

Minutes

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Rodney Stoke Parish Council held in the Draycott Memorial Hall, Latches Lane, Draycott on Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7pm

Present: Cllr Sealey (Chairman) and Cllrs Bullen, Dollins, McGovarin and Williams. Also present were Somerset Cllr Shearer, the Parish Clerk and 4 members of the public.

264.1 Election of Chairman: Cllr Sealey was proposed by Cllr Bullen, seconded by Cllr Dollins and duly unanimously elected by those present. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed, and witnessed by the Clerk.

264.2 Election of Vice Chairman Cllr McGovarin was proposed by Cllr Dollins, seconded by Cllr Bullen and duly unanimously elected by those present. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed, and witnessed by the Clerk.

264.3 Apologies for absence: Cllr Dearden, family ill health; Cllr Dudden, work commitment; Cllr Gladman, Leave; Cllr Ward, work commitment. The apologies were accepted. PCSO Chinnock and Somerset Councillor Shearer also sent apologies.

It was noted that Cllr Marie Daynes has stepped down from the Council due to a change in circumstances.

264.4 Declarations of Interest None

264.5 Public Participation: Item 264.21 was discussed including that until a formal proposal has been made, no legal advice will be sought; no decisions have been made; all information received by the Council has been published; a transport report on all the potential accesses has been requested from the consultants, but not received; Informal discussions with Somerset Council properties team and planning team have been started, but no clear indication of support or objection to the proposal has been received; Fields In Trust has outlined the requirements to transfer FIT protection.

264.6 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on **21st March 2024**, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and unanimously approved as a true record.

264.7 Matters arising from the Minutes: Hedgehog Highways It was noted that 2 requests had been received and the school had declined the offer. Supporting biodiversity was noted.

Resolution: To purchase 2 highways to a maximum of £20 to meet requests.

264.8 Election of Representatives for committees and groups: groups were reviewed, Cllr Williams joined the Planning Committee as a substitute member.

264.9 The terms of reference for committees and groups were reviewed and approved. Cllrs Sealey, McGovarin and Williams will attend a staffing committee. The Clerk is to arrange a meeting to review holiday pay and to also review the role of the street cleaner as a contractor.

264.10 The Policies of the Council, including the financial regulations, were reviewed. The new model financial regulations will be considered at the July Parish Council meeting.

264.11 The payments made under the General Power of Competence were reviewed.

264.12 The Financial, Play Area, Burial Ground, Wildlife Zones and Speed Indicator Device risk assessments were reviewed and approved.

264.13 The Insurance arrangements and additions to the schedule were reviewed. The Council is in the final year of a 3-year arrangement.

Resolution: To renew the policy. Unanimously agreed.

264.14 The membership of other bodies:

Resolution: To continue to subscribe to the Somerset Association of Local Councils; Society of Local Council Clerks; Somerset Playing Fields Association; Information Commissioners Office and CPRE. Unanimously agreed.

264.15 The existing **arrangements with other bodies** were reviewed and approved.

264.16 The asset register

Resolution: To approve of the register. Unanimously Agreed.

264.17 Review biodiversity duties It was noted that Cllr Dearden has planted The Pound and Wildlife Zone with managed wildflowers; Hedgehog Highways have been promoted and supplied to those requesting them; the local butterfly garden and the butterfly reserve on the Mendips have been supported with grants and recommendations for grants; Cllr Gladman has installed 3 double bat boxes and bird boxes are to follow; a tree has been planted in the Rev Cobley field. The Council decided to include biodiversity when developing policies.

264.18 Meeting dates for 2025 members agreed to move the July date from the 17th at the request of Mendip Players. The dates were confirmed as 16th January; 20th March; 15th May; **24th July**; 18th September; 20th November.

264.19 Roads Report including to consider cutting the hedge around the Rodney Stoke sign: The item will remain on the agenda until the highways price list or a one off price for the work is available. The **Temporary Road Closure of Moor Lane, Rodney Stoke on the 20th May 2024** was noted. The following matters have been reported and will be inspected: the **collapsing tarmac on Brangay Lane**; the **blocked drain on the Multi User Path**, the pipe needs rodding; the **footpath between Bay Lane and Wet Lane**, the Bay Lane end needs clearing and the surface needs to be investigated; **pot holes on Moor Lane and Honeyhurst Lane**; the **road surface and edges along Brook Bank**. It was noted that regarding the quality of the pothole repairs: "due to the number of defects at peak times and for certain repairs where water is present the contractor can use a material called viafix which doesn't require the defect to be cut out they just fill the area with the cold lay material and compact."

264.20 Planning: The Report had been received. **The potential proposal regarding the access to the land to the rear of the Memorial Hall, Latches Lane, Westfield Lane and Cross Farm Road** had been discussed in the open forum. There were no further updates.

264.21 Somerset Councillors Report: Cllr Shearer reviewed the problems disaggregating contracts such as highways and ground care; the new contact with Kier and the impending price list for additional works; the shortage of foster carers; the community safety partnership and youth violence; reworking the shape of the Council; adult and childrens care;

264.22 The Rev Cobley Playing Fields Report: Multi User Games Area (MUGA) information is still awaited regarding the Westbury MUGA; the grass cutting contractor was asked to **remove the brambles from the wildlife zone and to strim the area** to prepare it for wildflower sowing; the **ivy smothering the Jubilee oak tree** has been removed; Cllr Gladman has the **replacement plaque** ready to install; the playing field committee have sent a reminder about the **pile of rubbish between the pavilion and the double gates**; a **fly tipped table top** by the pavilion has been cleared; Cllr Gladman is to investigate the **rotting wildlife barrier post**; Cllr McGovarin is to attend the **Playground Inspection Awareness course**.

264.23 New Memorial Hall Report: Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated. The hall committee will be asked to reconsider the decision not to hang the King's portrait.

264.24 Burial Ground Report: There were no interments this period.

264.25 Footpath Walkers Report: the **Footpaths survey** initiated by Somerset Council has been submitted; Cllr Gladman has replaced the finger on the **Honeyhurst Lane post** and has the cap for a descale and paint.

264.26 Neighbourhood Watch Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated, a copy is available in the Minute Book. Cllr Dollins is keen to reinvigorate the local group and is inviting new members.

264.27 Environmental Issues Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated; a copy is available in the Minute Book. Cllr Dollins is to register the Councils concerns over proposals to close Cheddar Gorge to vehicles, and the impacts on surrounding routes.

264.28 Somerset Association of Local Councils It was noted that the CEO is still available until a replacement is found.

264.29 Emergency Planning Cllr Dollins' had postponed the item until the next agenda.

264.30 Community Matters: Bleed kits, it was discussed that there should be one kit per village that the kits should be available near the defibrillators in the community, Cllr Sealey is to speak to the owners of the Rodney Stoke Inn, Cllr McGovarin is to speak to the landlord of the Strawberry Special;

Resolution: If permission is given by the landlords, 2 standalone kits should be purchased at £199 each.

Bin for the bus shelter in Rodney Stoke. It was noted that there would be a cost for emptying the bin, which is not yet known. Members discussed the 4 quotes.

Resolution: Purchase the green lidded bin with a post at £289. Install the bin at a cost of £100. Cllr Dearden had submitted a **report on the wildflowers at The Pound** which had been circulated, and has started sowing seed in the wildlife zone. .

264.31 Correspondence: All correspondence was brought to the attention of the Council, including: A **request to include a link for rehab4addiction** on website was discussed. It was decided to add a link to a Somerset Council provision.

264.32 Newsletter: The following **items** are to be included: Neighbourhood Watch; Drug and alcohol addiction; wildflowers in Pound and Wildlife Zone; bin in Rodney Stoke.

264.31 Financial Report: It was noted that the precept had been received.

- i. **The Statement of Internal Control** was reviewed.
Resolution: To approve the statement. Unanimously agreed.
- ii. **Resolution:** The following direct debits were approved: Information Commissioners Office Registration Fee; NEST pension. Unanimously Agreed.
- iii. **Resolution:** The following **regular payments** were approved: Clerks Salary Expenses and Mileage; Clerks PAYE; pension; payroll provision; Grass Cutting; Street Cleaning; Newsletter Printing; Unanimously Agreed.
- iv. **Statement of Accounts:** The 'end of year' and the May statement had been previously circulated. Cllr McGovarin had verified the bank reconciliations for April and May.
Resolution: The End of Year and May Accounts were unanimously approved as a true record.
- v. **Resolution:** The updated **payments schedule** was unanimously approved:

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| NEST | DD | Pension | £40.32 |
| HMRC | I134 | Clerks PAYE | £89.32 |
| St Andrews Press | I137 | Newsletter Printing | ££60.00 |
| GWB Services Ltd | I138 | Grass Cutting | £247.80 |
| H Marshall | I139 | Clerks Salary & Expenses | £1033.44 |
| HMRC | I140 | Clerks PAYE | £86.06 |
| Somerset Forge Ltd | I141 | Remove fingerpost | £60 |
| H Marshall | I142 | Clerks Expenses | £263.67 |
| A Chick | I143 | Street Cleaning | £411.44 |
| GWB Services Ltd | I144 | Grass Cutting | £362.64 |

- vi. **To receive the Internal Audit Report.** In accordance with the auditor's recommendation, the rounding of staff costs will be adjusted by £1 to prevent further rounding issues moving forward. There were no matters for the attention of the external auditor.
- vii. **Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Statements:** Having been previously circulated the Council considered the questions and completed the document.
Resolution: Unanimously approved and signed.
- viii. **Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accounting Statements:** Having been previously circulated the Council considered the document.
Resolution: Unanimously approved and signed.

264.32 Dates of future meetings

2024 July 18th, Sept 19th, Nov 21st

Time of closing meeting: 9.29pm