

Minutes of a meeting of the Queen Thorne Parish Council held on Monday 13th November 2023 at 7.30pm in Nether & Over Compton Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllrs McBeath, Carter, Chick, Harris, Livingstone, Lowe, Morgan, Negus, Phillipson, Symms, RoWLO Max Snow Two members of the QTNWG, and several members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllrs Hart, Biddiscombe and Dorset Cllr Legg
2. **Chairman's Remarks:** The Chairman pointed out that the revised standing orders on the agenda for approval, contain a section on disorderly conduct at meetings, including a requirement to show respect for the views of others.
3. **Declarations of Interests:** Cllr Harris declared an interest in items 7c, 7i 4 & 5. Cllr Chick declared an interest in item 7f.
4. **Co-option of a new Member for Nether Compton:** The vacancy had been advertised but nobody from Nether Compton had come forward. The Council was therefore pleased to co-opt Deborah Gordon, a resident of Adber who lives within 3 miles of Nether Compton parish.
5. **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting on September 11th were agreed as a true record and signed.
6. **Business Items arising from meeting on September 11th 2023**
 - a. **Standing Orders Review:** The Council approved the previously circulated draft revised standing orders which are based on the NALC model standing orders 2018, v 2022.
 - b. **Nether Compton Recreation Ground:** The boundary fence between the recreation ground and Court Cottage has been repaired by the property owner.
 - c. **Allotments:** Cllr Negus reported that he intends to ask plot holders to pay subs by bank transfer. The Council agreed to the plan.
 - d. **Neighbourhood Plan:** Max Snow reported that the new designated area excluding Sandford Orcas, Nether and Over Compton has been agreed by Dorset Council.
 - e. **Trees on Gore Lane and Western Street:** It was reported that the trees are looking healthier. Only three of the forty trees on Gore Lane might be dead. It was agreed that the ground around each tree on Western Street should be cleared of competing vegetation in early spring.
 - f. **Fingerposts Maintenance and Repairs:** Cllr Lowe is making a database of the fingerposts throughout Queen Thorne. Cllrs Morgan and Carter offered to provide the information for Trent and Over Compton. Since the last meeting the volunteer has remade the fingers on the sign at the junction in the centre of Trent. Cllr Lowe thanked Cllr Chick and Tim Downing for organising and providing oak boards.
 - g. **Highways Issues:** The clerk had reported inappropriate parking in Stallen to Highways and the Community Police Officer. Unfortunately, they have been unable to help. The Clerk will ask about potential emergency vehicle access problems. Councillors understood that the building work causing parking problems outside Two Trees is soon to be completed, which should resolve that issue.
 - h. **QTPC Chairman, Succession:** The Chairman reminded the Council that he will not continue in the Chair after the May election.
 - i. **Trent Campsite:** Cllr Morgan reported that the campsite is likely to run again next year. Edward Hohler, who leases the land, has agreed that there should be better communication with neighbours, including provision of contact details in case of disturbance etc. The Clerk had written to the ECT to let them know about the unhappiness with the way that the campsite was run this year, expressed at the last PC meeting.
 - j. **Damaged Noticeboard in Over Compton** Cllr Chick had not been able to obtain a quote to make a new board. The Clerk had seen options on the internet for upwards of £1000. Cllr Carter had seen cheaper options and it was agreed to look at those.
 - k. **Street Sign Replacement in St Michael's Close, Over Compton:** Highways has confirmed that it will only provide one sign for this location. It was agreed that the existing sign should be moved to the other side of the road for better visibility.

b

Open Forum

A resident of Nether Compton asked the Council to contact Gigaclear to ask when they intend to act on their contract to provide fibre-to-the-property broadband in the Comptons as he had been unable to get an answer from them. It was agreed that the Clerk should write.

A resident of Over Compton asked the Council to press Dorset Council to do something about the unauthorized and dangerous coach park that has opened on the A30. The Chairman and Clerk of Bradford Abbas Parish Council were also present to express concerns about this development and it was agreed to work together. The Clerk will write to Robin Legg who has been urging Dorset Council to take action.

A resident of Nether Compton reported on an idea proposed at the Over & Nether Compton Village Meeting to create an active road scheme by limiting the speed limit to 50mph and creating cycle lanes on the A30 between Sherborne and Nether Compton. The Council agreed that this could improve road safety and enable residents to cross the road more easily and cycle to Sherborne. The Council agreed to write to Robin Legg.

Having previously sent photographs, a resident spoke about the state of the hedges on the road at Stallen and his concerns that traffic is being forced to use the centre of the road. Cllr Chick who had declared an interest, assured the meeting that the hedges will be cut in January, as they are every year. The weather this year has meant that hedges have put on a greater amount of growth. The Council agreed that, as this is a single track road, vehicles are already in the centre of the road and cutting once a year is sufficient.

7. New Business

- a. **Traffic in Trent at School Start and Finish Times** Parents at the school confirmed that they are already being asked to drive through the village and park in a considerate manner. Max Snow reported that further solutions to the parking problem are being actively considered. The Council decided there was little point in writing to the school again and it would await developments on the parking.
- b. **Over and Nether Compton Village Meeting** Cllr Carter reported that Chris Loder MP had attended the meeting and told the meeting which areas he is currently focusing on. Active road scheme – see Open Forum.
- c. **Problem Reports of Overgrown Bridleways and Rook Scarer in Nether Compton / Trent.** Cllr Gordon told the meeting that the overgrown hedges are making it difficult for riders to pass through the lanes in places and the rook scarer is frightening horses. Cllr Harris had declared an interest but the Council thought it would be useful to hear him. The QT Agri hedge cutter had been unable to access all the lanes due to the severely overgrown hedges on the other side belonging to the estate of the late Steve Goodden. Cllr Chick offered to make enquiries. If this approach does not work the clerk will write to the solicitors dealing with the estate. Cllr Harris said he would speak to his son about the positioning of the rook scarer and also that he will let Cllr Gordon know when it is to be used in future, so that she can inform the community.
- d. **Farm Operations such as Harvesting of Maize causing Problems on Rowbarrow Hill** Representatives of farms using this stretch of road were present and confirmed that there has been a problem with mud and waste on the road due to the number of farm vehicles using the road. It was reported that Batsons Farm has invested in a bowser and brush to alleviate the problem. Representatives present agreed to the following: They will put up warning signs as soon as there is mud or debris on the road, clean the road as often as possible and inform Cllr Gordon when they are about to start harvesting or muck spreading so that she can warn locals. The meeting supported the idea of a community Whatsapp group for this purpose and Cllr Gordon agreed to set one up.
- e. **Unauthorised Coach Park on the A30** See Open Forum.
- f. **Report of overgrown Hedges in Stallen** See Open Forum
- g. **Planned Nighttime Closure of the A30** This has been advertised and warning signs are in place.
- h. **Flooding in Sandford Orcas** Fortunately there were no properties flooded during the recent period of heavy rain. Cllrs Lowe and Philipson are planning a report on flood mitigation on the stream.
- i. **New Funding Requests:**

1. **Replacement Pads for Trent Defibrillator** This is in the budget and the Council agreed to pay the cost of £80.40.
2. **Monarch's Way information board:** Max Snow described the project and the Council agreed to pay the cost of materials which is likely to be £55 + VAT.
3. **Life Education Wessex:** The Council agreed to donate £155 towards the cost of the annual visit to Trent School. The remainder of the cost will be paid by the school.
4. **Proposed Gates on Bridleways:** Quotes are still being obtained. Deferred to next meeting.
5. **Nature Watch Group:** Cllr Negus asked questions regarding the water testing. The members of the group present at the meeting did not have all the answers. It was agreed that the Council will forward the questions to be answered before the next meeting. Cllr Chick also asked questions, including whether the NWG is duplicating the work of the Environment Agency. NWG representatives said that unfortunately the EA does not have the capacity to carry out water testing as widely or regularly as they are planning to do. They are reporting their results to the EA. At the Chairman's request, as a precaution pending clarification and not setting a precedent, Cllrs Harris and Chick left the room before the funding request was discussed. This was because Cllr Harris had previously declared an interest and Cllr Chick had cited the example of water testing on his own land during the discussion. The Council agreed to a donation of £720 which amounts to the cost including VAT of the photometer water testing machine.

8. Financial Matters:

- a. **Financial Report and Payment of Invoices** The Council reviewed expenditure against budget year to date. Invoices approved for payment: Clerk salary £865.67, KM Dike £254.16 (plus £508.32 to cover returned cheque), £252, BDO, Queen Thorne Magazine £100 **Payments made since last meeting approved at the meeting:** Trent Village Hall £88 and Dorset Planning Consultant £1215.12, both for the Neighbourhood Plan. KM Dike £381.24. **Receipts since last meeting:** £13,848.50 precept.
- b. **Conclusion of Audit:** The clerk reported that the auditors had completed the audit with no issues raised. The Council congratulated the Clerk on this achievement.
- c. **Budget 2024-25:** Cllrs McBeath, Livingstone, Morgan and Gordon volunteered to meet the Clerk to create a draft budget before the next meeting.

9. Planning Matters:

DC Planning Applications – Approved or decided by Parish Council

Name	Reference/Details	Status
East of farm buildings at Sevingates Western Street Over Compton	P/PABA/2023/06038 Erect agricultural building	Prior approval. Information only
Patson Hill Farm, Patson Hill Lane Trent	P/FUL/2023/03661 Erect a Brewery, form carparking and associated infrastructure	Support with conditions re junction with Marston Rd and water drainage.
The Chantry Gore Farm Junction To Road Junction Below Church Farm Trent	P/HOU/2023/05223 Carry out external remedial works to external walls. Replacement of timber garden shed	Support Granted 02.11.23

Mitre Inn, Sandford Orcas – Creation of new car park under investigation by Dorset Council.

Applications Determined by Dorset Council or awaiting decision

Batsons Farm, Adber	P/FUL/2023/03223 Erection of a dual purpose barn for the storage of agricultural equipment, feed and bedding and the housing of youngstock	No material objection, but concerns over pollution from light, noise, smell etc. Building must be better screened from neighbouring houses.
Trent School, Trent	P/LBC/2023/02500 Replace existing timber fencing with new metal fencing	Comments- recognise the need for higher fencing but consider the material is out of place here
High Pavement, Down Lane, Trent	P/HOU/2021/05420 Erection of 1 No. one and a half and 1 No. single storey side extensions , alteration of rear two storey extension, erection of garden walls, erect replacement garage (demolish existing garage and shed), relocate greenhouse.	Appeal APP/D1265/W/22/3301326
Higher Farm Compton Road Over Compton	P/FUL/2022/03668 Change of use and conversion of barns to form 3 no. dwellings. Erect agricultural building and form access (demolish existing barns)	No objection, but recommendation that careful consideration is given to the access. Pending decision
Lower Farm, Over Compton	P/FUL/2021/01334 Conversion & extension of agricultural building to create 1no. dwelling, including change of use of land to create residential curtilage. Erection of car port & boundary wall	No objection Pending decision Granted 21.09.23

10. Dates of Future Meetings 2024: 8th January in Trent, 4th March in Sandford Orcas, 13th May in Nether Compton.

11. Items for Next Meeting: Environment report by Cllr Negus. Cllr Lowe is creating a map of Sandford Orcas with field names, Cllr Harris offered to help.

12. The meeting closed at 10 pm.