

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL
ON TUESDAY 10th JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

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

In attendance: Cllr Barbi Lund, Hugh Williams – Clerk and 2 parishioners.

1. Public Participation: Concerns were expressed over the drains along Crooked Lane which were blocked, this was resulting in water creating potholes in the road. The Clerk was asked to report this to County Roads.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr A Boyden (County Councillor) and Cllr D Denton (County Councillor)

3. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th December were approved.

4. Declarations of interest: None.

5. Report from District Councillor: Cllr Lund reported Mendip was winding down its operations before it ceased to exist from 1st April. Many meetings had not taken place.

6. Report from County Councillor: Cllr Denton had sent a report indicating Somerset had an overspend of over £23million for the year. There was good news that the £2 flat rate bus fare had now started on all local buses.

7. Actions from previous meeting:

- i. **Trees: Merfield/The Mead:** Cllr Lund apologised for not sending a letter to Mr James but she would do so.
- ii. **Slip road onto A36:** Cllr Denton had reported that SCC would nudge National Highways on this issue.
- iii. **Ultrafast broadband:** No further updates had been received.
- iv. **Footpaths to and from Church Farm:** The recent rains had highlighted the poor quality of the 'rural' path connecting the estate with the village. Autograph Homes were keen to hand over the running of the estate, which included this path, to a Church Farm management company. However, the current path would require costly improvements to make it suitable for all weathers and any management company would be reluctant to take this on. JM pointed out there was a travel plan as part of the agreement to build Church Farm and he had been trying to find out if the Council had approved this yet. It was agreed JM and Cllr Lund would discuss this further and try and progress with Mendip. The PC had not been party to the S106 agreement and therefore had difficulty in resolving this issue. There was a suggestion that the PC could become an agent on behalf of Mendip and consider starting arbitration proceedings on this issue.
It was agreed that JM would report back in a couple of weeks to see if any progress had been made with Mendip before any further action is taken.

The condition of this path through the playing field land was also in very poor condition but it was agreed to take no action until the main part of the path was sorted. The use of bark chippings might be considered to improve this section.

8. Climate Change Group: AP had tried to make contact with Adam Woods regarding the rewilding of the area by the Memorial Hall but not had any response. Cllr Lund was seeing him this week and would try and chase him up.

9. Highways:

- i. **Speedwatch:** JB had tried to contact Malcolm Wood and agreed to try again to progress.
- ii. **The Sportsman:** Somerset Council had sent an email saying the site would be adopted in the Spring. However, concern was expressed that the issue of drainage on Clay Lane which was thought to be covered by the S106 agreement for this development had not been carried out. This was an old agreement probably around 2007 and the PC did not have a copy of the S106. Cllr Lund agreed to see if she could find the relevant documents from Mendip.
- iii. **Street Lighting:** Following the last meeting it had been determined that Rode had 70 street lights, of these around 16 were at road junctions and would probably have to be left on after midnight. There were ecological reasons for improving darkness and also climate reasons for reducing energy use and therefore consideration for turning off some street lights was favoured. It was agreed the village would initially be consulted over turning off 30 street lights and if supported and successfully carried out the remaining 20 could be considered for turning off. This would also reduce the initial costs to the Parish Council. The Clerk agreed to draw up a list of lights proposed for turning off.

10. Planning:

i) New applications:

2022/2374/FUL: Erection of 3 dwellings and associated access – The Bell Inn, 13 Frome Road. The meeting agreed this should be objected to on the same grounds as the previous proposal to build 4 dwellings (2021/2297). The refusal would be amended to reflect the Inspector's ruling regarding the Mendip housing plan.

ii. Mendip decisions:

None

iii. Other:

2021/0071/OTS: Appeal ref: 3292838: Development of Barbara's Field off Church Lane – erection of 49 dwellings and associated access. The case prepared by Context Planning objecting to the proposal to develop this site had been circulated prior to the meeting and was endorsed by the meeting as a very good document. This would be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as the Parish Council's objection to the planning application. JM was thanked for organising this and liaising with Context. The meeting agreed that Context had done a very good job and agreed they should also attend the Hearing (24th January) to help put the PC case. The funding of Context at the Hearing was agreed.

Discussion was held over a possible S106 agreement should the appeal go in favour of the developer. It was agreed that the PC must this time be involved in any S106 agreement to ensure the possible 'donation' of Brown's Ground did not become a financial burden to the PC and that certain work was carried out on this land by the developer as part of any S106.

2021/2297/FUL: Appeal ref: 3305951: Erection of four dwellings and creation of access – The Bell Inn, 13 Frome Road. The developer had appealed to Mendip as no decision on the planning application had been made within the set timeframe. It was agreed to resubmit the PC objection to

the original proposal to the Planning Inspectorate with amendments made to the 5-year housing supply.

11. Playing Field Constitution: AP had spoken briefly to Steve Eyles regarding the invoice and he agreed to follow this up.

12. Buses: PT reported that the new timetables should start on 22 January with most times of buses changing to reflect the requirement for time to be allowed on the D2 route for it to come through Rode. It was noted that apart from Saturdays there were no evening buses back from Frome to Rode.

The PC had sent a letter to the Minister for Roads, Buses and Places to request an extension to the Bus Recovery Grant. PT said that he was more hopeful that an extension to this grant could be made.

13. Website: Zonkey had acknowledged receipt of the initial payment and were working on the new website. It was agreed that the village sign should be the Rode logo and it was possible art work already existed for this.

14. Councillor Resignation: The meeting noted the resignation of Elaine Butler from the Parish Council due to family reasons. It was agreed the Clerk would let Mendip know and to advertise the vacancy on the noticeboard and put an article in The Link. The vacancy would also be put onto the village Facebook site.

15. Financial matters:

Payments: The following payments were agreed:

Hardington Vale	£650.00
Rode Chapel	£350.00
Mendip Community Transport	£150.00
Citizens Advice Mendip	£100.00
Tim Lynch (electricity for lights)	£50.00
Clerk Salary	£241.85
HMRC PAYE	£60.40

16. Any other business: A concern had been expressed that the tree on PC land on Halfpenny Lane was interfering with overhead cables. It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate, although it was thought the survey last year had not identified any problems, and if necessary, get a quote for work.

17. Date of next meeting:

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

Tuesday 7th February at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed

Date

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Website: rodevillage.com/parish-council