

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 18th September 2025, at 7.10pm

Present: Cllr Sealey (Chairman) and Cllrs Bullen, Dearden, Dudden, Gladman, McGovarin, Massey, Ward, Wilkinson and Williams. Also in attendance was Somerset Cllr Shearer, and the Parish Clerk. 4 members of the public were present.

272.1 Apologies for absence: Cllr Dollins, family commitment The apology was approved. The Chairman of the Memorial Hall Management Committee, Martyn Warne and Somerset Councillor Wyke also sent apologies.

272.2 Declarations of Interest: None

272.3 Public Participation: None

272.4 Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 17th July 2025, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and unanimously approved.

272.5 Matters arising from the Minutes: It was noted that the **first aid course** had been well received and eight people had been trained with a further seven booked in for the September course.

272.6 Roads Report: Maintenance of boundary hedges: it was discussed that Somerset Highways are not responsible for cutting hedges and would look to recharge any costs to the Landowner; safety as a priority; the farming initiative and bird nesting; landowners re-aligning hedgerows further back into the field; **Millway and Westfield Lane junctions** added to a regular schedule for white lining. Following a request from a resident an **Abandoned Car in a ditch on the moor** was reported to police, Somerset Council then quickly removed it. The **SID** is in Draycott on the Cheddar Rd, problems downloading the data, data will be circulated in due course. **Stoke Street Jetting** has been rescheduled. Landowners are responsible for clearing their section of the culvert, an item will be included in the newsletter and Cllr Wilkinson is to remind residents. **Stoke Street Junction** A further cut back of the brambles is arranged. **The Cliffs, Cheddar, Temporary Road Closure** will commence on **10th September 2025** and last for **31 days**. The Clerk is to report that the **surface of The Street**, Draycott is breaking up again and a **pot hole on the Wells Road at the top of The Street** needs a repair. Somerset Cllr Shearer noted that Somerset Council no longer support the FixMyStreet app and problems on the road should be reported via the Somerset Council website. **Potholes** have been marked for filling on **Honeyhurst Lane**, Rodney Stoke.

Action: Cllr Wilkinson, Clerk

272.7 The Planning Report was reviewed. **Emergency planning action at Somerset Council** to reduce backlogs will continue until mid October. **Enforcement** matters were updated.

272.8 Somerset Cllr Shearer gave the **Somerset Council Report** including the following matters: the government are coming up with ideas to address children and family education; large deficits at Somerset Council and preparations for the budget; the centralised call system was discussed, any problems should be reported to Cllr Shearer for investigation. The Councillors meeting with MP Tessa Munt was reviewed, including Environment Agency clearing work on rivers to stop and investigations into increased flooding; speeding and speed watch; monthly meetings with the Chief Constable; pot holes and the condition of Moor Road; problems with Cheddar Gorge closure and that locals couldn't get through; a request for an audio camera on Cheddar Gorge road; Somerset Council not cutting hedges and encouragement to do things locally such as employing a Lengthsman; complaints and self help; the sustainable farming initiative and the fruit and vegetables scheme.

The Clerk is to contact the police to request more presence in the Parish, and to discuss the speed watch scheme.

272.9 Local Community Network: Cllr Massey reviewed frustrations in planning delays and enforcement; positive reviews of community transport; and a directory of services that is being set up on an app. Cllr Massey will be attending the next meeting.

272.10 The Rev Cobley Playing Field: Playground Inspection report Cllr Gladman has inspected the Witches hat, tightened bolts and replaced the missing bolt, checking bolts has also been added to the inspection schedule. Soft close yellow gates for the play area were discussed but will not be considered at this time as the current gates are satisfactory; A missing No Dogs sign will be ordered; the fields in trust signs should be replaced with stainless steel plaques as the wooden ones are repeatedly broken, quotes will be sought for the next meeting; following a request to help with finding a use for the pavilion, **Somerset Football Association (SFA) raised potentially relocating to Draycott and installing a 3G pitch.** Discussions included: the pitch would be sound proofed, fenced and floodlit; access would be chargeable although priority would be given to residents; likely generation of around 200 car movements at changeover time; opening until 10pm; a lease for 21 years.

Resolution: Not to proceed further with discussions.

The SFA offered to support the Council to find groups and users for the pitch and pavilion if the proposal was not taken up, the Clerk is to ask for their help. **Somerset**

Playing Fields Association: No members were available to attend the AGM **Grass**

Cutting: The current grass cutters of the field have ceased operating. The contractor cutting the play area will match the current rates for a year.

Resolution: To engage the contractors for a year.

Wildlife Zone the report had been circulated.

Resolution: To trim the area in preparation for bulbs.

Cllr Dearden is to mark out the area and inform the Clerk when the trim should be arranged.

Training for play area inspections: The Clerk is to investigate Saturday dates.

Action: Cllr Dearden and the Clerk

272.11 New Memorial Hall Report Cllr Dollins report has been circulated. A copy is available in the Minute book. It was noted that hall hire charges will increase.

272.12 Burial Ground Report: Cllr Gladman reviewed improvements to the top of the burial ground where trees have been cut back and branches laid along the fence line to improve biodiversity. The pond has been tidied and the repairs to the pond fence look very good.

Resolution: To approve an invoice to replace 2 additional posts on the fence.

The Clerk is to contact the Diocese to enquire about **maintenance on the trees adjacent to the burial ground and school.**

It was raised that the trees in the Churchyard need work to the crowns. Suggestions will be made to the church warden.

Action: Cllr McGovarin and the Clerk

272.13 Somerset Association Local Councils: Elections at The National Association were noted. Cllr Dollins is attending the SALC AGM at the Somerset Parishes conference.

272.14 Environmental Issues: Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated; a copy is available in the Minute book. It was noted that a tourism representative is needed for the Mendip Hills AONB.

272.15 Neighbourhood Watch Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated; a copy is available in the Minute Book. Cllr Bullen is looking for a resident to join the Rodney Stoke group. New Neighbourhood Watch signs have been installed in Draycott & Rodney Stoke.

272.16 Footpath Walkers Report: The Clerk is to follow up with Somerset Council on the replacement gates that were to be installed in the Parish. A very narrow path over a ditch in Butts Lane will be reported. The missing bin by The Pound in Rodney Stoke has been reordered.

Action: the Clerk.

272.17 Emergency Planning Cllr Dollins reports that the updated Emergency Plan will be circulated next week for comments.

272.18 Community Matters: The potential project to create a community orchard in the overflow carpark was discussed including the following matters: Cllr Dearden gave a report including thanking Cllrs Bullen and Massey for their hard work; Cllr Bullen reviewed the overwhelmingly positive result of the survey and addressed concerns raised; Cllr Massey reviewed a grant application that was ultimately withdrawn and further sources of funding; groundworks, the need for a specification and further quotes; the extent of the work needed and a plan; the Council was supportive of the project subject to the costs involved. The next stage is to seek clarity on the groundworks. **Revitalising the overgrown land at the junction of Bay Lane and Eastville Lane** was discussed, confirmation that the land is not in the curtilage of the adjoining property, it was proposed that initially the land will be cleared and highways will be consulted. **Request to contact landowners regarding maintenance of watercourses** following flooding on Stoke Street, Rodney Stoke in recent years: the condition of the brook and the responsibility of all the riparian owners was discussed.

Resolution: To write to landowners in Stoke Street and remind them of their responsibilities and add an item to the newsletter.

CCTV upgrade it was discussed that the cameras do not give enough clarity, Cllr Gladman is to check the serial numbers to confirm if the cameras are 8 MP, to ask the hall committee if they would contribute to improving the cameras. **Request to Site a Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance clothes recycling bank in the Parish** the request is to be passed to the hall committee for their consideration.

272.19 Correspondence: All correspondence was brought to the attention of the Council. It was noted that Somerset Council have reported that **dog control measures/Public Space Protection Orders** are active in Somerset East following the consultation earlier this year.

Somerset Wildlife Trust: Invitation to Wilder Together 2025 at The Red Brick Building, Glastonbury Saturday 18th October 2025 11am – 3:30pm

272.20 Newsletter: To include the following items: The Community Orchard and thanks for the responses to the survey, the zebra crossing and safety, responsibility to clear Waterways and information on website, hedge cutting, contact for problems on the road.

272.21 Statement of Accounts: The statement for September had been previously circulated. The bank reconciliations for July and August had been previously verified.

Resolution: To approve the statement. Unanimously agreed.

272.22 Financial Report:

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

Resolution: The schedules were unanimously approved.

Draycott Memorial Hall	I257	Room Hire	£197.65
St Andrews Press of Wells Ltd	I258	Newsletter Printing	£62.00
Somerset Playing Fields Association	I259	Inspection Report	£130.00
EDF Energy Customers Ltd	I260	Electricity	£239.99
West Country Groundcare Ltd	I261	Grass Cutting	£360.00
EDF Energy Customers Ltd	I262	Electricity	£2.24
Wicksteed Leisure Ltd	I263	Play Equipment Part	£53.74
Starboard Systems Ltd	I264	Scribe Accounting Software	£414.72
H Marshall	I265	Salary & Expenses	£1101.28
HMRC	I266	PAYE	£30.54
PKF Littlejohn LLP	I267	Annual AGAR Review	£252.00
Greenways Grounds Maintenance	I268	Grass Cutting	£176.00
GWB Services Ltd	I271	Plant Removal	£132.00
West Country Groundcare Ltd	I270	Grass Cutting	£180.00
A Brumfitt	I271	Fence Maintenance	£450.00
SLCC Enterprises Ltd	I272	Affiliation Fees	£120.00

H Marshall	I273	Salary & Expenses	£69.71
A Chick	I274	Street Cleaning	£415.14
Greenways Grounds Maintenance	I275	Grass Cutting	£326.00
Information Commissioners Office	DD	Data Protection Fee	£47.00
NEST	DD	Pension	£44.31
Water2Business Limited	DD	Water and Sewerage Services	£37.75

- ii. **Resolution:** To transfer £5,000 from the reserve account to the current account.
- iii. **The external Auditors Report** was received. There were no matters for report and the 2024/25 Audit was concluded.
- iv. The **Local Government Pay Scales agreement for 2025/26:**
Resolution: To approve the 2025/26 pay scales, for use from 1st April 2025.
Resolution: The Working hours of the Clerk were increased to 20 hours per week due to the increase in work load, in particular the management of the playing field.
- v. **Somerset Art Works** request for a donation will be considered at the March meeting.
- vi. It was noted that **the interest rate** on savings account is reducing.

272.23 Next meeting: **November 20th**.

Time of closing meeting: 10.02pm