

Compton Bishop Parish Council

COMPTON BISHOP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting 15th January 2025

Present: Councillors T Mason (Chair), C Settle, E Parker, D McCarthy, G Hancock and Alan Mortimore (Clerk). Somerset Councillors B Filmer and T Grimes.

25/01A To receive any apologies for non-attendance.

None

25/01B To receive any declarations of interest.

No declarations of interest were received.

25/01C To receive and approve the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th December 2024 previously circulated.

It was resolved to approve the minutes. Councillor Mason signed the minutes as being a true record.

25/01D To receive Clerks Report.

1) The ScribeLite Accounting System. As this is the first financial year that the council has used this accounting software (which is widely used by other parish and town councils) the Clerk asked the council if they would consider paying for a “pre end of financial year check” at a cost of £190 (including VAT). This would then ensure that all the data has been input correctly with the correct cost codes and VAT amounts (which the council can reclaim from HMRC). The clerk will provide more information for a decision at the next meeting.

25/01E To receive County Councillors Report.

Councillor Filmer provided an update on the developments from Somerset Council which Included: -

- 1) Planning – Somerset are looking to develop local plans on how landowners develop their land for building houses etc and this is being progressed through the normal channels that exist to ensure all aspects are considered. This is more of a long-term project.
- 2) Fostering – There has been an increase in the number of children in care which is a huge expense to cover. Also, foster carers are in short supply, so the Council are running an advertisement campaign trying to encourage people to consider fostering as this option is cheaper than having to maintain so many children in care homes.
- 3) Boundary Changes – To reduce costs the Council want to reduce the number of councillors from 110 to 96 with each councillor being responsible for around 4800 of the electorate.
- 4) Financial – the Council are just managing to keep the finances stable for this financial year but next year the situation is dependent on many criteria's, one of which is how the government determine how they view certain aspects of the County's financial status.
- 5) The full transcript will be put on the Compton Bishop website.

25/01F To approve the bank statement and the following payments.

Payee	Description	Amount £
Clerk	Net salary (Dec 24)	318.86
HMRC	Tax deducted at source (Dec 24)	79.80
Clerk	Expenses (Dec 24)	11.99
ScribeLite Accounting for Parish Councils	Direct Debit set up for monthly payments providing a full accounting system for the Parish from July 2024.	14.40 Monthly
ElanCity Ltd	Purchase of a Speed Indicator Device	2747.99
Cross Memorial Hall	Council meetings for Jan-Dec 2025	216.00
Cross Memorial Hall	Police local community surgery	20.00
PATA	Payroll charges Oct-Dec24	31.05

The payments were approved.

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25/01G

To consider the following Planning applications

Planning application number	Location	Proposal

There were no Planning Applications to consider this month.

25/01H

To note the Planning Decisions Update.

Planning application number	Location	Decision

There were no Planning Decisions to note.

25/01I

Safe Pathway Campaign Cross Lane – update on any progress the Landowners.

The Safe Pathway Campaign are still awaiting an update from Somerset Council’s “Rights of Way” officer on any progress being made with the landowners so that this project can move forward. There will be an update at the next meeting.

25/01J

To consider Councillor Training.

Appropriate training sessions to be considered when a fresh set of courses become available.

25/01K

To receive Councillor reports.

1) Councillor Mason informed the meeting that Wessex Water are looking into the problem of surface water coming off the hills and getting into domestic drains. Last year the pumping station was overwhelmed with water, and it was thought that this was affecting the sewage system. Wessex Water had tankers remove this water at a rate of 120,000 litres a time four times a day and it was established that this was clear rainwater with only very little sewage. Wessex Water are now talking to Somerset Council and in the meantime have installed non-returnable valves in the properties affected. This was in March last year when Wessex intended to use video cameras down the drains once the water had subsided. This is an ongoing issue with investigations still going on. Councillor Mason will contact Wessex Water for an update, so the same situation does not happen again this winter.

25/01L

Update on the installation of the Speed Indicator Device (SID) which has been approved by Somerset Highways and the proposed fitting and management procedures.

Before the meeting the Councillors agreed to go ahead with the purchase of the SID to avoid a price increase on the 1st February 2025. This has been actioned with the delivery of the device awaited along with the invoice so that the payment can be made. The payment amount is under item 25/01F for formal authorisation so payment can be made on delivery. Once the device has been received the Clerk will contact Highways and get an update on the installation of the three posts that is required before the SID can be up and running.

25/01M

To consider investigating the water quality of the rivers and streams in and around the Parish.

The local Ecologist who has agreed to help the council in investigating the water quality has some data from Bristol Water which may prove to be useful.

It was agreed that an onsite meeting should be arranged with the Ecologist and Councillors Mason, Settle and McCarthy will arrange a mutually convenient meeting amongst themselves before the next meeting.

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25/01N Update on cutting back of vegetation that is stopping the water flowing through streams in and around the Parish.

One of the Landowners has cut back the vegetation. A letter has been received from the other Landowner advising that he has contacted the Environment Agency for their advice on who is responsible for clearing such overgrowth. The Clerk will contact the Landowner to ascertain if the Environment Agency has responded and provide an update at the next meeting.

25/01O Update on various Highway issues including the A38.

Somerset Councillor Filmer confirmed there has not been any further progress on the A38 upgrades other than the work at the roundabout by the junction 23 by the M5 motorway which is progressing.

25/01P To consider purchasing a replacement bench for “Maggie’s Corner” (by the side of the bridge Over the old river Axe on Old Coach Road) as the existing wooden one needs replacing.

It was agreed to ask the resident who had helped repair the bench and suggested that it needed replacing, if he was able to obtain three quotations for a suitable bench including installation. The Clerk to contact the resident concerned.

25/01Q Update on the progress of revamping the website.

Both the Clerk and Councillor Mason have been investigating the website and getting any updated information correctly input, with obsolete data being deleted. However, there are many sections to look at, which needs to be simplified, so this is a work in progress and there will be an update at the next meeting.

25/01R To consider storage of local Compton Bishop history and information which has been compiled after many years of research.

It was resolved that an onsite meeting should be arranged with the person who compiled all the research to establish the volume of documents involved so that a decision over the storage can be made. The Clerk to contact Margaret Jordan for a convenient time to view the documents.

25/01S To consider the Precept required for the 2025/26 Financial Year.

It was resolved that the precept for the financial year 2025/26 should remain at £16125 the same as this current year.

25/01T To liaise with the Landowner regarding the new village sign in Cross Lane.

Prior to the meeting the Landowner had confirmed that he was flexible with times for an onsite meeting. Councillors McCarthy and Parker suggested Monday 20th January at 9.30am to review the position of the sign. The Clerk to confirm with the Landowner.

25/01U To consider a date for the Annual Parish Council “Open” meeting.

It was resolved that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Wednesday 9th April at 7pm.

25/01V To review the Clerks monthly remuneration.

- 1) The Staffing Committee had met before the meeting to discuss the Clerk’s hourly rate. With the new legislation coming into force this would be below the legal minimum. An increase rate has now been agreed with the Clerk.
- 2) Due to the way meetings work, all payments must be on the agenda for approval. The Clerk must wait until after each meeting for the previous month’s salary. The Clerk did request that the salary be paid regularly on the 1st of every month (for the previous month) and this was agreed with the staffing committee.

The chair explained the situation to council members, and it was resolved that both the recommendations made by the staffing committee should be adopted.

25/01W To request that Somerset Highways carry out the clearance of the drains and gullies that should have been carried out in December 2024.

It was resolved that the Clerk should formally write to Somerset Highways to request that the Gully’s should be vacuumed as they are all badly silted and then the drains are cleared of all blockages.

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25/01X To contact Somerset Highways for the “white lines” to be repainted which they agreed to consider in the new year.

It was resolved that the Clerk should contact Somerset Highways regarding the repainting of the white lines through the parish which was agreed back in September last year.

25/01ZY Items for the next agenda

- 1)** Safe Pathway Campaign – update on any progress with the landowners.
- 2)** To consider Councillor Training.
- 3)** Update on the progress of installing the Speed Indicator Device around the Parish.
- 4)** Update on the Investigation of the water quality of the rivers and streams in and around the Parish.
- 5)** Update on Cutting back of vegetation that is stopping the water flowing through streams that cause problems with overflowing water and no good for the wildlife habitat.
- 6)** Update on various Highways issues including A38 upgrade.
- 7)** Update on investigating a suitable new bench for “Maggie’s Corner”
- 8)** Update on the progress of revamping the website.
- 9)** Update on the storage of local Compton Bishop history and information compiled over many years of research.
- 10)** To consider issues encountered with the National Trust.
- 11)** To consider inserting some form of writing on the back of the sign in Cross Village.

Next Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 12th February 2025 at 7pm