approach Traffic Management at SCC requesting repeater signs on Rode Hill as the Police already recognise this as a speeding area.

10. Planning matters

a. New applications:

2021/0025/HSE: Erection of solar panels on garage roof – 18 St Lawrence Lane. No objections

2021/0071/OTS: Outline planning permission for erection of up to 49 dwellings, formation of vehicular accesses, open space, landscaping and associated works. Change of use of agricultural land to public open space, community allotments and orchards – Land off Church Lane. PC to discuss further at public meeting to be held on 4th February at which public comment would be limited to 3 minutes per person; and to agree its position at Special PC meeting on 9th February.

2021/0139/HSE: Extension of single garage to form double garage – 1 St Lawrence Lane. No objections.

2021/0141/HSE: Erection of double garage rather than single garage and car port – 9 St Lawrence Lane. No objections.

b. Mendip decisions:

2020/2286/HSE and 2020/2287/LBC: Demolition of existing extension and replacement/erection of single storey extension and roofing works – 12 Lower Street. Approved with conditions.

2020/2346/VCR: Application to vary drawings of planning approval 2020/0973/FUL – rear of 16 Lower Street. Approved with conditions.

2020/2378/TCA: Apple trees thin crowns by 20 - 30% and reduce height by approx. 1 metre – 30 High Street. No TPO required, approved.

2020/2503/TCA: Removal of lower branches of Hornbeam, reduce height of Cornus and reduce height of and shape group of 6 Photinias – 33 High Street. No TPO required, approved.

11. Church Farm access to village/footpaths and playing field: The path made of hoggin had been started near the development, but most of the path on the S106 land had yet to be done. Trees are to be cut through to create access for this path onto the playing field site. It was agreed that AP would prepare a letter to formalise the fact that the new fencing and the actual S106 land differed.

12. Inspector's Hearing: The Chair reported that a document ED48 had just been issued by the Inspector. In this it appeared that he had deleted RD1 (the Merfield/Mead site) from the land that could be built on as part of the Mendip Local Plan Part 2. If this was the case it would add weight to the Parish Council objections to the planning application, however, it did not stop the application from still being considered by Mendip.

13. Cycling and Walking: PT had been in contact with Frome on their proposal but this still had to be costed. Support for it had come from Rode, Beckington and Rudge amongst others. EB said that the path 13/1 would require a formal diversion to go through the Church Farm site, this would need to be applied for.

14. Police Beat Manager: The Beat Managers had been informed over concerns raised about people driving to Rode (and Tellisford) and then doing the 'Tellisford loop'. This was to be monitored as being contrary to current Covid19 guidelines.

15. Financial matters:

i) The Clerk reported that he had now submitted (electronically) forms to add EB and MS as signatories to the NatWest bank account. He awaited approval.

ii) The current financial expenditure was noted, with significant extra outgoings this year. The precept for 2021/2022 of £19,000 had been applied for.

iii) The following payments were agreed:

SALC training (Code of Conduct)	£50.00
Clerk salary	£220.82
HMRC PAYE	£55.00
Peter Travis (Zoom subscription)	£14.39

17. Other items:

Bath transport consultation: PT said he had recently joined a virtual meeting on Bath's new transport plans and he said that it was important for Rode along with Beckington, Norton St Philip and Frome to comment on the consultation as Bath were looking to set targets up to 2030 for travel to and within Bath. Proposals were for a marked drop in single occupancy car journeys, increased bus (and train) use, walking and cycling.

The Meeting closed at 10.05 pm.

Signed _____

Date: _____

Print: _____

Date of Next Meeting (virtual via Zoom): Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at **7.30 pm**