

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL
ON TUESDAY 11th APRIL 2023 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

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

In attendance: Hugh Williams – Clerk and no parishioners.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr M Salmon, Cllr D Denton and Cllr A Boyden (County Councillors)

2. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th March were approved. There was concern over the minute 15 regarding David Warburton and this is dealt with in minute 14 of these minutes.

3. Co-option of new Councillor: Moira Punt was co-opted onto the Parish Council and this brings the Council up to full strength. She signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and would complete the Notice of Registerable Interest Form.

4. Declarations of interest: None.

6. Report from County Councillors: Cllr D Denton had circulated a report to the Councillors but no issues were discussed at this meeting.

7. Actions from previous meeting:

- i. **Trees: Merfield/The Mead:** The Clerk confirmed that these were due to be pruned on Tuesday 18th April. The work was going ahead despite the sad death of David James.
- ii. **Hoedown:** The Hoedown on 26th March had collected around 40 bags of rubbish plus old tyres from around the village. JB reported that the waste had been collected as agreed by Mendip and thanks were given for its help. The next Hoedown was planned for 30th April and would probably concentrate on litter clearance again. Discussion was held whether the village still had credit for another street sweep by Clive Harrington (Note: it has been confirmed we do). It was agreed to consider where and when this should be done.
- iii. **Footpaths to and from Church Farm:** JM reported that he had failed to make contact with Mendip as his emails and calls had not been returned. It was uncertain whether Simon Trafford was still employed by Somerset. (Cllr Denton would be asked to investigate). The developer is not interested in the path outside the Church Farm development and although agreement indicated it was the developer's responsibility the path from the development to the S106 land appeared not to be maintained.
- iv. **Road verges:** The issue extended beyond roundabouts and it was agreed that both Beckington and Norton St Philip should be approached on this issue to add weight to contacting Somerset to try and get something done about the litter along the roads in the area.

8. Climate Change Group:

i. National Green Week: JM reported that this was taking place between 10th and 18th June with Rode planning to re-run the green open doors day where people could show off green initiatives on Sunday 18th June. There would also be talks on the afternoon of Saturday 17th June in the Memorial Hall. Discussions were ongoing regarding a 'veggie week' during which the Cross Keys, The Mill and other pubs would be offering vegetarian meals. Frome was also doing similar things during the week. JM reported that there were now 53 subscribers to the green newsletter.

ii. Rewilding: AP that the digger had been hired and the surface removed from the area by the Memorial Hall and at the same time the ditch had been cleared. Thanks were given to the Osbornes and John Flindall for the help they had given. The digger hire costs were approved by the meeting. Part of the area had been smoothed and part left rough and when seeded it would be seen which performed best. (Again, seed costs were agreed). A proposal for a drainage pipe to be put in the ditch was to be considered at a subsequent meeting.

9. Playing Field: The soil from the cleared area had been put on the playing field S106 land. The plan to extend the cricket pitch had been agreed but work to level the area within the S106 land had still to be done and it was agreed the Playing Field Chairman should be approached to request that some of the S106 monies be used to get this done. The meeting also felt that at the same time a request to get the remaining S106 land developed as had been originally agreed should be made. Apart from some tree/bush planting along the boundary fence little had been done in the last year. The Clerk would write to Steve Eyles.

10. Highways:

i. Drainage repairs: Lower Street drainage works had now been completed and work was due to commence on the High Street.

ii. Street Lighting: The Clerk reported that the survey results indicated that residents were in favour of turning roughly half the lights off at midnight (128 in favour, 11 against and 4 no opinion). The Clerk would draw up a final list of lights to be turned off; some changes had been requested by residents. Somerset were compiling accident figures for Rode and once these and the final list was agreed the Police would be consulted over the proposal to turn off street lights. Once approved Somerset would be approached to action the turn off.

iii. A36 Slip Road: Cllr Denton was still working on this and would progress after Easter.

11. Planning:

i) New applications:

None

ii. Somerset decisions:

2023/0313/TCA: Reduce height of willow by approx. 5 metres and reduce lateral branches by up to 2.5 metres and remove dead wood and split and hanging branches – Halfpenny Row. Approved. This work was due to be carried out on 18th April.

iii. Appeal ref: 3292838:

Planning proposal to build up to 49 dwellings on Barbara's Field, Church Lane. The decision was still awaited.

12. Website: Slow progress was being made on this as the Clerk and JM admitted they had had little time to work on this. It was likely this would now not be launched until sometime in the summer.

13. Buses: The new timetables had been printed and distributed to all parishioners. There were now more buses coming through the village than there had been for many years. First Bus were

looking at ways to increase usage but the £2 flat fare helped. The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Peter Travis for all the work he had done to get a good bus service for the village. The meeting agreed to fund all future printing of revised bus timetables.

14. David Warburton MP: There was discussion over the wording of the phrase 'and that he theoretically was still an MP even if performing no duties', it was agreed that this should stand but it was noted he was now more active again so is not now correct.

The meeting was pleased that David Warburton had replied to the concerns over his inactivity. It was agreed to accept his offer to meet with Councillors and he would be asked for possible dates. It was agreed that prior to a meeting Parishioners' concerns/questions would be sought to be raised with him. Additionally, PT also reported that David Warburton had responded to him on a bus issue.

15. Solar Farm: A large 49.9 MW farm was being proposed on land off Bradford Road, Rode Hill and near the A361. A consultation on this proposal was due to start soon and a meeting with Rode residents was to be planned. There could be financial benefits for the PC. It was agreed that discussions on this should be not made until the consultation started.

16. Financial matters:

i. Asset Register: The asset register, previously circulated to Councillors, was approved with amendment proposed by Mike Salmon.

ii. Internal Auditor: It was agreed to appoint Alan Aked as internal auditor for this year.

iii. Payments: The following payments were agreed:

Passion for Somerset CIC (Somerset flag)	£16.20
P Travis for Frome Printers (bus timetables)	£155.00
Zonkey Solutions	£1,197.00
Clerk Salary	£247.29
HMRC PAYE	£60.40

17. Parish Meeting/AGM: It was agreed to hold this on Monday 15th May at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall.

18. Date of next meeting:

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

Tuesday 9th May at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed

Date

Print

Website: rodevillage.com/parish-council