

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL
ON MONDAY 11th MARCH 2024 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

Cllr Andy Pickett (AP) – in the Chair, Cllr Ann Edney (AE), Cllr Jonathan Bowler (JB), Cllr Pat Restorick (PR), Cllr Moira Punt (MP), Cllr Peter Travis (PT) and Cllr Jim McAuliffe (JM).

In attendance: Hugh Williams – Clerk and 6 Parishioners

1. Parishioners Participation: All present had come for item on new village hall so this item was moved up the agenda.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr M Salmon and Cllr D Denton and Cllr A Boyden (County Councillors)

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

4. Declarations of interest: None.

5. Community Hall:

There was enthusiasm to progress the project to develop plans for a new village hall to be located on the playing field site. However, members of the Committee working on the project were concerned that there were no terms of reference for the Committee and also there could be problems over liability which the Committee members could face once any contracts were entered into. Members were seeking the Parish Council (PC) take a lead in this and to provide an independent Chair for the Committee.

Discussions centred on how the PC could help and draw up terms of reference along with stages through which the project should progress. It was also important that liability was covered so no member of the Committee become liable and therefore documentation needs to be drawn up to protect members of the Committee.

It was confirmed that the aim was to keep the current Memorial Hall operational until the new one was ready.

It was reported that an outline draft for the new building and site should be available shortly.

AP requested the PC to vote whether it was in favour of the project progressing and desiring to assist in it. The meeting voted in favour by majority.

It was agreed that the Parish Council members should meet with the current Committee to agree a way forward for the project. (Dates of 27 or 28 March or 8 April were agreed for meeting.)

6. Actions from previous meeting:

i **Autospeedwatch:** John Flindall reported that the new device was now fitted on Bradford Road and it recorded both vehicle number plates and speed. The PC will need to pay the annual fee each year to ensure data are still recorded. Repeat offenders are contacted by the police. The coordinator is subject to confidentiality and privacy requirements. He reported that in the first 4 days of operation 400 vehicles had been recorded as exceeding 40mph in the 30mph zone. This device really had to remain in a fixed location, however the other SID can be moved to the other agreed locations. The Autospeedwatch device did not give speeds to motorists so did not act as a way of

getting motorists to slow down. It would be investigated whether the two devices could be located on the same pole as they might interact with each other.

A new Community Speed Watch co-ordinator was required for Rode following Malcolm Wood's retirement. The meeting thanked Malcolm Wood for his work as co-ordinator and agreed to give a gift to him.

ii. Bench at top of Marsh Road: The current bench is broken and considered beyond repair. John Osborne was present at the meeting and agreed to purchase and install a new bench and transfer the dedication. The meeting thanked him for his help and agreed to reimburse him.

iii. Paths at playing field: The new path had yet to be installed due to the continuing wet weather. It was hoped it could be done this month.

iv. The Mill: AP had received a reply from Somerset but there was still confusion over the new licence. It was agreed that the Clerk would try and arrange a Zoom meeting with Somerset (Phil Wake) to clarify the situation.

v. Paths from Barrow Farm: The Clerk reported he had a new quote and it was agreed this should be accepted after John Rottenbury had been approached.

vi. Drainage: There was no further update on work on Crooked Lane and Straight Lane.

vii. Litter bin: It was agreed a new bin (approx. £70) should be purchased for the top of The Shard to replace the present bin.

7. County Councillors Report: Cllr Denton had circulated a report to the Councillors. There was still no response regarding the slip road onto the A36. Possible funding for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points might be available.

8. Highways issues:

Street Lights Turn off: The Clerk reported that the midnight turn off would not be done until the next financial year and a quote was to be obtained from Somerset once the new contractors start.

9. Climate Change Group: JM had circulated report to Councillors. He said that the Group was seeking a new chair; EV charging was to be investigated, but any site might have to wait until new hall is built.

10. Planning:

i) New applications:

2024/0327/HSE and /0328/LBC: Extension to outbuilding to from annex (Retrospective) – The Old Coach House, Rode Hill. It was agreed comment should be made regarding the colour of the chimney.

2024/0356/HSE and /0357/LBC: Widen gated access and conversion of 2010 outbuilding to annex accommodation – Mayfield House, High Street. No objections.

2024/0421/CLE: Application for an existing lawful development certificate for existing residential use of Slodbrook Farm including the erection of a residential dwelling house with extension and stationing of static caravan – Slodbrook Farm, Rode Common. No objections.

2023/2183/FUL: Re-consultation: Construction and operation of a photovoltaic farm with battery storage and associated infrastructure, including inverters, security cameras, fencing, access tracks and landscaping – Land south and east of Bradford Road, Rode.

Low Carbon had attended a premeeting with the Parish Council to inform on the changes that had been made to the previous application. They also answered questions from Councillors. However, the Parish Council remained concerned over the scale of the solar farm which had not really been altered, the lack of information on why this site had been selected (it appeared very limited area had been looked at) and the continued use of access to the site, particularly Monkley Lane both during

construction and during operation of the solar farm. Low Carbon had made no significant changes to the application and had not answered any of the PC's previous comments.

It was therefore agreed that the PC would submit a comprehensive objection to this planning application.

Mendip Local Plan Part II – Sites and Policies update. None of the areas proposed for the 505-house shortfall were in this area and the PC agreed to support the proposals.

ii) Somerset decisions:

2023/2446/HSE: Rear two storey extension, replace house/garage roofs, removal of parapet, demolish room on south and east elevation, replace/add new windows/doors and amend existing access – Hill View House, Bradford Road. Approved.

2023/1747/LBC: Single storey rear glazed extension – Mayfield House, High Street. Approved.

11. Buses: PT said that there would be minor changes to the times of the buses through Rode from April and a new timetable would be printed and circulated. The D2 service costs an extra 6% to come through Rode but only gets 2% more income. This was putting First West under pressure to reduce the service through Rode and changes could be made to the September timetable. Another use the bus or lose it campaign would be run. A survey of bus use focusing on bus links with other buses/trains was to be conducted. Parishioners who had bus passes but could afford the £2 fare were to be encouraged to pay and not use their passes. It was also noted that some buses arrive full in Rode and residents cannot board these, this information should be gathered and First made aware.

12. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches: Concerns had been made by Selwood and Berkley Parishes however it was agreed this was not currently an issue in Rode and this response would be made.

13. AGM:

It was agreed to hold the AGM on 13th May before the Parish Council meeting, starting at 7.00pm.

14. Financial matters:

Payments: The following payments were agreed:

Clerk Salary	£265.31
HMRC PAYE	£64.60
Rode & District Memorial Hall	£135.00

14. Any other business:

i) Conservation area: AP had spoken to Context Planning regarding both the Neighbourhood Plan and Conservation Area, this had been helpful and it should be possible to link the two conservation areas and include extra properties. Also providing no changes to the Neighbourhood Plan are made which affect residents this should be acceptable.

ii) The Link: It was agreed the Parish Council would give Gill Leonard a gift in appreciation of her editing The Link for 10 years now she was standing down. An invite to the April meeting would be made.

iii) Top of Rockabella: This had become uneven and would be investigated.

15. Date of next meeting:

The next meeting would be held in the Committee Room at the Memorial Hall on: **Monday 15th April at 7.30pm** (A pre-meeting for the PC starting at 7.00pm for Councillors only will be held to review the Rode Neighbourhood Plan)

The meeting closed at 10.30pm.

Signed

Date

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