

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL (via ZOOM) MEETING OF RODE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 5th MAY AT 11.00am**

UNCONFIRMED

Present:

Cllr T Morrow – Chair (TM), Cllr P Travis (PT), Cllr P Banwell (PB), Cllr A Edney (AE), Cllr A Hooker (AH)
Cllr Elaine Butler (EB), Cllr Steve Eyles (SE)

In attendance: Cllr Linda Oliver – County Councillor, Cllr Barbi Lund – District Councillor

1. Public Participation:

This was done via e-mails being sent prior to the meeting and the 3 e-mails received were considered by the meeting, these all concerned possible housing development at Merfield. Concern had been expressed over this development being very different in scale and location to what was included in Rode's Neighbourhood Plan with access to the site via The Mead, the need for housing older people and the lack of consultation within the village over any plans.

It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan had identified a need for more housing for older residents. With regard to access there was general agreement that any access to a site should be only from Straight Lane. Currently no formal application had been put forward by David James. Mendip had however identified Merfield in Rode as its proposed site for 26 houses in response to a requirement resulting from of the Inspector's Interim Report on the Mendip Local Plan Part 2. His Interim Response is now subject to further hearings by the Inspector with Rode, Norton St Philip and Beckington all having submitted comments on the Inspector's Report; as has BANES. Comments will be considered at hearings which have yet to be scheduled. Given the current Covid19 epidemic it is currently not known when or how these hearings will take place. In the event the Inspector deems these (and housing developments elsewhere in NE Mendip) should go ahead; a formal planning application would need to be made which could still be commented on by Rode Parish Council.

It was however agreed that a virtual (Zoom) meeting between the Parish Council and David James would be held next week to gain a greater understanding of any possible planning application for Merfield.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr P Restorick

3. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2020: The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman while online.

4. Report from County Councillor: It was reported that Somerset was fully involved in the battle against the Covid19 outbreak. It had spent over £10million on PPE for Somerset, which meant it was meeting 70% of its cost. The Council was keeping its social care open 7 days a week and increasing the subsidy to care homes by 10%. Covid19 was costing the County more than it was receiving from Central Government; but it was able to report cases in Somerset were amongst the lowest in the country. Updates are available on the Somerset website: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus/covid-19-latest-advice/>

5. Report from District Councillor: She reported that all Mendip meetings were now being held virtually. A list of local food and producers had been published to help people source supplies.

6. Highways issues:

Somerset County Council had recently restarted highways work, however there was currently no work around Rode and it was not known when the work planned for just before the lockdown would be done.

It was agreed the Clerk would write to Clive Harrington to thank him for clearing the surfaces of Crooked Lane and Parkgate Lane of loose stones and chippings etc.

7. Actions from the previous meeting:

- i) **Gateway signs on A361:** Cllr Oliver said that currently with lockdown there had been no progress on this and she hoped to meet the relevant people after the end of lockdown.
- ii) **Lengthsman:** PT reported that no progress had been made due to lockdown.
- iii) **Pediment on High Street:** A letter had been sent to the flats in the Brewery Tower and their response had agreed that work would be done. However currently this was be on hold.
- iv) **Notice board by village hall:** Still to be progressed, awaiting end of lockdown.
- v) **Rockabella path:** TM would pursue the road records in Somerset. It was reported that a Stacy had owned the land at the bottom of Rockabella and further investigations would be carried out. The levelling work at the top of the path should be completed by the next PC meeting.
- vi) **War memorial:** The missing name had now been added to the Memorial.
- vii) **VE Day celebrations:** Although no public gatherings can be held a programme had been posted on the village Facebook site encouraging people to put up bunting and have tea/drinks in their gardens and in front of their houses with a toast to the future and it was hoped to stream, on Facebook, singing on the green at 8.00 pm.

8. Mendip Local Plan Pt2: The three councils (Rode, Beckington and Norton St Philip) had written to Tracy Aarons at Mendip with their objections. No further date for any hearings has yet been proposed and it was hoped any meeting would be at a time when this could be face to face. A letter had also been sent to BANES asking for their co-operation and a response was awaited. It was reported that planning applications previously rejected (in Beckington and Norton) were being included in the proposal from Mendip in their response to the Inspector's Interim Report.

9. Planning matters

a. New applications:

- i. **2020/0586/HSE:** Internal and external alterations including the erection of single storey glazed rear extension and conversion of garage to car port (13 High Street). This was still unresolved due to the lockdown but the PC had registered no objections to it.

b. Mendip decisions:

- i. **2020/0298/TCA:** Reduction of height of walnut by 2-3 metre and reshape (4A High Street). Approved no TPO required
- ii. **2020/0380/TCA:** Fell eucalyptus tree (4 Marsh Road). Approved no TPO required
- iii. **M1370:** Tree preservation order (2 Mayfield Court, High Street) – enforcement of 2019/1951/TPO decision.
- iv. **2019/2560/APP:** Alteration for approval of details by conditions (Church Farm development). Approval for parking and turning and external lighting, rejection of partial discharge/remediation and noise mitigation.

10. Footpaths – Church Farm site: The S106 stipulated that a path from Church Farm to Church Lane was required. The cost would be borne by Autograph Homes. There was some discussion over the suitability of this as access to the village centre. The other access would be down the footpath into the back of the Brewery site although it was agreed this was just a grassy strip on the edge of fields and often muddy.

11. Village Buddy Scheme: This had been set up as soon as lockdown was imposed and there had been a very good response within the village with all those needing a buddy being allocated one. There were a lot of 'spare' buddies available if required later. Mike Salmon was co-ordinating this project and the Parish Council thanked him for this scheme.

12. Financial matters: The Clerk reported that Rode had received its annual precept (£17,600). He also reported that the NatWest interest rate was to drop to 0.01% from 0.2% from the end of the month. It was agreed to pay the annual insurance premium but not to commit to a slightly cheaper rate but be tied in for 3 years.

The following payment were agreed:

Terry Morrow (Zoom subscription)	£14.39
Cane and Company (insurance)	£657.85
Clerk salary and expenses	£168.87
HMRC PAYE	£32.20
Eagle Grounds Maintenance	£369.16

13. Other matters: PT said that once lockdown was relaxed if the social distancing requirement of 2 metres remained the passenger capacity of a single decker bus would be reduced by 90%. It was therefore possible that buses going through Rode might at times be 'full' when passing through the village.

The Meeting closed at 1.00 pm.

Signed _____

Date: _____

Print: _____

Date of Next Meeting (virtual by Zoom): Tuesday 2 June 2020 at **11.00 am**

Website: rodeparishcouncil.webs.com