

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025 – RECITED AT EVERY VILLAGE MEETING.

As we enter our 131st year of being a Parish Council, I welcome you to this annual Parish Meeting. It is wonderful thought that our community has been served by a Parish Council for so many years and that we still have volunteer Councillors that continue to care for and support all our villages.

For those of you who have not attended an Annual Parish meeting previously, I will just explain about this meeting and format of our Parish Council meetings and for those of you that have heard this before, I apologise.

A 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 in order that they can be discussed. 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.comptondando-parishcouncil.org.uk). Meetings may also now be filmed or recorded in line with the protocol on the website.

Following the recent resignation of our B&NES Ward Cllr Alison Streatfield-James, we have a new Ward Councillor, who will join Cllr Duncan Hounsell to support our villages and Parish. One or other of our Ward Councillors regularly attends our monthly meeting, together with providing the Council with a monthly report in respect of B&NES matters that affect our Parish. This support and the reports are invaluable, and we thank our Ward Councillors for providing their time and support.

For the 2025 – 2026 financial year, the Parish Council voted to set the precept at £13,195.71 which is 1% above budget. The Precept is used to cover the Parish Council's expenditure and including assisting with the maintenance of the Parish assets.

Our Parish Precept is used by the Parish Council to pay for local services including: -

Streetlighting, grass cutting, maintenance and running of the Parish Council website and the services of a Parish Clerk.

B&NES Council budget 2025/26 was considered at their February meeting.

An increase in Council Tax of 4.99% in 2025/26 (an increase to £86.64 per Band D property).

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 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 15 planning applications (two less than the previous year).
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. They can also check whether matters have been reported and follow the progress of a reported problem via this platform.
3. The Parish Council continues to work with B&NES Highways Department on road safety matters.
4. The Parish Council continues to support the PCAA in its challenges against Bristol Airports expansion.
5. Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) for Park Copse (Bluebell Wood) Compton Dando is now before an Inspector due to an appeal following objections from a couple of residents.
6. The Parish Council continues to produce new policies and review existing ones to keep compliant with regulations.
7. The Parish Council has responded to numerous B&NES and WECA consultations throughout the year. In respect of the B&NES Local Plan this is still in draft format due to need to review the same following the change in Government. Currently, there is a consultation running to review site options. There will be public consultation on this document prior to it being approved by an inspector in spring 2026.
8. As Vice Chair of Avon Local Council Association, I have recently heard the West

of England Rural Network will be contacting all rural Parishes with aim of looking at connecting villages that have no transport with transport connections and necessary facilities such as doctors' surgeries, dentist, schools etc. This organisation is working closely with WECA to obtain Government funding to support community transport for villages currently isolated due to no public transport provision.

9. Finally, the Parish Council would like to thank Sue for another year's service as Clerk to the Parish Council.

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