

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020 – RECITED AT EVERY VILLAGE MEETING.

Each local council must hold an Annual Parish Meeting between March and June (May in Compton Dando). The Parish Meeting is a meeting of the parishioners (anyone on the electoral register of the Parish). Because our parish includes several villages, which may have differences in their points of interest, we also hold meetings in each of the five villages in March to collect their opinions. A summary of these will be added to the minutes recorded for the Annual Meeting of the Parish in May. The Parish Council will take note of the Parishioners' wishes expressed in these meetings and take matters forward to the full Parish Council to be discussed further and if required these matters will be acted upon. Items must be placed as an item on the agenda of the monthly Parish Council meeting. Any parishioner can come along to a Parish Council meeting, and they can speak for 3 minutes before the meeting opens, on whatever they wish to bring to our notice. Minutes of the Parish Council meetings are available to all parishioners who would like to see what is discussed and what decisions are reached. These are available on village notice boards, from the Parish Clerk, or on the parish council website (www.comptondandopc.org.uk/). Meetings may also now be filmed or recorded in line with the protocol on the website.

Throughout the year we have several standing items which we oversee. These include:

1. Planning matters (applications, appeals, enforcements): planning applications are considered by the Parish Council before they are decided by BANES. We arrange site visits to see for ourselves the proposed changes before we discuss our recommendation (we can support, object, or make comments). The recommendations are based on our understanding of the local environment and planning policies, not on personal preferences. In the past year, the Parish Council has considered 21 planning applications (two of which were retrospective and two of which were for new dwellings in the Parish. We also looked at three tree notifications and one application which the Parish Council supported and B&NES objected to which went on to appeal and was dismissed.

One of the planning applications considered was withdrawn. 99% of the decisions made by the Parish Council agreed with the final decision made by BANES.

There are several planning enforcements matters that still being investigated by Bath and North East Somerset Council.

2. The Parish Council has reported to the BANES Council (through Council Fix My Street B&NES) local issues such as potholes, fly tipping, flooding, water leaks, blocked drains & gulleys, damage to verges and damaged road signage. The Parish Clerk monitors the action or progress of these reported matters. Members of the Parish may also report problems via Fix My Street B&NES, can check that matters have been reported and follow the progress of a reported problem via

this platform.

3. The Parish Hall is doing well with some regular bookings by local groups such as the art club, Pilates, table tennis etc. As Trustees of the Parish Hall the Councillors attend regular meetings with members of the Parish Hall Committee to ensure all that is well.
4. Our Parish Precept is used by the Parish Council to pay for local services including: -

Streetlighting (currently, we are negotiating a collective contract with other Parishes and B&NES to bring down the cost of maintenance on our street lighting)

Precept also pays for grass cutting, maintenance and running of the Parish Council website and the services of a Parish Clerk.

We have also used some of the Precept for defibrillator training for both Parishioners and Councillors and also essential training for Councillors.

This year, the Parish Council voted to increase the precept from £10,000 to £12,641 (5%). This increase has been approved by B&NES. This increase was felt necessary due to increases in our costs, including a proposed NJC pay award to Clerks (yet to be agreed by the Unions), possible devolution of some services from B&NES and to assist with the maintenance of the Parish assets.

The Parish Council has also sought external funding and has now almost completed restoration of all the finger posts in the Parish and these are looking very smart. Funds have also been used on restoration works at the War Memorial in Compton Dando, to buy and erect protective bollards for the Coronation tree triangle in Queen Charlton. We have also repaired the Millennium Green fence in Compton Dando and a broken glass panel in the telephone kiosk. Monies have also been earmarked to contribute towards the installation of a new traffic island at the top of Chewton Road. The installation of this island (which should be this month) will prevent lorries using this route and getting stuck on the bridge near Chewton Place and will also protect cottages and property in this area from damage.

B&NES Council budget 2020/21 was considered at their February meeting

- ❖ A 1.99% general Council Tax rise and a 1.99% rise in the Social Care precept (tax)
- ❖ £400K in the district to help tackle the climate emergency
- ❖ £100k for additional street cleaning and litter picking
- ❖ £140k for additional litter and fly tipping enforcement
- ❖ £60k to support the council's tree and woodland strategy and tree planting
- ❖ £100k to increase the number of Approved Mental Health Professionals

The Parish Council will be considering any s137 grants that are submitted during the next few months.

Some of the issues that the Parish Council have dealt with are: -

1. Flooding issues on the B3116 Burnett including the digging out of a dew pond to locate and clear drainage pipes under the road. Unfortunately, the pipes could not be found but the digging out has relieved the water runoff problem to some extent. It is appreciated that despite drains and gulleys being cleared there is still an issue with a lot of water runoff from local fields and this is being monitored by the Parish Council.
2. Discussions are still being undertaken in respect of improvements of traffic problems in Queen Charlton.
3. The Parish Council strongly objected to the proposed expansion of Bristol Airport which has since been refused. However, there is talk of the airport appealing and the Parish Council will continue to work with other local Parish Councils and the PCCA to fight the expansion.
4. The Parish Council is part of a collective of other local Parish Councils looking at rural transport issues.
5. A new website has been created for the Parish Council that is GDPR compliant and accessibility ready.

We want as many people as possible to be able to use this website:

- You can zoom in up to 300%
 - navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
 - listen to most of the website using a screen reader
6. We are currently seeking assistance in respect of issues relating to damage to verges and walls at Bathford Hill.
 7. Recently, the Parish Council have been looking into how we as a Council and the Parish can help in respect of the Climate Change Emergency declared by the Local Authority and some of our planned initiatives are to be discussed as part of this agenda. Recently, the Parish Council made a decision not to declare a Climate Emergency, as it was felt by the Parish Councillors needed to gain some training and more knowledge in respect of this subject. We can assure you though that it does not mean that as a Parish Council that we do not care about Climate Change or the Ecology crisis associated with it.

8. In the past year, the Parish Council have produced new and reviewed existing policies and these include

The yearly risk assessment procedures list and risk assessment policy

The security incident response policy

The GDPR consent to hold information form

The accident and injury record for the clerk form

The freedom of information policy

The data protection/privacy policy notice

The email contact privacy policy notice

The data audit inventory

A Freedom of Information Policy

9. Finally, the Parish Council would like to thank all Parishioners for getting involved in village litter picks and we will continue work to resolve issues within our Parish as they arise.

Thank you for your time and for listening to this Parish Council report and we would welcome any questions that you may have.