

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL  
ON TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30 pm**

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**CONFIRMED**

**Present:**

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

**In attendance:** Cllr Barbi Lund, Cllr Adam Boyden, Hugh Williams – Clerk and 7 parishioners.

**1. Public Participation:** The Remembrance Day service on Sunday had gone well with a good attendance by the various Scout groups, the Army and a bugler; it was suggested letters of thanks were sent to the army and the bugler. This was agreed. A question was raised as to whether next year the service should be held outside again and it was generally agreed it should be (weather permitting). The Parish Council (PC) thanked Howard Russell for organising the event.

Thanks were given for the PC in getting the hedge overhanging the pavement cut.

Concerns were raised over the appeal by the developers to reverse Mendip's decision to refuse planning application to build 49 dwellings on Barbara's Field. The PC was encouraged to continue to oppose the development and residents asked what they should do to oppose the housing. Question was asked how comments should be made.

Concern was expressed over bright street lighting on all night. (This was carried over to the December meeting due to lack of time).

**2. Apologies for absence:** Cllr D Denton (County Councillor)

**3. Approval of the minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October were approved.

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

**5. Planning:** It was agreed to take the planning appeal (Appeal reference: APP/Q3305/W/22/3292838 – Barbara's Field) item first as requested by the Parishioners. The Chair said that there was some surprise that the developers had not raised anything substantially new in their appeal apart for challenging Mendip over its decision. It was agreed JM would double check the appeal documents to confirm this. As all the current comments would be taken forward to the informal hearing there was no requirement for anyone to resend their comments and only if they had new points or information should they make comments to the Planning Inspectorate. There was some confusion on how any extra comments should be made. [Clerk's Note: Comments should be made through the website: [acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk](http://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk) and after registering/logging on put the number 32922838 in the 'Search' box and then click on 'Make Representation' to get to the comment section. Or send comments in writing.]

Mendip was going to robustly defend its refusal and the PC would continue to reject the planning application as it reflects the views of Rode residents. It was agreed that JM, AP, PT and Cllr Lund would take part in a 'Teams/Zoom' call with Nikki White at Mendip next week to agree the best way forward for the PC on the appeal. It was noted that it was expected the hearing could take place in February 2023.

**6. Report from District Councillor:** Cllr Lund reported the judicial review of the housing development in Norton had been completed and the judgement was due before Christmas. Mendip was looking for tree wardens and if anyone was interested they should contact Mendip. Mendip had a Greenspace consultation ongoing which ended on 25<sup>th</sup> November, this had all the green spaces for each town and village shown but it appeared not to include the S106 land by the playing field. It was agreed the PC would review this and comment as necessary.

**7. Report from County Councillor:** Cllr Boyden reported that there had been 600 responses to the LCN survey but the consultation had not been conclusive with regard to the make-up of the individual LCNs. Further work on this would be done in January. Each LCN would be given a budget to help it operate but it was confirmed planning would not be transferred to the LCNs. There were moves to try and form purely rural LCNs, with the aim of having a rural 'view' which did not include Frome, it was agreed there were pros and cons to this.

Unfortunately, First Bus (including the D2) had not updated its website for the new bus timetables or put them up in bus stops, this should be resolved this week.

He said that he and Dawn Denton were still trying to meet with Sara Davis at Somerset to discuss road issues including the Bradford Road/Rode Hill crossroads.

There were a number of initiatives to help people with the cost-of-living crisis and energy costs. A new Scrutiny Committee for the Environment had been set up with a wide remit covering most climate and environmental matters.

**8. Actions from previous meeting:**

- i. **Trees: Merfield/The Mead:** Cllr Lund agreed to chase up Bo Walsh to see if the letter had been sent to the owners of Merfield.
- ii. **Books of condolence:** It was agreed to ask Frome Museum to store the two books condolence books.
- iii. **Slip road onto A36:** The videos had been sent to Cllr Denton who is to approach Sara Davis on the best way to proceed.
- iv. **Ultrafast broadband:** The base and box had been fitted by Gigaclear and the box has now been wired up. PT reported he had received an email which indicated that Voneus were still interested in bringing full fibre to Rode and Tellisford and other small villages and this indicated Gigaclear might not proceed. This was noted and Gigaclear would be asked for an update. [Clerk's Note: I have had email which says Gigaclear will start with offering people the chance to order in January with a small number being connected each month – with a note this is subject to change!]
- v. **Grass cutting:** It was agreed that the grass at the end of the High Street opposite the Memorial Hall should be included in the contracted grass cutting area. Thanks were given to John Griffiths for having cut it for many years.

**9. Climate Change Group:** JM reported that the Group had held a good meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November, with concerns raised over buses in the villages and what could be done to help their use. The need for safe walking and cycling routes to help minimise car use were discussed. The Big Green Weekend was considered a success, in particular the visits to showcase good climate initiatives. The Group would look at holding a future weekend event with showcases and talks; also, occasional evening talks would be considered.

AP had spoken to the Flindalls and they had agreed the rewilding area should continue. Whether the area should be covered to kill the grass or the top removed prior to seed sowing in the Spring would be explored.

**10. Highways:** The drainage work had been delayed due to an aspect of the contract needing to be resolved. This had only come to light just prior to work starting. Hopefully this will be resolved in the near future.

**11. Planning:**

**i) New applications:**

**2022/2164/HSE:** Erection of rear conservatory – 15 Marsh Road. No objection.

**ii. Mendip decisions:**

**2022/0932/VCR:** Variation of conditions 9 (roads), 13 (land access), 17 (drainage), 20 (trees), 24 (noise), 25 (environmental management), 29 (land parking), 34 (refuse and recycling), 35 (ecology), 38 (land materials) and 49 (housing land sample panel) of permission 2011/3124 – Church Farm. Refused. It was reported Autograph would probably appeal this decision.

**2022/1753/TCA:** Fell magnolia tree – 31 Lower Street. Approved

**2022/1877/TCA:** Reduce apple tree by 2.5m and spread by 2m; reduce magnolia by 3m and spread by 1m – 17 High Street. Approved

**ENF/2022/0168:** Outbuilding in garden of 14 Nutts Lane. No enforcement action to be taken.

**iii. Other:**

**Planning Forum:** Each village had a page showing information on it under the Mendip Plan. It was noted that the information on Rode's buses was incorrect and the number of houses needed to be checked and the Chapel referenced. The Clerk agreed to comment.

**12. Playing Field:**

**a) Constitution:** The constitution had not been finalised. However, a legal bill had been sent to the PC which was far higher than expected. It covered some work which the Solicitor had carried out which was considered unnecessary. It was agreed AP would speak to Steve Eyles about the bill and look to reduce it and also split it with the playing field.

**b) Pavilion:** A surveyor had inspected the building and declared it unsafe. Therefore, it could no longer be used. Discussions were held over the possible future of all the halls in Rode and whether all could be combined, but this would be a long-term option. However, the main current concern is what could be done to get the pavilion open again and the Playing Field Committee would investigate options.

**13. Church Farm:** Information had been received regarding a blocked footpath from Church Farm and investigations revealed that the new path had also not been designated as a footpath. Footpath FR13/1 should also be rerouted as part of the S106 agreement and it was agreed Autograph Homes would be approached to get this done and the 'new' path designated.

**14. SALC survey:** The meeting had no comments to make on the Health and Wellbeing survey.

**15. Buses:** With many buses coming through the village it was reported that bus drivers were complaining that the extra 9 minutes it takes to go through Rode had not been added to the timetables so buses arrived late at each end of their journeys. There was concern that once the Government subsidy was withdrawn the D2 service would end. PT reported that Frome, Beckington, Rode, Norton St Philip and Hinton Charterhouse had set up a fighting fund to promote

the D2 route. This group would try and get businesses and entertainment places to promote what can be done on the D2 route. He asked for Rode PC to help with this by giving some funding. The meeting unanimously agreed to donate £250 to the fighting fund.

**16. Allotments:** No update, awaiting for Allotment Chair to come back to MS.

**17. Website:** JM had circulated an outline proposal for a new website for village, groups, parish council and businesses to the PC. It was agreed this should now be progressed with Zonkey to start work on developing a new website. This would help as the current one was experiencing problems with many virus software programmes warning that the site was unsafe and people should not go on it.

**18. Financial matters:**

**i) Account update:** The Clerk had circulated an update of the accounts to the beginning of November which currently indicated the Parish Council should break even or make a small profit this financial year.

**ii) Precept:** Discussion was held over the level for next year, the PC had to balance the cost-of-living crisis against inflation and the possible need to build up a reserve for any major project. It was agreed to raise the Precept to £24,990 for 2023/24.

**iii) Payments:** The following payments were agreed:

Frome Printing (bus timetables)	£160.00
Eagle Grounds Maintenance	£777.40
Cross Keys Rode (Remembrance Day food)	£100.00
Wreath (Remembrance Day)	£25.00
SALC (training)	£50.00
Clerk Salary	£224.58
HMRC PAYE	£56.00
J McAuliffe (Big Green Weekend)*	£240.00

\*(£160 to be refunded to PC by Beckington and Norton St Philip)

**19. Any other business:** A request had been made to either find space on PC land for a bench or a bench on which a plaque could be placed in remembrance of Duncan McLennan the past chair of the Memorial Hall Committee. It was agreed that probably the best solution would be a new bench undercover outside the Memorial Hall as there was space there.

**20. Date of next meeting:**

It was agreed to meet on the second Tuesday of the month next year and the Parish Council would move back into the Committee Room in the Memorial Hall unless Covid flared up again.

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

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm**

The meeting closed at 10.35pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

Print .....

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