

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL  
ON MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2025 AT 7.30 pm**

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**CONFIRMED**

**Present:**

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

**In attendance:** H Williams – Clerk, Cllr Dawn Denton (Somerset Councillor)

**1. Parishioners Participation:** None present.

**2. Apologies for absence:** Cllr A Boyden (Somerset Councillor)

**3. Approval of the minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January, proposed by AE and seconded by PR were approved.

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

**5. Highways issues:**

i) **Bradford Road/Rode Hill:** Somerset Council had come back saying that it could not do any more work to improve this cross roads. Amazingly, Somerset reported that according to Somerset and Avon police records that since 2019 there had only been 3 slight incidents at these cross roads. Members of the Parish Council (PC) all knew of many more, with 3 having occurred in two weeks after Christmas 2023. It was agreed that through freedom of information AP would contact both Somerset and Avon and Wiltshire police forces regarding incidents at these cross roads. Some might have been attended by Wiltshire police. It was also agreed members of the PC (and John Osborne to be contacted) would send information on accidents to JB to collate.

ii) **20mph limit:** The installation of the 20mph limit in Rode village was still in the work programme for 2024/25 which should implement it before the end of March. However, Somerset Highways were way behind in its programme of works. It was agreed to re-consider village signs on the A361 after the new speed limits were completed.

iii) **Potholes:** It was reported that using the Somerset website to report potholes was quite successful, but it was not easy to use. It was suggested a better route for reporting was to use the Fixmystreet ([www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com)) site attaching a photograph of the pothole. This was considered easier to use. Direct email to [countyroads-mendip@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:countyroads-mendip@somerset.gov.uk) can also be used for reporting.

**6. Somerset Councillor's report:** Cllr Denton reported that the rights of way team in Somerset were being reduced by 40% which would further affect footpaths. It was agreed she would clarify which form should be used regarding the new right of way for path 13/1 to go across Andy Fussell's land. Discussion over the path from Church Farm estate to the village agreed that under the S106 agreement this should be maintained. However, it remained unclear whether a Management Committee had been formed and whether the maintenance of the path surface differed to cutting back vegetation over it. Cllr Denton added that Somerset planned to adopt The Sportsman before the end of the summer after assessing what work was required. The PC pointed out that the only work it thought needed to be done was to improve the drainage, this was known and agreed by Mendip in early 2023 with money available in the retained bond.

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

i. **Drainage in village:** JM had prepared an application to the Community Flood Action Fund but following conversations he was advised to set up a Community Group which would identify projects for flood prevention. The Group would be seen as a better way of getting funding as it would have community backing for projects.

Cllr Denton said she was still chasing Somerset to complete the drainage works part done by Calm Engineering.

ii. **Hoedowns:** JB was still to contact Clive Harrington.

iii. **Grass cutting:** The Clerk reported that the current contractor had quoted to freeze his price for 2025, with the area at the top of Marsh Road excluded. He awaited another quote. It was agreed to agree a contract at the next meeting.

AP reported he had purchased the seed for re-wilding the area of grass at the top of Marsh Road and would arrange digger and spoil clearance.

The meeting agreed to re-employ Steven Whitehead to maintain the path from the allotments to Barrow Farm for 2025.

iv. **Village allotments:** It was agreed to approach people with large garden areas to see if they would let them for allotments. The current waiting list of 13 would otherwise take over 10 years to clear. Other areas for allotments would be asked for.

v. **Playing field signs:** The differing signs regarding dogs and the playing field had been raised. It was reported that this had now been resolved.

**8. Footpaths:** There had been further complaints regarding the path on Church Lane near the A361. Somerset had assessed the state and said it was not bad enough for it to take any action. The meeting agreed to employ Treecycle to cut back the undergrowth. However, the clearance of the mud/leaf mould would be referred to Clive Harrington as to the best way to clear and what precautions should be taken due to danger from traffic while clearing it.

## **9. Planning:**

### **i) New applications:**

**2025/0106/TCA:** Fell poplar tree – 11 Frome Road. No objections.

**2025/0150/TCA:** Reduce the crowns of 2 sycamore trees by 2m – 19 High Street. No objections.

**2025/0151/TCA:** Reduce crown of yew by 1m – 1 Red Lion Gardens. No objections.

**2024/1824/HSE:** Demolition of existing garden room and garage and construction of replacement garden room and garage – 24 Lower Street. New drawings were now available and the height of the new garden room clarified. The PC now had no objections to this application.

### **ii) Somerset decisions:**

**2024/2119/HSE:** Demolition of attached single-storey garage and utility room. Construction of a single-storey extension. New gateway and associated driveway works – 23 Lower Street. Approved.

### **iii. Other:**

**Appeal APP/E3335/W/24/3347836:** Planning Inspectorate decision on development to build 2 no. semi-detached houses – 4 The Mead. Rejected.

**10. Buses:** PT reported that although the evening service of the D2 was under threat it would hopefully be protected in the new timetable starting at the beginning of April. The meeting approved the cost for new timetables for the village. He also said that the D2X would revert to running from Frome to Bath via the A36 but it would go from Frome to Woolverton then Norton St Philip, but not go via Beckington. Both the D2 and D2X would be single decker buses.

**11. Conservation Plan and Neighbourhood Plan:** AP reported he had spoken to Context and would be meeting them on Friday. The decision to concentrate on the Conservation Plan was supported as this should give greater protection to the village more easily. There was concern that the Neighbourhood Plan was very exposed under the new National Planning Framework; however, to update it sufficiently without public consultation (work, time and cost) would be unlikely.

There was concern that Somerset was in line for an extra 8% housing in the next 5 years. A proposal to the LCN that no rural village should get more than 10% extra housing was not supported. A rural limit should be lower with the emphasis on town expansions. Sustainability and protecting conservation areas should be priorities.

**12. Emergency Policy for Rode:** This was deferred to the April meeting.

**13. Thermal Imaging Camera:** The proposal for a thermal imaging camera for use to help monitor heat loss from dwellings was supported. JM would take this forward and it could be the cost be shared with Norton St Philip.

**14. Any Other Business:**

**Chairman:** The Chair said he would be standing down as Chair at the next AGM. Discussion on the next Chair was held with the possibility of it being a shared role. A new Councillor might be needed in the next year and maybe someone willing to, in the future, chair the Council should be sought.

**Council Tax:** It was reported that Somerset Council tax would increase by 7.5% in April.

**15. Financial matters:**

i. **Assets:** The asset register dated January 2025 was approved.

ii. **Payments:** The following payments were agreed:

Rode and District Memorial Hall	£252.00
J H Jones and sons	£809.99
Clerk Salary	£276.96
HMRC PAYE	£67.40

**16. Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting would be held in the Committee Room at the Memorial Hall on: **Monday 10th March at 7.30pm.**

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

Print .....

Website: [rodevillage.com/parish-council](http://rodevillage.com/parish-council)