

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL
ON TUESDAY 4th OCTOBER 2022 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

Cllr Mike Salmon – Chair (MS), Cllr Peter Travis (PT), Cllr Ann Edney (AE), Cllr Pat Restorick (PR) and Cllr Jonathan Bowler (JB)

In attendance: Cllr Dawn Denton, Hugh Williams – Clerk and 2 parishioners.

1. Public Participation: There were still problems on the Bradford Road with the hedge by the empty (for sale) house forcing pedestrians into the road, the Clerk had approached County Roads regarding this and a work number had been assigned but nothing had happened. He agreed to chase up. [Clerk’s Note: This should be done within 7 days.]

There was comment that Mendip should remain consistent in its objection to the development on Barbara’s Field. The Chair said that Mendip were still against this development.

The PC was asked about the flying of the Ukrainian flag and it was agreed this would only be flown on the country’s significant days (with 14th October being the next one – Defenders of Ukraine Day).

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr J McAuliffe, Cllr A Pickett, Cllr B Lund (District Councillor) and Cllr A Boyden (County Councillor)

3. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6th September were approved.

4. Declarations of interest: None.

5. Report from District Councillor: Cllr Lund’s report had been circulated to the PC. There was support for the Mendip motion on river quality although it was uncertain what action could be taken. The Energy Saver website was a good place for people to look for energy tips (<https://somerseenergy saver.co.uk/>).

6. Report from County Councillor: Cllr Denton reported that Somerset County Council was struggling financially with overspend in some areas. The Local Community Networks (LCNs) were still the subject of a survey and it was possible this could be extended to 1st November. People across Somerset were encouraged to have a flu jab and also a Covid booster jab.

7. Actions from previous meeting:

- i. **Trees: Merfield/The Mead:** Cllr Lund had chased Bo Walsh as to who should write to the owners regarding the state of the trees, but had not had a reply. [Clerk’s Note: We have now heard Mendip will write to David James on this issue.]
- ii. **Ultrafast broadband:** Gigaclear had held an information evening and were still optimistic as to when Rode would have full fibre available. However, Voneus had gone quiet and it was unlikely fibre (via Gigaclear) would be in the village until late 2023. The base for the

Gigaclear box had been put in on Lower Street so some progress was being made albeit later than promised.

- iii. **Bradford Road Hedge:** See under 1. Public Participation.
- iv. **Dog bin on Marsh Road and trees:** Grant Slade had moved the bin further up Marsh Road.
- v. **Slip road onto A36:** Videos were now available of vehicles stopping on the slip road and it was agreed that National Highways should be approached again to see what can be done to stop people parking on the slip road. Cllr Denton agreed to speak to Sara Davis at Somerset Highways to see if she had any contacts or the best way to take this forward with National Highways.
- vi. **Fire Plan:** Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue had informed the PC that they do have fire plans for rural areas. However, it was agreed that Frome Fire Service should be approached to come to Rode to see if any actions should be taken to reduce fire risks.

8. Climate Change Group: The Big Green Weekend had taken place this on 10/11 September and this had been well attended and the PC thanked Jim McAuliffe for arranging this. It was agreed that another one should be held but there was a need to try and encourage younger people to attend, especially as they would be the most effected by climate change.

9. Highways: A361 by the church: The wall had been hit again and damaged, there was concern that the insurance premiums could rise significantly as the wall had now been hit three times in recent years. Cllr Denton agreed to approach Sara Davis to see if there were any traffic calming measures that could be carried out to try and reduce accidents on these bends. Although a 30mph zone traffic often exceeded this limit. It was agreed traffic flow figures would also be given to Sara Davis.

10. Planning:

i) New applications:

2022/1846/TCA: Fell birch tree – 1 Hughes Court. The meeting had no objections to this but was concerned that a tree was being felled in a conservation area and this comment would be made to Mendip.

2022/1877/TCA: Reduce height of apple tree by 2.5m and spread by 2m; reduce height of magnolia by 3m and spread by 1m – 17 High Street. No objections.

ii. Mendip decisions:

None.

iii. Other:

2021/0071/OTS: DLA Piper had been sent the PC questions and their responses had been received and circulated. There was some discussion over how the challenge to Mendip's refusal would be conducted and it was agreed that Mendip should be approached to enquire by what route it would like the appeal to be heard.

11. Playing Field Constitution: This still had to progress. However, it was brought to the PC's attention that there were structural problems with the pavilion with cracking, probably caused by the dry summer. A builder was to inspect the building and it was agreed that as the building was used by the public a structural engineer's inspection should be carried out. JB would give AE details of a company who could do this.

12. Church Farm: It was reported that Mendip is inclined to refuse the application to allow two affordable houses to be sold on the open market. This decision would be contrary to the Rode PC and residents' position which would favour this change in ownership as part of a condition to substantially improve the path from Church Farm to the village. It is likely that the final decision will go to the Mendip Planning Board. Autograph Homes had been chased up over gravel etc. for improving the 'bridge area'.

13. LCNs: The Chair reported he had attended a meeting where recommendations were given on how to respond to the survey. It had been pointed out that the questions regarding the roles that the LCNs should have should have a 'very important' answer given to many of these otherwise there would be no point in having LCNs. The meeting worked through the questions on the survey and agreed 'very important' to most of the roles. Discussion favoured a smaller number of LCNs across Somerset, this would give the LCN greater power through weight of numbers represented by the LCN but would unfortunately reduce the power of any individual parish council within the LCN. The Clerk agreed to complete and submit the survey.

14. Buses: PT reported that very unexpectedly First Bus had agreed to reintroduce a greatly improved service running through Rode. This would include buses on a Sunday for the first time in years as well as an improved evening service and regular daytime service to Bath for the first time in seven years. Unfortunately, this improved service would only initially run for six months as a trial and therefore it was essential people used the buses as much as possible. The meeting thanked PT for his work in improving bus services and unanimously agreed to fund the printing of new timetables for distribution to all households in Rode.

15. Allotments: To be actioned.

16. Drainage work: It was noted that work to improve and repair the drains and culverts etc. in Rode was scheduled to start on 7th November.

17. Financial matters:

i) Payments: The following payments were agreed:

PKF Littlejohn (audit fee)	£240.00
Eagle Grounds Maintenance	£777.40
Clerk Salary	£224.58
HMRC PAYE	£56.00
P Travis (Books of condolence etc.)	£72.96
G Slade (cement)	£12.55

18. Any other business: a) **Hoedowns:** JB reported that the Hoedowns would restart next spring and that Clive Harrington would be contacted regarding sweeping the gullies early next year.

b) **Remembrance Day:** It was agreed the PC would fund a wreath and contribute to the food for the soldiers on Remembrance Sunday.

19. Date of next meeting:

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

Tuesday 15th November at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Signed

Date

Print

Website: rodevillage.com/parish-council