

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL
ON TUESDAY 9th AUGUST 2022 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

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

In attendance: Cllr Barbi Lund, Cllr Dawn Denton, Hugh Williams – Clerk and 1 parishioner.

1. Public Participation: Concerns were expressed over the proposed new planning application for seven houses off Church Lane. It was thought the access was not suitable and that the area was not large enough for seven properties. It was reported that all the neighbours to the land were opposed to the development.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr P Travis and Cllr A Boyden (County Councillor)

3. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th July were approved.

4. Declarations of interest: None.

5. Report from District Councillor: Cllr Lund reported that the Tree Council was funding the planting of trees by schools and community groups; and additionally, there was funding for local schools to create nature areas.

6. Report from County Councillor: Cllr Denton reported that the Local Community Network (LCN) boundary still had not been decided which was of concern. The Frome LCN had done a very good detailed audit of children and family services as part of a pilot LCN.

There was a major concern over bus services with the withdrawal of funding for the D2 service from Frome to Bath which served Rode. The user numbers were still down and use needed to be encouraged. It was thought First Bus had a several £100,000 short-fall. There was a likelihood the evening service would be axed.

7. Actions from previous meeting:

- i. **Trees: Merfield/The Mead:** Cllr Lund reported she had received a comprehensive reply from Bo Walsh and the risk/hazard from the trees was low even though they were considered dangerous. She agreed to see who should be contacting David James over the state of the trees as it was unclear who at Mendip would do this.
- ii. **Tree on The Mead near allotments:** The Clerk reported this should be seen to at end of week.
- iii. **Clock:** The Clerk reported that Peter Watkinson had made the necessary repairs to allow the clock to strike again. Initially the half hour and hour striking were wrong; but Peter Harris and Mike Price had sorted this out. Both had attended the repairs and Mike was

being trained up to look after the clock. The Chair thanked the Clerk for persisting in getting Peter Watkinson to repair the clock.

- iv. **Ultrafast broadband:** There had been a presentation over 'Teams' to some Parish Councillors by Gigaclear who appeared to be the most advanced of the possible providers. The box for providing ultrafast broadband was due for delivery and installed on Lower Street/Rode Hill land at the end of August. A range of services would be available, these would have an initial 18month price but this would rise after this introductory period. Gigaclear was planning to make a presentation of their service in the Memorial Hall, probably in September.
- v. **Grass round Christchurch:** Currently this was cut by Mendip but done infrequently – either left too long or done too often. The owner of Christchurch was keen to rewild this area to improve biodiversity. Mendip said that both the PC and Diocese would have to approve this before any change could be made. The meeting approved the rewilding of this area provided a path was left clear for those to attend graves. JM agreed to now take this to the diocese for approval.

8. Climate Change Group: The main action arising from the last meeting was the agreement to run a 'Big Green Weekend' to be held on 10th and 11th September. This would take place in Rode, Norton St Philip and Beckington. A repair café would run in Norton on morning of 10th with 3 speakers (on climate issues) on 10th afternoon in the Committee Room at the Memorial Hall along with stands in the main hall. On Sunday 11th there would be a series of 'open houses' showing off various energy saving and other climate initiatives in the villages. JM asked for a contribution towards the publicity for the weekend and the PC agreed an initial donation of £100. The two other PCs would be asked for a similar contribution.

9. Highways:

a) The Sportsman – a further response had been received from Somerset which indicated that they were unable to fund any further work to prevent surface water on Clay Lane. Discussions reported that adoption of The Sportsman would not resolve all the issues and it was thought that the retained monies from the development could be used to resolve the drainage issues which were part of the S106 agreement for the development. AP agreed to obtain photos and the Clerk agreed to send these to Somerset clearly indicating the current problems.

b) Double yellow lines and 20mph in village: MS reported Sara Davis had recently visited Rode and marked where the double yellow lines would go at the Rode Hill/High Street junction. The consultation for these ended on 18th August and if no objections were received these should be in place within a short time. The 20mph limit in the village and the installation of village gates had been agreed by the police. The publication of the TRO still had to be done but Sara Davis was confident these would be in place before the end of the calendar year.

10. Planning:

i) New applications:

2022/1516/OUT: Outline planning permission with some matters reserved for 7no dwelling houses with access details – land at rear of 41A Church Lane. Discussions on this noted that the objections made for the development on Barbara's Field over access, visual impact etc. would not apply to this proposal. The concerns from the neighbouring properties were noted. It was agreed to request an extension to the commenting time would be requested to allow for a fuller discussion at the September meeting.

ii. Mendip decisions:

2022/0801/HSE: Replacement of existing conservatory – 3 Orneage Close. Approved.

2022/1196/TPO: Elm, removal of dead wood and remove/reduce overhanging lateral branches – 9 Langham Place. Approved.

2022/1265/TCA: Eucalyptus, reduce by 2m; acer reduce roadside by 0.5m – 5 Lower Street. Approved.

iii. Other:

2021/0071/OTS: There had been no further news on the appeal. It was agreed that DLA Piper would be asked the following questions to help the PC prepare for the appeal:

1. Can we, as statutory consultee to the original decision-making process, be an official party to an appeal?
2. What forum (inquiry, hearing or written submissions) is in our best interests?
3. Why do we think the Appellant has requested an inquiry?
4. Can we have influence over the decision as to forum?
5. If we cannot be a party, what opportunity will we have to make submissions?
6. Any other advice as to how best to represent parishioners' interests in this process.

The appeal was likely to be through the inquiry process, which the developer had asked for, but Mendip would make the final decision. Cllr Lund agreed to ask Mendip for an update on the appeal.

11. Playing Field Constitution: AP is still to contact Steve Eyles to progress.

12. Church Farm: Some members of the Parish Council along with a resident from Church Farm had met Rob Benson of Autograph Homes and clarified a number of issues regarding the hard and soft landscaping. The path from the development would be improved on the land near the development in accordance with the S106; however, the majority of the path had never been defined in any agreements and would remain as it is unless a new S106 can be agreed. It was hoped Mendip would require this (asked for by the PC and residents) as part of the planning revision requested by Autograph to change 2 properties from affordable to general sales. Autograph have agreed to put sand bags by the 'bridge' in the playing field and supply 1 tonne of fine stone to improve the path.

It was still unclear what the composition of the management company would be or when it would take over the maintenance of the path and communal areas on Church Farm.

13. Memorial Hall: AE had attended the AGM as a representative of the Parish Council, she reported that the Memorial Hall was keen to work with the Playing Field. It had also been agreed that the Hall would be free for Community village organisations until March 2023.

14. LCNs: The Chair expressed his concerns that there were only 8 months until the new Somerset Council becomes the new Unitary Authority and the powers, responsibilities and geography of the LCNs still had not been decided. Cllr Denton said a consultation on these would start at the end of August and in November the recommendations for the size/area of the LCNs along with their powers and responsibilities would be made. There was a possibility of there being 40 LCNs which the meeting considered far too many.

15. Cold weather: With energy prices continuing to rise a number of people would be in financial difficulties over the winter. The meeting gave initial thoughts to what could be done in Rode with

one suggestion being to open up the Memorial Hall during the day and offer teas, coffees and maybe food to be somewhere people could meet and keep warm. This would be explored further at future meetings.

16. Buses: The problems of reduced services had been raised under the County Councillor’s report and people were encouraged to sign the petition to keep services. The Bus Users and Stakeholders Group was doing everything possible to get a service retained.

17. Allotments: MS and JB had inspected the site at the end of The Mead, the main problems were the large tree at one end of the site and foul water drains near the other end. However, after discussion it was agreed this land could be offered to make new allotments – probably two half plots. The Chair would discuss this further with the Rode Garden Committee.

18. New Website: JM had had discussions with Zonkey who provided websites for a number of local groups and councils. It was agreed in principal that a new site would help with communication and should be open to other village groups and organisations in Rode. The question was raised who should have overall control was raised. It was agreed JM would go back to Zonkey and ask for a proposal to be put together for presentation at a future meeting.

19. Financial matters:

i) VAT rebate: The rebate of £2,264.65 had been paid into the PC account.

ii) Payments: The following payments were agreed:

Eagle Grounds Maintenance	£777.40
Mendip District Council (election fee)	£100.00
Clerk Salary	£224.38
HMRC PAYE	£56.20

20. Other business:

i) A question had been raised over how long the Ukrainian flag would be flown for. After discussion it was agreed to keep it flying until Remembrance Day.

ii) Should the street lights be turned off after midnight to save energy – it was reported that this had been raised with Somerset some years ago and rejected by them. However, Cllr Denton agreed to raise this again with Somerset.

iii) Fire on waste site on A361 – this had been put out quickly by the fire brigade but it raised the question whether the PC should have a fire plan. This would be considered at a future meeting.

21. Date of next meeting:

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

Tuesday 6th September at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

Signed

Date

Print

Website: rodevillage.com/parish-council