

Minutes of a meeting of the Queen Thorne Parish Council held on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.30pm in Trent Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllrs McBeath, Biddiscombe, Chick, Gordon, Hart, Harris, Livingstone, Lowe, Morgan, Negus, Phillipson, Symms, Dorset Council Cllr Legg, RoWLO Max Snow and several members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Carter
2. **Chairman's Remarks:** The Chairman asked for brevity during discussions.
3. **Declarations of Interests:** None
4. **Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting on November 13th were agreed as a true record and signed.
5. **Business Items arising from meeting on November 13th 2023**
 - a. **Nether Compton Recreation Ground:** Cllr Hart reported that the play equipment has now been made safe. At its next meeting, the committee will consider replacing some of the equipment and have a general clear up of the recreation ground.
 - b. **Allotments:** Cllr Negus reported that he has sent out the Trent annual requests for payment. In Nether Compton, Cllr Biddiscombe is instigating a new system of payment for all plots in January and it was agreed that the price should increase to £30 per plot. Plot holders will be asked to pay by bank transfer.
 - c. **Neighbourhood Plan:** Max Snow reported that the NP Committee has successfully applied for four lots of Technical Support which will fund assessments to move the plan forward.
 - d. **Trees on Gore Lane and Western Street:** It was reported that one of the trees on Gore Lane has been destroyed by the hedge cutter. The farmer, Stuart Casely has offered to replace that tree and another one which has died. The clerk will contact him. Cllr Negus suggested a mulch of wood chips should be put around the trees on Western Street and the weeds cleared before the main growing season. He will enquire about the wood chip and Cllr Chick will speak to someone who might undertake the work.
 - e. **Fingerposts Maintenance and Repairs:** The volunteer has renovated three posts in Trent, using paint kindly donated by Sydenhams of Gillingham. The clerk has written to thank them. Broken signs in Trent, near Glebe Farm and at Adber Cross will be repaired next.
 - f. **Highways Issues:**
 - i. **Water on the road in Stallen, Over Compton & Holywell dog leg corner** Highways are dealing with the first location. The council understands that the water on the road at the top of Western Street is caused by a blocked drain. The problem at Holywell corner has been fixed by Cllr Symms.
 - ii. **Stones along the highway outside Sandford Orcas Church** This has been reported to Highways who will contact those responsible and ensure the stones are removed.
 - iii. **A30 speed/safety consultation** Cllr Legg has ascertained that the Highways authority has still not received the police report of the fatal incident which took place thirteen months ago.
 - iv. **A30 unauthorised coach park** Cllr Legg has contacted planning enforcement and Highways. Cllrs agreed that coaches pulling out onto the dual carriageway and the lane can pose a hazard for other vehicles.
 - v. **Old Mill Lane, Trent** The council has been made aware of large amounts of water gushing down the lane following heavy rain. This is too much for the road drains to cope with and threatens to flood The Old Mill, This has been reported to Dorset Council and the owners of the surrounding land. Max Snow spoke on behalf of the property owner and said that the Ernest Cook Trust has undertaken to look at the drains and gullies shortly with a view to doing work.
 - vi. **Street sign replacement in St Michael's Close, Over Compton, update** The clerk has asked Highways for a quote for a new sign, which Cllr Chick

has offered to install.

- vii. **Rowbarrow Hill** A resident of Adber had written to the council about the poor state of the road, including mud and debris from farm vehicles causing the drains to block, lack of maintenance of the drains and a degraded surface in places. It was noted that Dorset Council is undertaking five days of works on the road this week. It is hoped that this will resolve some of the issues highlighted, but the situation will be monitored.
- viii. **Potholes and drains** Cllr Lowe told the council that she is regularly reporting potholes and blocked drains on the Dorset Council website, and has made around twenty reports in the last two months.
- g. **Damaged Noticeboard in Over Compton** Cllr Negus had requested and seen the invoice for a recent notice board purchased for the Cricket Club. The cost without legs was around £500. The clerk had seen a similar offer but the cost of legs took the total to around £800. Max Snow suggested a local craftsman in Trent who had made the Monarch's Way board. The clerk will ask him for a quote.
- h. **Overgrown Bridleways in Nether Compton / Trent:** Cllr Chick is making enquiries with the executors of S. Goodden's estate.

Open Forum

Mr Roger Kipling told the meeting about the amount of water that is collecting on the road in Hummer outside his house during periods of heavy rain. Heavy vehicles driving through the water are sending waves over the garden wall and twice recently, water has flooded into the house. He has been regularly clearing the covers of three road gullies, but believes they are blocked inside. He has reported this and the flooding to Dorset Council and been told that the drains have been cleared, He is not convinced that this is the case.

Max Snow thanked the council for a donation of £55 towards the Monarch's Way information board that is now in place in Trent. It was agreed that the clerk should write to the ECT to thank them for their contribution.

Kim Creswell, speaking as a resident and not on behalf of the NWG, asked the council to consider writing to DEFRA to request that they do not allow so many derogations for cutting hedges during the nesting season in Queen Thorne. She has noticed the dramatic loss of farmland birds. It was agreed that Cllrs Negus and McBeath would discuss the best course of action.

6. New Business

- a. **Environment Report** Cllr Negus told the council about a recent DEFRA announcement on environmental land management incentives. This includes over 50 new actions including agroforestry incentivized for the first time. Cllr Negus offered to send highlights of the report to the council.
- b. **Dorset Community Tree Project** Cllr Negus had looked at the details of this rather complex project. He offered to help and guide anyone interested in the role of tree warden. He said that if he were to take on the role there could be a conflict of interest with his professional regulatory responsibilities.
- c. **Complaints about lighting at Rosedown Farm.** Cllr Lowe told the meeting that there are four properties affected by the lighting. She has spoken to the MD at Pearce Seeds who has adjusted the timing and angle of the lights. Tim Rutter also spoke and informed the council that the row of trees specified in the planning permission to screen the building will be planted this winter. Kim Creswell is still concerned about the lighting and the type of trees and will liaise with Tim Rutter and Pearce Seeds.
- d. **Elections 2024** The clerk briefly ran through the nomination process and timetable for the elections. She will send councillors the link to the nomination form in advance of the next meeting.
- e. **Fibre broadband connection in Nether and Over Compton** In answer to enquiries, Gigaclear has said that the project had been put on hold. They will update the clerk and Mr Llewelyn as to the current situation shortly.
- f. **Wall damage at Homecroft, Sandford Orcas** Cllr Lowe reported that the wall has been damaged three times by passing vehicles. The property owners are applying to Dorset Council for permission to install bollards on the outside of the wall.

- g. Overgrown trees on the mill stream bordering Sunnyside in Sandford Orcas**
Councillors have noticed a sycamore with several trunks that is growing into and impeding the stream. Cllr Legg has been asked to find out where concerns should be addressed.
- h. Hummer Bridge and condition of the approach road** Cllr Legg has once again chased Dorset Highways. The information received this week from the head of Dorset Highways and the Dorset Council Legal Department is that they have just received and are now considering an opinion from legal counsel on the likely liability should a vehicle leave the road and end up on the railway track. This will enable them to come to a collaborative agreement with Network Rail over responsibility for the safety barriers required and the division of costs. When that is agreed the necessary work can be started. The deterioration of the approach road and its embankment has been flagged with Dorset Highways.

7. 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, Trent Village Hall £43, DAPTC £54, Over & Nether Compton Village Hall £50, Dorset Planning Consultant (NP) £1279.44 **Payments made since last meeting approved at the meeting:** Nature Watch Group £720, South West Signs £66 **Receipts since last meeting:** £1000 Over & Nether Compton Fete Committee for NC play ground equipment maintenance, Goundwork (NP grant) £4584, British Horse Society £100
- b. Budget and precept 2024-25:** The council agreed the budget totaling £37,422, as drafted by committee in December. It was decided to increase the precept to £29,314 which will be a 5% increase on the parish section of the council tax.
- c. Clerk's pay award:** The council agreed to the committee proposal to increase the clerk's pay in line with the NALC pay award for the year 2023-24. This is an increase of £1 per hour backdated to April 2023.

8. Planning Matters:

DC Planning Applications – Approved or decided by Parish Council

Name	Reference/Details	Status
Land and Buildings at Lower Farm Western Street Over Compton	P/PAAC/2023/07129 Change of use and conversion agricultural building to form 1 No. dwelling (Class C3).	Prior approval. Comment re possible over intensification of the site.
Stirling Harts Lane Junction Above Middle Farm To Junction A30 Dual Carriageway Nether Compton	P/HOU/2023/06450 Demolish conservatory and erect single storey extension, demolish garage and erect two storey extension with first floor link to existing dwelling and erect detached garage with loft over	No objection Granted 18.12.23
Holway Farm Holway Sandford Orcas	P/FUL/2023/05986 Engineering works to facilitate access	Support
The Chantry Gore Farm Junction To Road Junction Below Church Farm Trent	P/LBC/2023/06481 Internal alterations to existing fireplaces. Removal of floor covering	No objection subject to Historic England approval

Mitre Inn, Sandford Orcas – Creation of new car park under investigation by Dorset Council. The owner of the pub has been in contact with the son of the owner of the property looking onto the area of the car park.

Applications Determined by Dorset Council or awaiting decision

East of farm buildings at Sevingates Western Street Over Compton	P/PABA/2023/06038 Erect agricultural building	Prior approval. Information only Prior approval not required
Patson Hill Farm, Patson Hill Lane Trent	P/FUL/2023/03661 Erect a Brewery, form carparking and associated infrastructure	Support subject to access being appropriately configured.
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 Result: Split decision The property owners are understood to be liaising with Historic England.
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

8. **Correspondence:** A letter from Mr P. Churchill of Adber received in December concerning the poor state of Rowbarrow Hill and the Adber Cross junction as well as the continued temporary traffic lights on Hummer Bridge. See items 5.f.vii and 6.h above. The clerk will write to Mr Churchill accordingly.
9. **Dates of Future Meetings 2024:** 4th March in Sandford Orcas, 13th May in Nether Compton, 1st July in Trent, 2nd September in Sandford Orcas and 4th November in Nether Compton.
10. **Items for Next Meeting:** Climate emergency; Unsuitable for HGVs sign for Compton Road
11. **The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.**