

**MEETING NOTES OF THE ANNUAL RODE PARISH MEETING HELD IN  
THE CROSS KEYS ON MONDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025 AT 7.30 pm**

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**UNCONFIRMED**

**Present:**

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

**In attendance:** H Williams – Clerk, Cllr Adam Boyden and Cllr Dawn Denton (Somerset Councillors) and 16 Parishioners

**1. Apologies for absence:** Cllr J Bowler

**2. Opening presentation:**

Peter Travis gave an overview of how Rode Parish Council (PC) fitted into the structure of Somerset. The PC was the local voice in trying to influence planning, traffic control, street cleaning and other local issues. It was Somerset Council that decided on many issues, most importantly planning where the PC was only a voice trying to influence any decision. Somerset Council had changed a couple of years ago becoming a Unitary Authority replacing the former four District Councils, the local one being Mendip. The change had resulted in Rode being the most distant Parish from Taunton in Somerset. The two Somerset Councillors helping represent Rode would soon be reduced to one Councillor representing the new area including: Beckington, Norton St Philip and Rode.

To help increase the voice of Rode there was a local council network (LCN) covering the Vale of Frome, but this was still finding its feet.

Currently the largest expenditure by the PC was grass cutting. However, with the current financial concerns in Somerset additional expenditure was being transferred to local parishes and this year Rode would have to pay for bin emptying.

Rode PC had a lower Precept than Beckington and Norton but had increased this over the last two years to build up reserves.

**3. Planning:**

Jim McAuliffe outlined the work the PC in representing the village views to planning applications. Rode had a Neighbourhood Plan which helped restrict new building, however, this was slowly becoming out of date and therefore losing weight. There was also the Mendip Local Plan for housing which was in place to 2029 and served as the Somerset Plan for this area. There was also the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was calling for increased housing and would increase the housebuilding in Somerset by 41%.

Reserves (through the Precept) would be necessary for any planning fight as there would be requirements for expert support to fight unwanted planning. Over recent years reserves had been depleted by fighting planning applications for Merfield and Barbara's Field; both of which had been successful.

**4. Discussion:**

The question was raised as to how much the Precept would be increased in 2026. This was difficult to answer as it was unknown what planning was coming to Rode. However, it was pointed out that the recent gradual increases had already helped build up reserves .

The Chair of Norton St Philip emphasised how important their reserves had been in fighting a major planning application and agreed Rode needed to ensure it had sufficient reserves. This area was popular with developers as high prices could be achieved.

A question was raised over the Somerset Plan for housing and the call for 'sites' for development for 2029-2045. It was reported that this had been delayed until at least the autumn.

#### **5. Traffic issues:**

Mike Salmon reported that after just over 4 years of trying to get the 20mph limit it had finally been installed in the village, along with increased 30mph limit along the A361. The Parish Council continued to work to get further improvements made to the Bradford Road/Rode Hill junctions and had managed through the PSCO's help get accurate accident figures for this junction and relay this to Somerset Highways.

#### **6. Village Hall:**

Andy Pickett reported that with both the Scout hut and Pavilion being on their last legs and the current Memorial Hall becoming too small and with limited parking, there was a project looking at a new all-purpose hall on the playing field site. Somerset Council had approved an initial concept design and a presentation of the new hall would be made in the Memorial Hall on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July between 2pm and 5pm. It would probably cost around £2million to complete the project.

In answer to a question it was pointed out the Parish Council owned both the Memorial Hall land and the playing field land.

#### **7. Emergency Plan:**

The Parish Council was drawing up an Emergency Plan for Rode which would give information on what to do who to contact etc. in an emergency. This would include flooding and there was already a Flood Action Group working on this.

In response to a question it was pointed out the over 50 houses in Rode were classified by the Environment Agency as being at high risk of flooding.

#### **8. Other:**

A question was raised regarding overgrown hedgerows.

These were the responsibility of the landowner. However, between March and September cutting was restricted due to nesting birds etc.

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