

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE CHAPEL
ON WEDNESDAY 7th DECEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 pm**

UNCONFIRMED

Present:

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

In attendance: Cllr Barbi Lund, Hugh Williams – Clerk, and Ian Hasell (Chair of Norton St Philip PC)

1. Public Participation:

Ian Hasell reported on the recent public meeting held in Norton St Philip, which had supported making a legal challenge to the Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2) and housing development within North East Mendip. Mendip had proposed development within the 3 villages – Rode, Beckington and Norton St Philip in LPP2, which had not been in LPP1. Norton St Philip had sought legal advice (using DLA Piper) about challenging the Inspector's Report which had rejected building in Rode but retained development in both Beckington and Norton St Philip (NSP). LPP1 had as its core 'proportionate development in Mendip villages' but LPP2 had started on the premiss of development in NE Mendip and this was now part of NSP's legal challenge to Mendip on the Inspector's Report, based on a 'legal error at the outset'. Mendip was due to consider the adoption of LPP2 at its full cabinet meeting on 20th December and NSP Parish Council (NSP PC) would decide whether it would take legal action at its Council meeting on 13 December; if approved by the NSP PC the legal challenge to Mendip would be issued following the meeting.

He said the best outcome for the area would be for Mendip to adopt the LPP2, as if it was not adopted there would be no plan in place and a developers would be in position to apply for development unhindered. NSP would then legally challenge the LPP2 during the six-week window. Rode PC was asked to consider its support for the legal challenge (as would Beckington). The meeting agreed to put this issue on its January agenda and requested Ian Hasell to keep it informed and updated on this issue. It was noted that NSP and Rode had close ties and had in the past worked successfully together.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr Mike Salmon and Cllr L Oliver. Caroline Murray (Calm Engineering) was also unable to make the meeting so her update would be held over to the January meeting.

3. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th November were approved.

4. Declarations of interest: None.

5. Report from County Councillor: Cllr Oliver's report was noted, specifically that Covid rates remained high in the area and also that there was now a specific Somerset website on climate emergency, which could be of interest.

6. Report form District Councillor: Cllr Lund had nothing specific to report.

7. Actions from the previous meeting:

- i. **Trees:** The Clerk informed the meeting that he had chased up the cutting of the dead trees along Clay Lane and these should be done soon.
He had sent a second email regarding the trees along The Mead to the owners of Merfield House attaching the tree report from John Osborne; also copied to County Roads. County Roads had forwarded the report to the County Arboriculturist for him to inspect the trees. It was agreed that Mendip should also be informed and that a further email sent enquiring whether insurance was in place on these trees should they come down.
A further concern had been expressed over a tree near the allotments on PC land, and it was noted that the Parish Council did not have a register of the trees it was responsible and SE agreed to contact Peter Harris to see if he knew of one. All PC trees should then be inspected by a tree surgeon and conditions noted.
- ii. **Fingerpost – Straight Lane:** The Clerk reported that the fingerpost had been removed and that the new finger and repainting were in hand. The post should be returned within a couple of weeks.
- iii. **Notice board by Memorial Hall:** It was reported that the Memorial Hall might own the freestanding notice board but were reluctant to take ownership. It was agreed the Clerk should source and get a price for a new board and evaluate the state of the legs. This would be reviewed at the next meeting.
- iv. **Clock above Cross Keys:** A report from David Hornsey indicated that getting the striking mechanism working again would require access from the roof. This would require scaffolding and be expensive; however, the meeting agreed it should be repaired and further enquiries would be made.
- v. **Building in grounds of Coach House:** It appeared that although planning permission had been given this probably lapsed before construction began and its use and size might not accord with permissions given; Cllr Lund agreed to follow this up with Mendip Enforcement.
- vi. **Footpath from Church Farm estate:** The path from the estate to the playing field had now started. However, plans from Autograph indicated that only the path to the playing field was to be constructed and not the arm off it to Church Lane. AP and EB agreed to check emails they had on this and Autograph would be approached over the paths. Supply of the sleepers would be chased up and cut-through location checked.
- vii. **Voneus broadband:** The Voneus service of fibre broadband should be ready for service by June/July 2022. Rode was still a priority village but there was currently a shortage of engineers. BT could also be installing fibre in the village through a separate scheme.

8. Highways:

- i) **Speed Watch:** The purchase of an extra SID for use in the village as a reminder to motorists was still planned. Fixing points had been agreed in the past with a new one on Rode Hill to be installed. However, a new Memorandum of Understanding had to be completed and a meeting with the Speed Watch team should be arranged. AP and EB would arrange to get this Memorandum completed.
- ii) **The Sportsman:** The drainage issues were being investigated by Somerset and Calm. An update was expected at the next meeting.
- iii) **A36 Slip road:** Highways England had acknowledged the Clerk's email and it had been passed to the engineering division.

9. Planning matters:

i) New applications:

2021/2621/HSE: Erection of single storey ground floor extension with roof terrace – Monkley House, Monkley Lane. No objections.

2021/2641/TCA: Reduce birch by 2-3m finished height at 9m, reduce apple by 2m – 7 Langham Place. No objections.

2021/2297/FUL: Erection of four dwellings and creation of new access – The Bell Inn, 13 Frome Road. Discussions on this application raised concerns over the piecemeal development of the land around The Bell Inn and the fact that the Bell – a listed building – would not benefit from the development. There were concerns that other small development plans could be submitted all of which could avoid any S106 or other planning requirements (e.g. affordable homes) due to their size. Some other concerns had been raised over the access along Church Lane. The development was also outside the village boundary. It was agreed that the PC should reject the application and seek to find out the intentions of Wellington Pub Group who owned the whole site.

Rode Village Facebook would be updated to alert the village of this development.

ii) Mendip decisions:

2021/2329/TCA: Reduce by 1 to 1.5 all round two yew trees – Rode Chapel. Approved.

2021/2368/TCA: Reduce magnolia by 1m, reduce plum by 1.5m and reshape apple tree – 5 Lower Street. Approved.

iii) 2020/1686/OTS appeal: No update available – still to be considered by Planning Inspectorate.

10. Playing field: The Memorandum of Understanding between the PC and the Playing Field revision was still to be progressed, SE was to speak to a solicitor.

11. Conservation Area: Deferred to the next meeting.

12. Bus services: PT reported that Somerset had put in a bid for £165 million to improve bus services across the whole county, however the Government had received from across the country bids well in excess of the funds available. The Government response was now awaited. He added that some minor changes in local bus times were expected in January but no cuts to services. Bus use was running at only 70% of pre-Covid levels.

13. Financial matters:

i) It was agreed the PC would fund a gift voucher for E Talman who had played the trumpet at the Remembrance Day commemoration on the village green again this year. She had travelled down from London and thanks were expressed to her for doing so.

ii) The following payments were agreed:

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|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| Eagle Grounds Maintenance | £725.12 |
| Clerk salary | £220.82 |
| HMRC PAYE | £55.00 |
| Gift voucher – Remembrance Day (E Talman) | £25.00 |
| G Berry (internet provision) | £154.66 |
| A Pickett (rewilding expenses) | £151.78 |

14. Any other business: a) JM reported that he had been approached about digitising all the copies of The Link to keep as an archive. The meeting thought this a good idea and asked him to investigate the possibility of doing this.

b) As this was his last meeting, thanks were given to Steve Eyles for his many years on the Parish Council, his calm and persuasive approach would be missed.

15. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held in the Memorial Hall at:

7.30 pm on Tuesday 11th January

The Meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Signed _____

Date: _____

Print: _____

Website: rodevillage.com/parish-council/