

Rodney Stoke Parish Council

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

Minutes of the Meeting of Rodney Stoke Parish Council held in the Draycott Memorial Hall, Latches Lane, Draycott on Thursday 20th March 2025, at 7.52pm following the Annual Parish Meeting.

Present: Cllr Sealey (Chairman) and Cllrs Dearden, Dollins, McGovarin, Ward and Wilkinson. Cllr Massey joined the meeting following his co-option. Also in attendance were Somerset Cllr Wyke, Chairman of the Memorial Hall Committee M Warne, Draycott Playing Field Committee representative M Whittle and the Parish Clerk. 2 members of the public were present.

269.1 Apologies for absence: Cllrs Bullen, ill health; Dudden, work commitment; Gladman, family commitment (received after the meeting); Williams, family ill health, (received after the meeting).

269.2 Declarations of Interest: None

269.3 Public Participation: A resident raised that the ground under the **gate at the bottom of Dolmead Lane** had been levelled. **Robert Massey** introduced himself as the applicant for the vacancy for a Parish Councillor and discussed the following matters: his work history, partner, hobbies, voluntary roles, interest in residents issues including Millway and Brangay Lane drains, the need for affordable housing and supporting local issues.

269.4 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th January 2025, having been previously circulated, were taken as read.

Resolution: The Minutes were approved.

269.5 Co-option to fill the vacancy for a Parish Councillor The application for the vacancy had been previously circulated.

Resolution: Cllr Wilkinson proposed that Robert Massey be co-opted. Cllr Dollins seconded. Unanimously agreed.

Cllr Massey signed his declaration of acceptance of office and joined the Councillors.

269.6 Matters arising from the Minutes: First aid training, it was noted that the previous trainer had retired, alternative providers will now be considered. **Roadside training,** 3 Cllrs are attending. **Noticeboard** The Hall Committee had contributed £250 and the Jubilee Committee contributed £500 towards the cost. The board has been ordered and will be installed as soon as it arrives. **CCTV improvements** despite chasing, no proposal has been received from the company who installed the equipment. **Rodney Stoke bus stop,** Cllr Dearden noted that there has been no progress with the promised bench so other sources are being explored. **Complaint to National Grid about power cuts** Cllr Wilkinson reviewed the response from National Grid including that a helicopter was sent to inspect the lines, trees have been cut back, the insulators will soon be replaced with no cut to service to give a more stable supply. During the recent extended outage Draycott was able to be restored as the switch had been tripped while Rodney Stoke required a repair. National Grid had to focus on larger areas first. Vulnerable residents are encouraged to register for priority service. It was noted that they do offer generators and power banks where possible. It was discussed that phone providers also offer alternatives to vulnerable residents.

Action: Cllrs Ward, Dearden and the Clerk

269.7 Roads Report: offer from Westbury Sub Mendip Parish Council to collaborate on additional gully clearing blocked gullies were discussed, including householder responsibility to clear gullies in front of their property. It was decided not to pay for additional clearing at this stage. **Request to reduce the speed limit on School Lane including to consider the potential cost:** Members discussed the scheme put in place 8 years ago, that speed data shows very low speeds at school time, that an intermediate speed would need to be installed, the lack of support from Somerset Council and the cost to the Parish Council for a speed limit, the response from Cheddar Parish Council that they would not be pursuing a speed limit on Top Road, that extending the 30mph to the junction with Short Lane is not supported by Department of Transport criteria, speed and collision data does not support a speed limit on Top Road.

Resolution: Cllr Dollins proposed that the Parish Council did not proceed with the request to reduce the speed limits. Cllr Ward seconded. Agreed.

White Lines in Rodney Stoke will be refreshed at the following locations: Millway/Stoke Street, Stoke St/A371 Scaddens Lane/A371 **Flooding on Bay Lane:** Following increased pressure from the Parish Council and Somerset Cllr Wyke, Highways responded that this site is awaiting a drainage scheme from the Asset Design Team as a lot of the water is missing the existing gullies. It is hoped that the new contractor will deliver the works in the coming year. **Wells Road, Rodney Stoke, water running on road** has been reported. **The Cheddar Road Closure driving a lot of traffic through Draycott:** Wales & West Utilities anticipate completion by 26 March. An **Emergency Road Closure at Bartletts Bridge, Wedmore** from 24th March to 11th April 2025 was noted. A **temporary Road Closure on Moor Lane, Rodney Stoke** on 16th April 2025 was noted.

Action: Clerk

269.8 The Planning Report was reviewed. **Land to the rear of the Memorial Hall, Cross Farm Road and Westfield Lane**

Resolution: To decline a request for a private meeting with the developer, having taken advice from the Somerset Association of Local Councils on the matter.

Security light at the Rodney Stoke Inn, Cllr Wyke had advised that the matter be raised with the planning enforcement officer.

Action: Clerk

269.9 Somerset Council Report. The report had been given at the Annual Parish Meeting.

269.10 Local Community Network: Cllr Bullen sent a report noting that the last LCN meeting on Community and Neighbourhood Watch was badly attended, and that questions had been submitted to the team and the responses were awaited.

269.11 The Rev Cobley Playing Field: The representative of the **Playing Field Management Committee** reported that as there were no longer many users of the field it had been decided to close the Committee and pass the management and remaining funds to the Parish Council. It was noted that the incumbent football club may be promoted and could move elsewhere. It was proposed that if the club stayed, a more formal agreement should be put in place, to include regular inspections. **The weekly playground inspections** list is to be updated and circulated. **Service and re-tension of the aerial runway**

Resolution: To accept the quote.

Information received on a Pump Track project in Liss; members discussed the tracks and costs and requested more information on the work and groundwork involved.

Proposals for the overflow carpark: Hall Committee representatives confirmed that the area is little used by the hall, Members discussed creating a wooded copse or orchard area. Cllrs Dearden and Williams will investigate further and develop costings. **Repainting the play equipment:** The Chairman is to meet a local contractor to discuss the requirements.

Emptying the bins on the playing field: the charge was confirmed as in accordance with previous costs circulated to members.

Resolution: To ratify the decision to accept the quote to ensure continuity of service.

Wildlife corridor: Cllr Dearden requested that the area be strimmed to prepare for wildflower seed planting.

Resolution: To strim the area.

Action: Cllrs Dearden, Sealey, Williams and the Clerk

269.12 New Memorial Hall Tree work to the drive and overflow carpark following advice that 3 further trees would need cutting down along the border hedge, the Hall Committee agreed to share the cost. Following consultation with 3 Cllrs it was decided that the work should go ahead without delay to mitigate any potential issues.

Resolution: To ratify the decision to go ahead with the work.

It was noted that the Hall Committee is investigating obtaining a wedding licence and that new members are need for the Committee

269.13 Burial Ground Report: There have been no interments this period. The Clerk is to chase the Diocese for a **response on the garden of remembrance land.**

269.14 Somerset Association Local Councils: It was noted they are now based in Wells.

269.15 Environmental Issues: Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated; a copy is available in the Minute book. It was noted that grants are available towards fingerpost restoration. It was raised that the fingerpost at Honeyhurst is pointing the wrong way.

269.16 Neighbourhood Watch Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated; a copy is available in the Minute Book. Cllr Dollins noted that there is interest in organising a meeting, and new signs are available to be put up; Cllr Dollins will liaise with the Rodney Stoke group.

Action: Cllr Dollins

269.17 Footpath Walkers Report: The Clerk is to request a **replacement fingerpost for the path adjacent to the Rodney Stoke Inn**. Cllr McGovarin is to determine the location of the **drain below Brangay Farm for jetting**..

Action: Cllr McGovarin, the Clerk.

269.18 Emergency Planning To be discussed at the May meeting.

269.19 Community Matters: Cllr Dearden reported that **The Pound** had been weeded and lots of flowers were coming through.

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

269.21 Newsletter: New Councillor, Hall Committee vacancy, British Gas priority service.

269.22 Statement of Accounts: The statement for March had been previously circulated. The bank reconciliations for January and February had been previously verified. Cllr Ward reviewed the Council's accounts and noted that revenue had been slightly higher than expected and expenditure had been slightly lower than expected.

Resolution: To approve the statement. Unanimously agreed.

Resolution: To improve liquidity of the current account by transferring £4,000 from the reserve account. Unanimously agreed.

Resolution: To transfer £1000 to the unexpected costs reserve.

Action: The Clerk

269.23 Financial Report:

i. The **payments schedules** were updated.

Resolution: The schedules were unanimously approved.

St Leonards Church PCC	I205	Grant towards churchyard upkeep	£500.00
Draycott Memorial Hall	I206	Tree & hedge maintenance	£150.00
Harry H Dudden	I207	Grass cutting	£288.00
St Andrews Press of Wells Ltd	I208	Newsletter Printing	£61.00
Somerset Playing Fields Assoc.	I209	Membership Fees	£15.00
Somerset Assoc. Local Councils	I210	Training	£30.00
Arien Signs Ltd	I211	Noticeboard	£540.60
Currys Group Limited	I212	Laptop	£599.00
Rapide System Supplies Ltd	I213	Stationery	£23.94
H Marshall	I214	Salary & Expenses	£1,102.80
HMRC	I215	PAYE	£83.89
A Brumfitt	I216	Solar light installation	£60.00
A Brumfitt	I217	Refurbishment of bench	£100.00
Somerset Assoc. Local Councils	I218	Training	£40.00
GWB Services Ltd	I219	Grass Cutting	£136.32
H Marshall	I220	Salary & Expenses	£1,102.13
H Marshall	I221	Salary & Expenses	£89.29
A Chick	I222	Street Cleaning	£383.24
Adam Clark Tree Services	I224	Tree & hedge maintenance	£220.00
HMRC	I223	PAYE	£83.89
NEST	DD	Pension	£44.31

ii. **The grass cutting contract** was discussed including the high quality of work currently provided and the quotes submitted.

Resolution: Cllr Ward proposed awarding the contract to Greenways Cllr Dollins seconded. Agreed. The Clerk is to thank the current contractor.

iii. **The hedge cutting contract**

Resolution: To take up the option to extend the contract for a year.

iv. **Resolution:** Cllr Ward proposed purchasing the latest version of the **Charles Arnold Baker** Local Council Administration book Cllr McGovarin seconded. Agreed.

- v. **Simpler Recycling:** The Clerk is to investigate whether the Council will have a responsibility to at make arrangements for business waste under the new regulations, and to include a provision in the budget accordingly.
- vi. **Email provision.** Cllr Williams is to investigate alternative providers and costs of increasing the current provision.
- vii. It was noted that: The **Precept request** has been submitted, the **workplace pensions re-enrolment** is required in July 2025; updated **Financial will be considered** at the next meeting as part of the annual policy reviews.

Action: Cllr Williams, the Clerk

269.24 Dates of future meetings: **May 15th; July 17th; September 18th; November 20th.**

Time of closing meeting: 10.10pm