

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL (via ZOOM) MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD  
ON TUESDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MARCH 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, Cllr L Oliver, Hugh Williams – Clerk, and 7 members of the public

**1. Public Participation:**

Comment was made that the weed clearance had improved the appearance of the village; however, it had revealed the poor state of the pavements in many areas. The Chair said a full assessment of pavements would be carried out.

It was said that currently the Mendip planning site did not have all the comments submitted on the Barbara's Field application on its site.

It had been reported that fibre internet was to be installed throughout the village and an update was asked for. It was reported that Voneus were planning to install this before the end of this year, but confirmation was still awaited. It was noted that Truespeed required customer commitment before they would proceed and that currently they had no plans for Rode for at least 3 years.

Concern was expressed that during a recent accident on the A361 it was noted that a number of overweight lorries had been using Rode Bridge to avoid the delays.

Following the Inspector's deletion of Merfield/The Mead site from the list of sites to accommodate the required extra housing it was asked if this would impact on the current application. In response it was said that the application would still proceed. It was thought that the reasons for this deletion by the Inspector would be given once the final Hearing's Report was issued.

It was asked whether the annual Parish meeting would take place this year; in response it was said it would and that it would probably be a remote (Zoom) meeting.

**2. Apologies for absence:** None. The Chair expressed his thanks to all Councillors and also to the District and County Councillors for their continued attendance at all meetings.

**3. Approval of the minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 and of the Special Parish Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> February were approved.

**4. Declarations of interest:** SE and AP declared an interest in planning application 2021/0071/OTS, however as the vote on the Parish Council (PC) decision had been made they had been given dispensation to provide limited information to help with the compilation of the full PC response.

**5. Report from County Councillor:** The PC wished to pass on its congratulations to SCC for its excellent roll out of the Covid19 vaccinations.

Cllr Oliver reported that she had forwarded designs for the village gateway signs to the Chair and these would be circulated for selection. It was hoped these would be installed in the next financial year. At the same time the 30mph and 40mph limits would be extended on the A361.

Sha asked for all the photos on worn street markings be forwarded to her in a single file which she would then pass onto SCC.

The speed and volume data for the A361 had raised questions from members of the PC and she advised these be sent to Traffic Management as soon as possible and before full evaluation of the data took place. This was agreed and it was explained that members of the PC had been busy with the planning application on Barbara's Field and not had time to evaluate the data.

**6. Report from District Councillor:** Cllr Lund reported that Mendip had agreed to implement a trial of the universal basic income and to pay the real living wage to all its employees. Mendip was also giving a £40,000 investment to the arts; this money had come from travel savings by staff during the Covid19 lockdowns.

### **7. Actions from the previous meeting:**

- i. **Weed control:** It was agreed the PC would present Clive Harrington with an aerial view of Rode to thank him for all the work he had done. AP had arranged for photos to be taken and he would be circulating a selection for PC to choose an appropriate one to donate.  
It was agreed that other photos should be offered to residents and that a small percentage of each sale given to the PC as it had funded the taking of them.  
AP was thanked for arranging this.
- ii. **Lengthsman:** Ben Vowles would be employed as the village lengthsman. There was some discussion over the number of days he would be needed during the year, with questions raised as to whether he would be needed for 26 days per annum as the bulk of the work had been done and little work would be needed in the winter months. It was agreed that he would be initially given a six-month trial which would be for a minimum of 13 days work to be reviewed monthly by EB and the PC would decide if extra days were needed during this trial period. The rate of pay was set at £120/day. The wording of the draft contract was agreed with the deletion of clauses 3 and 6 as these were covered by clause 7. Discussion was held as to whether any money could come from MDC or SCC as this was work that would have been done in the past by them. Cllrs Oliver and Lund agreed to investigate what the sequence of road sweeping etc. should be. Additionally, AP agreed to check what responsibility landowners had for keeping footpaths clear.
- iii. **Surface Water – Clay Lane:** Cllr Oliver had written to SCC regarding this issue and was awaiting a response. This issue was part of the adoption of The Sportsman development which still had to be done. A bond was in place to ensure drainage and other issues were sorted prior to adoption by SCC. It was agreed the PC should write to Somerset once details of the S106 or S278 were determined as these should cover this issue.
- iv. **Calm Engineering:** JM reported that an initial survey had been conducted but the full drainage survey had been delayed to mid-March due to delays in getting road closures in place. Affected residents would be notified prior to work starting. He said seven letters had been sent back on flooding issues, especially on the 2000 flood, and these had been passed onto Calm.
- v. **Riverside walk:** Three new signs had been prepared and installation of these was now with the landowner; a request to move the sign near Scutts Bridge to the other side of the path had been made.
- vi. **Marsh Road:** Photographs had been sent to Mendip and an engineer was due to visit the road. It had also been agreed once Covid19 restrictions were lifted a site visit by Mendip with AE, EB and the Clerk would take place.
- vii. **Lower Street:** The PC agreed that the current bench would be replaced and it was agreed to pay Grant Slade £190 for a replacement. It was also agreed that the pump would be repaired and repainted by Ben Vowles at a cost of £100.

viii. **The Bell:** Contact with the owners was still to be made. PT reported he had been contacted by a resident interested in operating a take-away service from part of the building but would require other businesses to take on part of the space to make this viable.

**8. Climate Emergency:** JM reported that he had put an article in The Link to get volunteers to form a Working Group (WG) but to date had had little interest. It was agreed getting this off the ground during the current restrictions was difficult.

**9. Highways:** It was agreed the working group would look at the A361 speed and volume data with Patrick Moss this month.

PT agreed to collate the worn road marking photographs and send them to Cllr Oliver who was co-ordinating a response.

The issue of large vehicles using Lower Street was discussed, it was agreed not to make the narrow southern end one way. The PC would also highlight the issue of HGVs using this narrow stretch of road to Somerset Traffic Management (with copy to Cllr Oliver) and ask for their recommendations for a solution to avoid the problem of damage to people's property.

It was agreed to approach Traffic Management at SCC asking for their advice on installation of either repeater signs or roundels on Rode Hill, this would be supported by speed-watch data.

## **10. Planning matters**

### a. New applications:

**2021/0178/HSE:** Insertion of garage door to existing car port and erection of a garden room for home office – 16 St Lawrence Lane. No objections.

**2021/0293/TCA:** Goat willow – re-pollard at previous pruning points – Cheap Street. No objections.

### b. Mendip decisions: None

### c. Other planning matters:

**2021/0071/OTS:** Application for outline planning permission for the erection of up to 49 dwellings etc. off Church Lane. The PC had at its Special Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February agreed to oppose this development. The draft response had been circulated to all members of the PC and there were no comments. It was agreed this was a comprehensive objection and JM in particular was thanked for preparing it. It was considered about 80-90% complete and agreed the final draft would be circulated to the PC for email approval before being submitted by the Clerk as the PC response. The transport assessment prepared by Patrick Moss should also be submitted as a separate response.

It was also agreed that 'without prejudice' a separate document should be prepared outlining the minimum requirements of a Section 106 (S106) that the PC wanted should the development get approval. Discussions agreed that the requirements would include installation of a 20mph speed limit throughout Rode village, commitment that the developer did install on Brown's Ground: allotments, a water supply, proper paths and flood abatement measures for Nutts Lane along with other water/flood measures. PT, EB and Cllr Oliver agreed to draft this document.

**11. Church Farm access to village/footpaths and playing field:** The trees had now been cut back near the Playing Field and fencing could start; however, the path from Church Farm was yet to start and this probably would not do so until further housing was completed.

AP had prepared a letter of agreement regarding the boundary fence and actual S106 land boundary, this required approval prior to being sent to Andy Fussell.

**12. Inspector's Hearing:** No update, the final report was awaited.

**13. Cycling and Walking:** This was moving forward slowly, a consultant had been appointed for the initial work in Frome. The villages would be consulted at a later stage.  
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:** Toni-Marie Lines was now back after long term sick leave.

**15. Transport action plan for Bath:** A joint response from Rode, Beckington and Norton St Philip had been submitted along with a response from Frome.

**16. Face-to-face meetings:** Currently virtual meetings were only possible until 7<sup>th</sup> May which meant that face-to-face meetings would have to start in June. If this was the case, the large room in the village hall would need to be used to maintain social distancing. It was noted that this was being challenged by the NALC as it was not in line with other Government guidance.

**17. Financial matters:**

i) The Clerk reported that he had now re-submitted (electronically) forms to add EB and MS as signatories to the NatWest bank account, the first submission having been rejected by the bank.

ii) The following payments were agreed:

Dale Weeks (hedge cutting)	£50.00
Drone Aerialpix (aerial photos)	£317.90
Vistaprint (Riverwalk signs)	£49.71
Clerk salary	£228.74
HMRC PAYE	£55.00
Peter Travis (Zoom subscription)	£14.39

**17. Other items:**

**Lower Street development:** PT said it had been reported to him that there had been two land falls from gardens on the High Street onto the site. The second being more serious in that a digger driver could have been badly injured. It was suggested that the HSE and the site owner along with possibly someone within Mendip Building Control be alerted to these incidents. This was not a PC issue but appropriate authorities should be informed.

**Book of condolence:** A book had been bought should it be needed for either the Duke of Edinburgh or The Queen.

The Meeting closed at 10.25 pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Next Meeting (virtual via Zoom):** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at **7.30 pm**

*Website: [rodeparishcouncil.webs.com](http://rodeparishcouncil.webs.com)*