

Rodney Stoke Parish Council

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 21st May 2026 at 7pm

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

276.1 Election of Chairman: Cllr Sealey was proposed by Cllr Ward, seconded by Cllr Massey and duly unanimously elected by those present. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed.

276.2 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 of Office was duly signed. .

276.3 Apologies for absence: Cllrs Dudden, leave; Gladman, leave; Wilkinson, leave. The apologies were accepted. MP Tessa Munt sent apologies due to a prior commitment; PC Alice George sent apologies due to a last minute shift change.

276.4 Declarations of Interest None

276.5 Public Participation: A member of the Lazy Lunch Group reviewed previous community projects and proposed that a mural by Glastonbury artist John Munchal be painted in the bus stop at the top of Back Lane.

Resolution: Cllr Dollins proposed accepting the offer, Cllr Ward seconded. Unanimously agreed.

276.6 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on **19th March 2026**, having been previously circulated, were taken as read. Cllr Ward proposed that the Minutes were approved. Cllr McGovarin seconded. Unanimously approved.

276.7 Matters arising from the Minutes: A further email against permitting **dogs in the Orchard** was noted. Concerns regarding **development at the Rodney Stoke Camp Site** were raised. It was noted that an application is to be considered at the next planning committee meeting. A bright light shining all night outside the Rodney Stoke Inn was raised. Cllr Wilkinson will follow this up, if the matter is not resolved the Parish Council will write to them. Cllr Dearden reviewed the successful planting weekend for the Community Orchard and thanked Cllrs for their help and support.

276.8 Election of representatives for committees and groups: groups were reviewed and approved.

276.9 The terms of reference for committees and groups were reviewed and approved.

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

Resolution: The Financial Regulations were unanimously adopted as drafted.

The updated **safeguarding policy** had been circulated.

Resolution: To unanimously adopt the Safeguarding Policy as updated.

The effectiveness of the CCTV system was reviewed including provision of data to the police, replacement of cameras and extension of the system. It was decided to review the system for updating next year.

276.11 The payments made under the General Power of Competence were reviewed as newsletter printing and grants.

276.12 The Financial, Play Area, Playing Field, Burial Ground, Community Orchard, Wildlife Zones, Street Cleaning and Speed Indicator Device risk assessments were reviewed and approved as drafted.

276.13 The Insurance arrangements: it was reviewed that the Council will remain with the current provider for a 3 year term for renewal in May 2028, but to review the premium annually.

Resolution: Cllr Bullen proposed that the Council renew the policy with the current provider. Cllr Dollins seconded. Unanimously agreed.

276.14 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.

276.15 The existing arrangements with other bodies were reviewed and approved.

276.16 The asset register

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

276.17 Review of biodiversity duties: In addition to previous actions, The Pound and Wildlife Zone are maintained; the ground at the end of Eastville Lane is managed, development of the orchard has been mindful of biodiversity, members of the group feel very strongly that the eco system should be protected; the planning committee consider the biodiversity net gain reports as part of recommendations; the grass cutting is managed to leave areas unmown.

276.18 Meeting dates for 2027 The dates were confirmed as 21st January; 18th March; 13th May; 15th July; 16th September; 18th November.

276.19 Roads Report including the proposed road closure for upgrades to the gas network from 20th July to 30th August: The Chairman urged members to attend the drop in information meeting on the 26th May; it was noted that the Parish Council had contacted Somerset Cllr Ros Wyke and MP Tessa Munt over concerns for the many local businesses that rely on the summer holiday trade; the Chairman had contacted local businesses and the information had been shared with the community; the following matters were discussed: the impacts on local by roads caused by traffic not using the 43 mile diversion route, concern over brook bank which is already sinking, lack of compensation paid for previous closures, proposals for mitigation including night working, opening the road during the day and employing additional teams, other local Councils have been notified and asked to respond as they will also be affected, school and public buses will be diverted. It was noted that Somerset Cllr Wyke and MP Tessa Munt will meet with the utility company to iron out the options available.

The Chairman urged residents to write to Wales and West Utilities expressing their concerns; **Safety concerns of large tractors on the roads** following concerns raised by a resident it was discussed that a licence can be obtained at 16 years old for large vehicles towing up to 32 tonnes, it was discussed that the law hasn't changed for decades and was created for smaller vehicles achieving about 15mph, with HGV training requiring 350 hours of tuition to earn a licence, drivers can also drive for 12 to 14 hours in high season.

Resolution: To contact MP Tessa Munt and request a change in the law to bring the tractor licence in line with HGV licences. Unanimously agreed.

Yellow lines to end of Smiths Close to discourage parking on the brow of the hill

members discussed visibility and safety issues, recent action by the local police, and advice to request yellow lines so that the restriction can be enforced.

Resolution: To request yellow lines the whole length of Smiths Close. Agreed.

Parking on the pavement at the Bay Lane/A371 junction: members discussed the complaint including visibility, parking at the junction restricting visibility, and experience of poor parking in the area.

Resolution: To request yellow lines on Back Lane from the A371 to Baggs Lane.

Environmental improvements at Draycott Water Recycling Centre (WRC): It was noted that the Parish Council had raised that the Street is unsuitable for HGV traffic and they will be speaking to delivery drivers about the need to use more appropriate local routes, such as Wet Lane, as well as providing signage directing them to that effect. Where necessary - and particularly for larger deliveries - they will also carry out local letter drops to inform residents in advance of the need to use the road for this purpose. Concerns on the condition of Milking Lane were also raised and they have documented the current condition of the road and, as a part of the construction work, will seek to maintain its condition and make any repairs and reinstatements should the condition deteriorate as a result of construction traffic. The **Rodney Stoke a thankful village sign** has been ordered and will be replaced within 6 months. **Speed Indicator Devices:** Issues with the software have been resolved and reports will be submitted to the police, the device is regularly moved to different positions in both villages.

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

276.21 Somerset Councillors Report: Cllr Wyke Cllr Wyke had given a report earlier in the meeting.

276.22 The Rev Cobley Playing Fields Report: The Chairman is to speak to the Chairman of the Hall Committee regarding responsibility for the various areas of the grass cutting contract. The Clerk is to ask the contractor to cut the driveway grass from the gate to the layby, leaving a section unmown to support biodiversity. **The tree contract** was deferred to July meeting. It was noted that a Tuesday evening bootcamp has been booked on field. Draycott School are holding their sports day on the field; Cllr Gladman has taken the tree guard off the oak near the playground and removed some lower branches, the guard is now repurposed onto the Alder tree; the gate closer has been removed from the gate and it still self closes; The electricity meter has been removed from the pavilion, the cables are still in place should reconnection be required.

276.23 New Memorial Hall Report: Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated.

276.24 Burial Ground Report: There were 2 reservations during this period.

276.25 Footpath Walkers Report: Request to install Strawberry Line Totem signs

Resolution: Not to install the signs as no suitable locations could be identified.

There was a discussion regarding **extending the Strawberry Line through Draycott** and the difficulty acquiring the land, it is understood that compromises are being explored.

It was noted that following a request from a resident, **the path between the playing field and Cross Farm Road** has been cut back by County Highways.

276.26 Neighbourhood Watch Cllr Dollins' report had been circulated, a copy is available in the Minute Book. Signs are to be put up. Cllrs Bullen and Dollins are to coordinate to register with the new Neighbourhood Watch system. The police will make sure their website is up to date with their priorities and will contact us about any beat surgeries they will plan in the Parish, residents should contact them if there are any events that they could support.

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

276.28 Somerset Association of Local Councils No matters were raised.

276.29 Emergency Planning The draft plan had been circulated. Members were asked to submit additional information and amendments.

276.30 Community Orchard: The report had been circulated. Cllr Dearden note that 2 further grants had been received and that the 2 Stoke Reds were in leaf.

276.31 Community Matters: The report had been circulated. It was gratefully noted that 2 residents had tidied the **Card Memorial**; **Complaint regarding noise created by Cockerels:** a resident had requested that members reconsider the issue.

Resolution: Members did not consider that it was a matter for the Parish Council to address.

Bleed kits: Cllr McGovarin is to follow up with the Strawberry Special to confirm that a standalone model can be installed. The Clerk is to write to the manager of the Rodney Stoke Inn requesting permission to install a stand alone unit next to the defibrillator.

Resolution: To purchase and install stand alone models subject to the receipt of permission. **MP Tessa Munt had requested** any record of the owner of the land between Sealey Close and Cross Farm Road. It was agreed that this is the land that Somerset Cllr Wyke is investigating. The Clerk is to follow up with Cllr Wyke. **Littering in the Parish and the extent of street cleaning** The Chairman is to meet with the street cleaner to discuss incorporating particular areas on a regular basis and to review the contract duties and hours. It was noted that the Council had received a **request for an allotment and advised** that should the Council be contacted by 6 residents of the Parish to request allotments, they would review the provision. The Clerk is to contact Aster as the **greenery from their property is growing through the noticeboard again.**

276.32 Correspondence: All correspondence was brought to the attention of the Council. A lovely letter of thanks had been received from the School regarding the planting of the Pixie tree in the Orchard by pupils; Forestry England will soon be introducing car parking charges at Stockhill Wood, BA5 3AS; the Clerk is to respond to the Polling station review.

276.33 Newsletter: It was noted that printing charges had increased; to include the following items: Stockhill Woods parking charges, yellow lines on Smiths Close and Back Lane and parking on pavements should be reported to the police using the non-emergency number, mural in the bus stop, urge residents to write regarding the closure of the A371 for improvements to the gas network.

276.34 Financial Report:

- 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; Water2water - Standing Charge Pavilion 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; Strimming the orchard. 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 statement and May Accounts** were approved. Unanimously agreed.
- v. **Resolution:** The updated **payments schedule** was unanimously agreed.

NEST	DD	Pension	£61.55
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Somerset Council	I335	Bin Emptying	£202.80
Grant & Stone Ltd	I336	Building Supplies	£204.42
SK Planthire	I337	Groundwork	£240.00
HMRC	I338	Clerks PAYE	£98.03
St Leonards Church PCC	I339	Grant towards Churchyard Upkeep	£500.00
St Andrews Press	I340	Newsletter Printing	£61.00
Probusiness Ltd	I341	Payroll Charges	£46.50
A Brumfitt	I342	Pavilion Maintenance	£230.00
Greenways Ground Maintenance	I343	Grass Cutting	£250.80
Major Maintenance	I344	Plant Removal	£120
H Marshall	I345	Clerks Salary & Expenses	£1266.65
HMRC	I346	Clerks PAYE	£98.60
Baruch Enterprises Ltd	I347	SID Maintenance	£105.98

Balmoral Systems Ltd	I348	CCTV system maintenance	£440.57
Probusiness Ltd	I349	Internal Audit	£450.00
A Chick	I350	Street Cleaning	£403.72
Greenways Ground Maintenance	I351	Grass Cutting	£140.40
Brunel Engraving Company Ltd	I352	Plaques	1610.64
H Marshall	I353	Clerks Salary & Expenses	£120.05
H Marshall	I354	Clerks Salary & Expenses	£1267.00
HMRC	I355	Clerks PAYE	£98.63

- 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 3rd June to Monday 14th July 2026
- ix. **New regulations regarding Annual Leave Record-Keeping**
Resolution: To approve the record keeping and agree the leave request.
Unanimously agreed.
- x. **Grant requests** from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, Somerset Art Works and Crimestoppers South West.
Resolution: Cllr Dollins proposed a grant of £150 to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, retaining £150. Cllr Dearden seconded. Unanimously agreed.

276.35 Dates of future meetings

2026: 16th July; 17th September; 19th November 2027 21st January;

2027: 18th March; 13th May; 15th July; 16th September; 18th November

Time of closing meeting: 9.54pm