

# **MINUTES OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

## **HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL, HIGH STREET**

**ON MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024 AT 7.00 PM**

Present: 8 Parish Councillors, Clerk and 2 Parishioners.

**1. Election of Chairman for 2024/25**

Mike Salmon was elected unopposed as Chairman for the year. He added that this would be the final year he would be Chair.

**2. Election of Vice Chairman for 2024/25**

Andy Pickett was elected unopposed as Vice Chairman for the year.

**3. Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting**

The minutes were approved.

**4. County Councillors' report:**

The main concern was the financial situation of Somerset Council and cuts were being made to the services it offered and to staffing levels. There was still danger of the Council declaring bankruptcy.

Key issues still being worked on were; the completion of the Rode drainage scheme, the slip road onto the A36, the solar farm application and issues relating to The Bell and The Mill. The Rode Climate event had been very good and improvements had been made to the Rode Hill/Bradford Road junction. (Full report attached as Appendix 1).

**5. Memorial Hall Report**

Kate Robinson's report highlighted that bookings of the hall have increased significantly, maybe helped by the new hourly rates as opposed to block booking rates. The floor has been refurbished and kitchen equipment improved this year. There is backing for a new village hall and a committee has been formed to drive this forward. (Full report attached as Appendix 2).

**6. Playing Field Report**

Steve Eyles' report highlighted the problems during the year with the pavilion which had to be shut while repairs were carried out. There is backing for a new hall which would include a pavilion. Rode Cricket Club and Freshford Football club continue to use the field. (Full report attached as Appendix 3).

**7. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman said that this had been another busy year for the Parish Council, he said that finally Somerset should be implementing a 20mph speed limit in Rode in July, consultation with the village had resulted in agreement to turn off most street lights at midnight, a new grass cutting contractor had been employed and a special thanks was due

to Peter Travis for his continued efforts to keep a good bus service in Rode. (Full report attached as Appendix 4).

## **8. Financial Statement**

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council reserves had risen considerably as a result of an increase in the Precept and there being far less legal expenses this year. Grass cutting remained the largest expense for the Parish Council (PC), but there had been two other larger than normal expenses this year; a new defibrillator in the phone box and the new village website. (An overview of the accounts is attached as Appendix 5).

## **9. Parish Discussion Forum**

There were three main concerns expressed by villagers:

- a) The Mill: there was concern over the new licence and the lack of involvement by the PC in taking villagers' objections forward. To miss the appeal was not good. It was pointed out that legal advice had indicated the time limit for the PC to lodge its objections and this was incorrect by 24 hours. However, the PC was still seeking clarification for Somerset over the extent of the licence. Noise monitoring would be in place to ensure this was kept to a minimum.
- b) The Bell: this was falling into ruin and concern was expressed over the state of it. The PC said Somerset Heritage had inspected it and had reported it as acceptable. Continued efforts would take place to see if it could be re-assessed.
- c) Speeding in the village was raised and questions were asked whether speed indicators could be placed in the village.

There was also a request that everyone in the village be kept up to date with the progress of the possible new village hall. A feasibility study had been undertaken and draft planning was underway.