

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL (via ZOOM) MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD  
ON TUESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 AT 7.30 pm**

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**CONFIRMED**

**Present:**

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

**In attendance:** Cllr B Lund, Cllr L Oliver, Hugh Williams – Clerk, and 4 members of the public

**1. Public Participation:**

Comment was made that the review of use for the playing field was no longer easily accessible on the Village Facebook site. It was noted this review would be further discussed at the Parish Meeting on Thursday. The review it would be posted onto the Parish Council website.

A question was raised as to whether there was any news of the proposed development on Barbara's Field, in response it was said that Mendip had not made a decision yet and may not do so for a couple of months. The refusal for development of The Mead/Merfield site had been good news but in response to a question over an appeal it was said the developer had 6 months within which to appeal. A request for the SIS Speed sign to be reinstated on Straight Lane was made.

**2. Apologies for absence:** Cllr Elaine Butler

**3. Approval of the minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April were approved.

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

**5. Report from County Councillor:** A response from SCC had been received regarding the adoption of The Sportsman and this should be pursued (see also under minute 9).

The legal challenge to continue with virtual meetings had been rejected and physical meetings would have to take place after 7<sup>th</sup> May.

**6. Report from District Councillor:** Cllr Lund reported that the public consultation on the Unitary Authority had closed; however, all four district councils were going to hold a referendum on the Unitary Authority composition – this will take place from 18 May until 4 June. Again, it was noted meetings of Mendip District Council would have to cease to be virtual after 7<sup>th</sup> May.

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

- i. **Hoedown:** The village Hoedown, organised by MS and EB, was held on 25<sup>th</sup> April with 35 volunteers plus a few others working outside their own properties. This was a very good response and involved the picking up of litter, clearance of gullies on Marsh Road, re-staining 3 benches and weed clearance in various locations around the village during the 2 hours. Thanks were also given to those supplying cakes and sausage rolls. MS reported a further 14 people had expressed an interest in future Hoedowns; he added that another was planned for afternoon of 30<sup>th</sup> May and possibly on the last Sunday of the month up to October.

Approval was agreed for further expenditure for grabbers, waste bag rings and high visibility jackets as well as approval for bag, gloves, sandpaper, wood stain and other sundries already bought for the April Hoedown.

- ii. **Lengthsman:** Ben Vowles was due to start work on 14 May, probably clearing gullies on Marsh Road. There was discussion over the width of the path on Church Lane, investigation would be conducted to see if tarmac continued under the encroaching bank and possible contact made with County Roads regarding its width. It was agreed that the Lengthsman should keep an eye on this and clear as necessary as part of his regular duties.
- iii. **The Bell:** Contact attempts would continue, to date no response had been received.
- iv. **Riverwalk:** It was reported it was 10 years since Jim Ryan had allowed walking across the fields by the river and a vote of thanks was given to him as this had been so welcome for villagers during this last year. A letter of thanks would also be put in The Link.
- v. **Jubilee Clock:** This had been installed in 1887 and had worked until the 1960s, it had then worked on and off until the early 2000s when it was serviced and electrical winding installed. It was now not striking and initial investigations indicated a problem at the top of the clock. The person who rebuilt it in the early 2000s had been approached, if this was not fruitful another repairer would be approached. The meeting agreed the clock had to be repaired with the PC footing the bill.
- vi. **Dog Waste Bin – The Mead:** This had broken and the PC had agreed to purchase a replacement. The Clerk had ordered one which was due soon.
- vii. **Trees:** The trees on Clay Lane and The Mead were still to be inspected by John Osborne and AP said this was to be done this week, an additional tree by the allotments would be inspected. It was agreed any cutting should be left until September.
- viii. **Bus back better:** PT had circulated a report to the Parish Council which said the first step was to lobby the local transport authorities, this was more difficult for Rode as both buses that served the village came under two different authorities. It was agreed that as a Primary Village, Rode did not have a viable bus service. A survey of the village on bus use was planned for September as doing it before was thought to be unrepresentative of bus use/requirements as people were not currently using buses during the Covid pandemic. Cllr Oliver expressed concern over the timing of the survey as a decision on buses was to be made in October. She proposed a meeting was held with SCC's John Perriett.
- ix. **Brown's Ground:** Discussion was held as to whether the Parish Council should approach Andy Fussell to express an interest in it taking over and owning Brown's Ground irrespective of the current proposal to develop Barbara's Field. There was agreement that this could be a valuable village asset, however after some debate it was agreed that this might not be the most appropriate time to approach Andy Fussell. There were also questions over the possible ongoing costs of maintenance of the land, although these could possibly be minimal.

**8. Climate Emergency:** JM reported that he had got 6 people interested in joining the Steering Group but he still had to leaflet villagers and he hoped to do this in the next couple of weeks.

### **9. Highways:**

- a) The working group had met with Patrick Moss and although there was a lot of information and data on speed in and around the village this needed to be put together into a good case for speed limits. The A361, Rode Hill and Bradford Road were one issue and the High Street, Lower Street, Straight Lane and Church Lane were another issue. The proposal by Patrick Moss, although costing around £2,500 was considered necessary. But it would be put on hold until discussions had been held with Sara Davis at Somerset Highways as possibly Somerset could

do some of the survey work and it would be good to clarify what would be required to install speed limits. It was agreed the Transport Group and Cllr Oliver would meet with Sara Davis and that the Clerk write to Sara Davis on this issue.

- b) County Roads had responded to the concerns over HGVs using Lower Street and this indicated that to install any signage would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which would require the support of the Police, the installation of any signs would also be a lengthy and expensive process – up to £10,000. The meeting having considered this and the fact that the bakery (source of some of the HGVs) had now relocated out of Lower Street and also that SWP vehicles were aware of the problems, this would not now be pursued. A watching brief would be kept.
- c) Some pavement photographs had been taken, others still to be done.
- d) The Sportsman had still to be adopted but a more positive response to Cllr Oliver's email had been received from Somerset. It was agreed the Clerk should continue to pursue this with Development Engineering at Somerset as a bond was in place to rectify any issues prior to the road being adopted by Somerset. It was agreed to keep this on the agenda.

## **10. Planning matters**

### **a. New applications:**

**2021/0807/TCA:** Works to trees in conservation area: 3 beech, 1 ash, 7 lime, 6 horse chestnut and 1 yew – Langham House. No objections, leave to Planning Officer

**2021/0858/FUL:** Erection of detached dwelling including associated alterations to 9 The Mead and provision of 2 car parking spaces – 9 The Mead. No objections, leave to Planning Officer.

**2021/0887/VRC:** Application to vary condition 17 (obscure glazing) of planning approval 2018/2015/VRC – 6 Stable Close. No objection, leave to Planning Officer.

### **b. Mendip decisions:**

**2020/1686/OTS:** Application for outline planning permission for the erection of up to 29 dwellings with associated access and landscaping works – The Mead/Merfield. Refusal.

**2021/0418/HSE:** Demolition of single storey extension to rear elevation and of existing garage to eastern elevation of house. Construction of two storey extension to eastern elevation – 24 Marsh Road. Approved.

**2021/0534/TCA:** 4 pleached hornbeams, reduce height by 1 – 1.5 metres – 17 High Street. No TPO required, approved.

**2021/0569/TCA:** Ash tree reduce height by 2 metres and reduce spread by 1.5 metres – 1 Halfpenny Row. No TPO required, approved.

**11. Calm Engineering and drainage:** JM reported that some small extra surveying was to be done on the village outskirts next week. An update on the work done would be in the next issue of The Link and a report was due from Calm with update letters being sent to all houses.

**12. Church Farm access to village/footpaths and playing field:** There was no update on the hoggin path but this would be pursued. A report on the playing field would be given at the Parish Meeting on Thursday; draft proposals for the development of the S106 land had been issued and these were on the Village Facebook site (and subsequent to the meeting on the Rode PC site [under planning]).

**13. Parish Council website:** The Chair reported that this still had to be progressed; contact was being made with website developers.

**14. Police Beat Manager:** The monthly report was noted.

**15. Financial matters:**

- i) The Clerk reported that he had still not heard back from the NatWest, but he thought the new signatories (EB and MS) had been approved.
- ii) It was agreed to retain the allotment fee at £50 and the Clerk would send the invoice.
- iii) The asset register was agreed and this would be uploaded to the website.
- iv) The following payments were agreed:

Eagle Grounds Maintenance	£725.12
Clerk salary	£220.82
HMRC PAYE	£55.00
Peter Travis (Zoom subscription)	£14.39
Elaine Butler (materials for Hoedown)	£48.01
Hugh Williams (paint and brushes)	£65.85
- v) The Annual Governance and Accountability Return – AGAR Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2020/21, previously circulated, was agreed and the Chair and Clerk would arrange signing off.
- vi) AGAR Section 2 Accounting Statements 2020/21, previously circulated, were approved and the Chair and Clerk would arrange signing off.
- vii) Rode Parish Council had a turnover of less than £25,00 and therefore the PC could exempt itself from a Limited Assurance Review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015. It was agreed to complete the Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2020/21 Part 2 and the Chair and Clerk would sign this off. The Clerk agreed to arrange for an internal audit of the accounts.

**16. Date of Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be a physical meeting in the main hall of the Memorial Hall at:

**7.30pm on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June.**

Please note the change of day for the meeting.

The Meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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