

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN RODE MEMORIAL HALL
ON MONDAY 8th JUNE 2024 AT 7.30 pm**

CONFIRMED

Present:

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

In attendance: Hugh Williams – Clerk, Cllr Adam Boyden (County Councillor) and 2 Parishioners.

1. Parishioners Participation: A request was made to fly the flag on June 6th (D-Day anniversary) and this was unanimously approved. The other issue raised was Autospeedwatch and it was agreed to move this up the agenda.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr J McAuliffe, Cllr A Pickett and Cllr D Denton (County Councillor)

3. Approval of the minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th May were approved.

4. Declarations of interest: None.

5. Highways issues:

Autospeedwatch and SID: JB reported he had contacted Ashley Reay regarding what action could be taken with the data already gathered. It appeared little could be done but the statistical data could be sent to the Speed Enforcement Unit (SEU) for them to consider action. It was noted that in the past repeat offenders (from data gathered via the SID) were sent a letter, but this was not being done with data from the Autospeedwatch. Maybe due to too much data? Somerset PCC would be contacted to ask why the data is not being acted on.

John Flindall (JF) reported that the worst offender (12 repeats over speed limit) was a car with hire plates and the PC agreed that JF should pass this data onto the Somerset Hire organisation, although it was not clear if this was a Somerset hire plate. He also proposed that for a month the Autospeedwatch device be deactivated and the SID unit put in the same place on Bradford Road to collect comparable data. This would indicate whether a speed warning figure had any effect on speeding. This was agreed.

It was also agreed that JB would contact Autospeedwatch for information on the trial conducted by Gloucestershire Police.

6. Actions from previous meeting:

i. **The Bell:** The reply from the Somerset Planning Enforcement had not been encouraging saying that although there had been deterioration in the building it was not bad enough for action. Suggestion to contact the Conservation Officer was made, but the officer had left Somerset. Discussion followed as what to do and it was thought approach from the Parish Council (PC) would not be of use as Somerset had failed to get any action. Cllr Adam Boyden agreed to try and make an approach to the owners.

ii. **The Mill:** It was reported that Cllr A Pickett had discussed the licence with Grant Slade and was to go back to Phil Wake to seek clarification. He was also to speak with the manager of The Mill.

iii. **Rode Park Fest:** It was agreed to make a donation of £500 to the event in July.

iv. Bus shelter at The Bell: This had become very overgrown but inspection revealed that the roof could be made of asbestos and it should not be disturbed. The cost to check this would be around £185 and to remove, if asbestos, around £500. There could be markings on the roof and these would be checked to see if they indicated asbestos or not. It was agreed something needed to be done as this was a PC asset.

7. County Councillor's report:

Cllr Dawn Denton had reported that she was to speak to Sara Davis regarding the speed limit on the A361 by the Church Farm exit to see if it could be lowered. Unfortunately, the Conservation Officer had left Somerset but she would chase about extending the Rode Conservation area. Phosphate mitigation – Somerset had issued a call for sites, it was unclear if this would impact on this area*. Cllr Boyden reported that there had been a large number of redundancies at Somerset and more were expected to try and save money. He added that he would be speaking to Somerset Planning regarding the recent issue raised by the Monkley Lane residents in connection with the solar farm application.

[*Clerk's Note: Somerset's call for sites through the phosphate mitigation scheme applies to developments in the River Parrett, River Brue and River Tone catchment areas. Developers have to demonstrate nutrient neutrality and biodiversity net gain and this can be done by purchasing 'off site' nutrient credits (phosphate: P-Credits). To get a P-Credit a landowner has to manage the land in a different way to possibly increase: field margins, deliver buffer strips, strengthen ecological networks, reduce arable or grazing use and maybe increase tree planting or wetland creation. This can occur anywhere in Somerset – but it would not involve housing development outside the area only improve ecological criteria in that area used to gain the P-Credit.]

8. Planning:

i) New applications:

2024/0871/HSE: Proposed single storey side extension – Barton Gate, 1A Lower Street. There was concern that the extension might obscure exit onto Lower Street. Also, the Barton sign needed to be put up after work was completed.

ii) Somerset decisions:

None.

iii) Other

2023/2183/FUL: Application for photovoltaic (solar farm) on land south and east of Rode. No contact had been made with Low Carbon. It was noted that there had been some problems between residents on Monkley Lane and Rode Farm (see also 7 above). It was expected some changes could be made by Low Carbon.

9. Footpaths:

i) Path 13/1: There would be a cost to reroute this path and Cllr Denton was to ask Somerset if it would meet this cost as it was a safety issue. The path was not widely used and it was agreed to wait for a decision from Somerset regarding cost funding.

ii) Church Farm path: It was agreed that this should be made a public footpath and not just a permissive path to give it greater legal protection. However, as a permissive path it was apparently protected in law through the S106. It was noted that the path was becoming overgrown and questions were raised whether the Church Farm Management Company had been formed and did it cover the upkeep of this path. This would be investigated by Cllr Boyden.

10. Neighbourhood Plan: It was reported that the brief had been approved by the PC and this would be taken to Context Planning next week.

11. Buses: There was a need to encourage use and PT reported that stickers for residents to display had been prepared as First still needed greater use through Rode. There was disappointment that no buses were coming through Rode this week due to road works and the PC was concerned over the large number of road closures in Rode with little co-ordination to reduce the number of closures.

12. New village hall: The meeting last week had progressed the plan and it should be submitted as a Pre-planning application to Somerset Planning in the near future. The cost (£2,000) of the Pre-planning review was being met by the Memorial Hall. This Pre-planning review would look at size, height and access to determine whether there were any major issues to prevent it going forward as a planning application. The use of the current Memorial Hall site for planning would also be assessed. There was still a lot to do, fund raising would require professional help and a project manager would be needed. There was a need to set up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for those involved in this project and the meeting agreed to fund the legal costs up to £1,000 to form this.

13. Financial matters:

i) Internal audit: This had been completed and the Clerk would submit the AGAR.

ii) Payments: The following payments were agreed:

Rode Park Fest Ltd	£500.00
S Whitehead (path clearance)	£120.00
J H Jones (grass cutting)	£809.99
A Aked (audit)	£50.00
Clerk Salary	£266.11
HMRC PAYE	£64.60
P Travis (bus promotion)	£240.00

14. Any other business:

a) Hoedowns: It was agreed Clive Harrington would be approached to carry out a street sweep and to ascertain his costs. Village projects would also be evaluated for Hoedowns.

b) Fingerpost: The Clerk was asked to get costings for repairing or replacing the broken finger on Straight Lane.

c) Laurel on The Mead: It was reported that a laurel hedge was growing across the pavement, this would be investigated.

15. Date of next meeting:

The next meeting would be held in the Committee Room at the Memorial Hall on: **Monday 8th July at 7.30pm.**

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Signed

Date

Print

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