

## **Rodney Stoke Parish Council**

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Clerk: Mrs H Marshall 3, Barrows Park, Cheddar BS27 3AZ Tel: 07423283940 .

### **Minutes**

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Rodney Stoke Parish Council held in the Draycott Memorial Hall, Latches Lane, Draycott on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 at 7pm

Present: Cllr Sealey (Chairman) and Cllrs Bullen, Dearden, Dollins, Dudden, Gladman, Massey, McGovarin, Ward and Wilkinson. Also present were Somerset Cllr Wyke, the Parish Clerk and 5 members of the public.

**270.1 Election of Chairman:** Cllr Sealey was proposed by Cllr Bullen, seconded by Cllr Ward and duly unanimously elected by those present. The Declaration of Acceptance is to be signed at or before the next meeting.

**270.2 Election of Vice Chairman** Cllr McGovarin was proposed by Cllr Gladman, seconded by Cllr Ward and duly unanimously elected by those present. The Declaration of Acceptance is to be signed at or before the next meeting.

**270.3 Apologies for absence:** Cllr Williams, family health, received after the meeting. M Warne the Chair of the Memorial Hall Committee and M Whittle also sent apologies as they had to attend another meeting.

**270.4 Declarations of Interest** None

**270.5 Public Participation:** A resident made a heated accusation toward the Chairman regarding a planning matter in Rodney Stoke. The Chairman responded and advised the resident to contact Somerset Council to report an enforcement matter and the Standards Board (Monitoring Officer) at Somerset regarding any Code of Conduct complaints. Somerset Cllr Wyke also clarified the process regarding enforcement.

**270.6 Minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held on **20<sup>th</sup> March 2025**, having been previously circulated, were taken as read. Cllr Wilkinson proposed that the Minutes were approved. Cllr McGovarin seconded. Unanimously approved.

**270.7 Matters arising from the Minutes: Noticeboard, Wells Road, Draycott**, following concerns by the contractor regarding the location of underground cables, the additional bay will be sited to the right of the board.

**270.8 Election of representatives for committees and groups:** groups were reviewed, Substitute members were incorporated into the Planning Committee; Payment authorisation officers were updated to include Cllr Wilkinson; Cllr Bullen joined the Neighbourhood Watch committee; Cllr Massey became a Local Community Network representative; Cllr Gladman is to be the named Cllr for CCTV access, along with the Chair and Vice Chair.

**270.9 The terms of reference for committees and groups** were reviewed and approved. The Planning Committee will comprise 6 members; the New Memorial Hall Committee will send 1 or 2 members to meetings.

**270.10 The Policies of the Council**, including the financial regulations, were reviewed. The draft model **Standing Orders** 2025 had been adapted to reflect the preexisting requirements of the Council and had been circulated.

**Resolution:** Cllr Ward proposed that the Standing Orders 2025 be adopted. Cllr Gladman seconded. Unanimously agreed.

A **safeguarding policy** had been circulated.

**Resolution:** To adopt the Safeguarding Policy as circulated.

The Clerk is to ensure that the CCTV policy reflects that third parties may not view the data, the need for the CCTV was considered and it was noted that an improved camera was being investigated.

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

**270.12 The Financial, Play Area, Burial Ground, Wildlife Zones, Street Cleaning and Speed Indicator Device risk assessments** were reviewed and approved. A risk assessment for the annual asset inspection will be created.

**270.13 The Insurance arrangements** were reviewed. 4 companies had been invited to quote. It was discussed that the current provider is a good quality provider and the insurance is at appropriate levels.

**Resolution:** Cllr Dollins proposed that the Council renew the policy with the current provider for a 3 year term, but to review the premium annually for 3 years and not commit to a long term agreement. Cllr Wilkinson seconded. Unanimously agreed.

**270.14 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.

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

**270.16 The asset register**

**Resolution:** To approve the register as circulated. Unanimously Agreed.

**270.17 Review biodiversity duties** It was noted that The Pound and Wildlife Zone have been enhanced; 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; a tree has been planted in the Rev Cobley field. Cllr Massey urged members of the Planning Committee to consider Biodiversity Net Gain.

**270.18 Meeting dates for 2026** The dates were confirmed as 15th January; 19th March; 21<sup>st</sup> May; 16th July; 17th September; 19th November.

**270.19 Roads Report including complaint about car parking at the junction of Mendip Lea Close/Station Road.** An item will be included in the newsletter including parking at Baggs Lane/Back Lane junction, The Street and parking on pavements. The Clerk is to enquire about how best to prevent parking on the pavement due to concerns regarding a car blocking visibility at the top of Back Lane near the bus stop. **Stoke Street, Rodney Stoke, clearing the pipe under the road:** it was noted that along with a number of issues not carried out by Somerset Council's contractor, this should be completed in this financial year.

**Draycott Zebra Crossing** – a paint refresh has been added to schedule. A **Temporary Road Closure: A38 Bristol Road, Badgworth** is expected to commence on **27th May 2025** and last for **6 days**; A **Temporary Road Closure Westfield Lane, Rodney Stoke** is expected to commence on **9th June 2025** and last for **5 days**; Cllrs Gladman and Wilkinson have completed **Roadside training**; the latest update from **Traffic Management** was reviewed including to notify the Clerk of all lines that need repainting.

**270.20 Planning:** The Report had been received. There were no further updates.

**270.21 Somerset Councillors Report:** Cllr Wyke noted that she is now Vice Chair of Planning; Biodiversity Net Gain, the checklist should be reviewed and is especially important considering the proximity to the AONB; Bristol Water/Southwest Water and the go ahead for the Cheddar reservoir; the merger of Strode College with Bridgwater and Taunton College and degree level courses, with nursing candidates moving into local hospitals; Strawberry Line moving closer to the community in Cheddar and plans for a bridge over the Yeo nr Draycott Park; a number of properties to house young people have been bought across Somerset, the shortage of foster carers. Questions were invited. No matters were raised.

**270.22 The Rev Cobley Playing Fields Report:** the **quote to upgrade the CCTV camera** was discussed.

**Resolution:** Not to accept the quote. To seek alternative quotes.

**The Pavilion and arrangements for future use.** An inspection had been carried out by the Chair, Vice Chair and the Clerk. It was noted that the building was generally watertight, but the gutters and barge board needed attention, the flat roof need repair and vegetation

needed to be cleared from around the building. The facility has no current hirers as Axbridge football club have returned to Axbridge. Options to mothball, bulldoze or prepare for further use were discussed. Cllr Massey is to investigate whether nearby teams might be interested in hiring the building; at the same time an initial quote to make the building watertight and to bring the electrics up to code will also be sought. Cllr Wilkinson will attend the **Somerset Playing Fields Association Play Equipment Inspection Course** and the Clerk is to investigate holding a session for other Councillors. The **Zipwire** is to be serviced this week. It was noted that horses were reported on the field at the beginning of the month.

**270.23 New Memorial Hall Report:** Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated. **Draft proposal for the overflow car park to be used as a Community Orchard.** Cllr Dearden reviewed findings of the group, which includes a horticulturalist and Cllrs Bullen, Dearden, Massey and Williams. Discussions included: grants and support available for the initial set up and beyond, research of similar projects, the use of more mature trees, a layout of trees around a central seating area, a row for overflow car parking along the southern end of the field, the cost of clearing the land and accessing water including local springs and a stand pipe. It was noted that Bristol Water customer forum will be in Cheddar in July. Manpower for ongoing maintenance and watering, the need for a long term committee, and access for a flail hedge trimmer were raised. An item will be included in the newsletter to engage the Community. Covenants on the land will be reviewed. It was noted that an enquiry to install a memorial bench has already been raised. It was noted that the Hall committee gave the proposal their wholehearted support and that many residents had been supportive. A donation had already been offered towards the project.

Cllr Dudden left the meeting due to a work commitment.

A **Key Cabinet** will be located at the hall to provide access to keys in an emergency. The keys will be numbered but not labelled.

**270.24 Burial Ground Report:** There was one interment this period. HiLine have been cutting back the greenery around the cables in the burial ground. A scheduled Burial Ground inspection will be carried out prior to the next meeting.

**270.25 Footpath Walkers Report:** Cllr McGovarin reported that most paths are fine. A missing stile on the path nr the Rodney Stoke Inn, and a rotten gate at the bottom of Milking Lane and a damaged stile at the bottom of Barrow Wood Lane were discussed. The Clerk is to contact the Footpaths officer at Somerset to investigate replacement gates.

**270.26 Neighbourhood Watch** Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated, a copy is available in the Minute Book.

**270.27 Environmental Issues** Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated; a copy is available in the Minute Book.

**270.28 Somerset Association of Local Councils** No matters were raised.

**270.29 Emergency Planning** The draft plan had been circulated. Members were asked to submit additional information and amendments. Cllr Bullen is to liaise with Cllr Dollins regarding the plan and contact details.

**270.30 Community Matters:** Difficulties with remote access at the last Local Community Network (LCN) meeting were noted. Cllr Massey had attended **the Climate and Nature LCN** and had reviewed the meeting in a previous item. The report had been circulated.

**270.31 Correspondence:** All correspondence was brought to the attention of the Council.

**270.32 Newsletter:** It was noted that MP Tessa Munt is to include surgery dates. The following **items** are to be included: Parking nr Mendip Lea Close, on The Street, nr Baggs Lane; foster care; parking on the pavement; the community orchard..

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

**Resolution:** Cllr Ward proposed transferring £9000 into the reserve account and £9000 into the 35 day account. Cllr Dollins seconded. Agreed.

Notification of the increase in the cost of the Office software was approved. The increase in the charge for the Internal Audit was noted. Members requested that alternative providers should be investigated.

- 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; Hedge 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:** Cllr Dollins proposed that the **End of Year and May Accounts** were approved. Unanimously agreed.
- v. **Resolution:** Cllr Dollins proposed that the updated **payments schedule** was approved. Cllr Dearden seconded. Unanimously agreed.

NEST	DD	Pension	£44.31
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St Andrews Press	I225	Newsletter Printing	£61.00
HMRC	I223	Clerks PAYE	£83.89
GWB Services Ltd	I226	Grass Cutting	£272.64
Probusiness Ltd	I227	Payroll Charges	£46.50
Greenways Ground Maintenance	I228	Grass Cutting	£176.00
H Marshall	I229	Clerks Salary & Expenses	£1102.77
HMRC	I230	Clerks PAYE	£29.19
A Brumfitt	I231	Bus Shelter Maintenance	£430.00
A Brumfitt	I232	Bus Shelter Maintenance	£440.00
Som.Assoc.of Local Councils Ltd	I233	Affiliation Fees	£616.96
TQ Exel Ltd	I234	Training	£492.00
West Country Groundcare Ltd	I235	Grass Cutting	£540.00
Som.Assoc.of Local Councils Ltd	I236	Training	£40.00
H Marshall	I237	Clerks Salary & Expenses	£1100.26
H Marshall	I238	Clerks Salary & Expenses	£52.79
A Chick	I239	Street Cleaning	£385.33
HMRC	I240	Clerks PAYE	£29.39

- vi. **To receive the Internal Audit Report.** The report had been circulated. 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.  
**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.  
**The dates set for the exercise of public rights were agreed as Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June to Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025**
- ix. **Email Storage.**

**Resolution:** To increase storage. Unanimously agreed.

- x. To defer a request for a grant from Citizens Advice Somerset to the March meeting.

**270.32 Dates of future meetings** July 17th ; September 18th ; November 20th

**Time of closing meeting: 9.57pm**