

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING MARCH 2024

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Rodney Stoke Parish, which was held in the New Memorial Hall, Latches Lane, Draycott on Thursday 21st March 2024 at 7.00p.m.

Present: 7 Parish Councillors, Somerset Councillor Shearer and the Parish Clerk. 5 members of the public were present.

The Chairman of the Parish Council chaired the meeting and opened by welcoming everyone. At the request of a resident the Councillors introduced themselves.

1. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting, held on 16th March 2023, had been published prior to the meeting. They were agreed as a true record by those present and were signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a report. Matters discussed included: a tribute to Cllr Ken James who sadly died last year; the new King; the new Unitary; new Councillor Tom Williams; thanks to Playing Field Committee Secretary Steve Young who planted 50 slips in the hedge on the field; thanks to Somerset Cllrs Shearer and Wyke for their support; wildflowers in The Pound and wildlife zone; the overgrown greenery at the top of Back Lane, the Chairman thanked the group of residents who had cleared the area; the improvements to mobility access at Baggs Lane; the multi user path which was cleared by volunteers from the Strawberry Line; repairs to fingerposts; rebuilding the Pound wall after it was hit by a vehicle; the review of The Narrows in Draycott; replacement of a dog bin hit by a vehicle; planning and licencing meetings; the likely replacement of the oak sapling; the extension of the local bus service to Weston and a call to support it; a special thanks was given to Cllr Gladman who is standing down as Vice Chairman this year and the work he does for the Parish; thanks to all the Councillors; it was also noted that the accounts are in good order.

Cllr Dollins gave a vote of thanks to the Chairman and the Clerk.

4. Police Report No report had been received for the meeting. PCSO Chinnock had sent apologies.

5. Village Agent Report Apologies had been received from Bella Lapwood, the village agent. A report had been received and was circulated prior to the meeting and is available on the website and in the Minute Book.

6. New Memorial Hall Committee Report the Secretary had given his apologies for the meeting. A report had been received and was circulated prior to the meeting. A copy is held in the Minute book. The Chairman noted the hall's income; and that they are not in favour of selling the driveway and access, following the approach by a developer. It was noted that there were concerns including the stability of the foundations of the hall.

7. The Rev Cobley Playing Field Committee Report the Secretary had given his apologies for the meeting. A report had been received and was circulated prior to the meeting. A copy is held in the Minute book. The Chairman reviewed their finances and the history of the donation of the field to the Parish Council and the amalgamation of local charities in order that funds could be donated towards running the field. It was noted that the Committee are not in favour of realigning the driveway access.

8. Somerset Cllr Report: Cllr Shearer introduced herself, noting her role as lead in children family and education, and gave a report. Matters discussed included: the legal and balanced budget approved in February; the costs exceeding the budget; the demand lead services; efforts to meet costs including increased fees, sale of assets, savings, use of reserves, the curb on the increase in Council Tax; redundancies and problems faced next year; the reduction

in non-statutory services; the police and crime panel and discussion regarding the lack of attendance by the police at Parish meetings.

9. Footpath Walkers Report Chairman of the Footpath Committee, Cllr McGovarin, gave a report. Matters discussed included: the multi user path and the volunteers in the Parish clearing sections; the Strawberry Line volunteers; Brangay Lane drain is blocked again, it was discussed that Cllrs McGovarin and Sealey will investigate the drain and clear it if possible; most of the footpaths are clear; the pathway between The Street and Wet Lane was noted as overgrown. The Clerk is to write to the neighbouring residents asking them to cut the greenery back; repointing on the bridge at Latches Lane is to be carried out by English Heritage.

The meeting closed at 7.44 p.m.