



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 5 August 2024 at Benwick Village Hall

Present	Cllrs S Lowry, L Keppel-Spoor, R Few and R Emmitt. Clerk A Barnes. Four members of the public.	
087/24-25	Apologies for absence Cllrs Chapman and Taylor sent apologies for the meeting.	
088/24-25	Declarations of Interest Cllrs Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 094/24-25 and 100/24-25 in relation to the village hall. Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 095/24-25 and 100/24-25 in relation to the Community Lounge.	
089/24-25	Public time Public time opened at 19:31. Maintenance of the village was raised, with verges and weed growth being an issue around the village. Cemetery and allotment maintenance was also discussed, as well as the cemetery gates needing to be painted and a bin by the war memorial which is looking old. The condition of highways signage was raised, with some signs missing letters completely. Concern was raised over the uneven pavement along the High Street (bus shelter side) and holes in the pavement at Chapel Gardens. There were reports of dog poo being smeared along hand rails of the footbridge. Public time was closed at 19:54.	
090/24-25	Confirmation of Minutes Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes of the parish council meeting on Monday 8 July be approved and signed.	Agreed
091/24-25	Action Log Councillors and the Clerk provided an update on actions assigned to them in the action log, details are included within the minutes under the relevant items.	
092/24-25	County & District Councillors Reports No reports were received for this meeting.	
093/24-25	Defibrillators The Clerk reported that replacement defibrillator pads and AED starter kits have arrived. Now that we have a larger number of units the Clerk will create a maintenance record spreadsheet.	
094/24-25	Village Hall Cllr Lowry reported that repair work will commence on the village hall in the coming week. Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED to cancel cheques issued on 09/05/24 which have not been cashed (622922 for £192.00 and 622923 for £192.00) and re-issue under item 100/24-25 to cover outstanding village hall invoices 2431 and 2432.	Agreed
095/24-25	Community Lounge Cllr Lowry updated that the Community Lounge regularly now has in excess of 20 attendees per session. Locally grown produce has also started to be donated to the Community Fridge. Cllr Lowry thanked the people volunteering at these sessions. Cllr Lowry reported that having looked into it, other Community Lounges in the area use their village hall insurance. The Benwick Village Hall committee have agreed to the Community Lounge and Fridge being covered under the village hall insurance. Cllr Emmitt requested we ask for a copy of the Village Hall insurance documents, to be reviewed at the next meeting. Cllr Few proposed and it was AGREED that the Community Lounge monthly advance is increased from £50 to £100 per month.	Agreed

096/24-25	Highways matters There was no update on the MVAS speed signage at this meeting.			
097/24-25	Cemetery and September Gardens The Clerk raised the recent contact from an allotment holder regarding the overgrown hedgerow along Whittlesey Road. Cllrs were in agreement that the hedge cannot be cut until the end of nesting bird season.			
098/24-25	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Community Energy Action Plan The CCC Community Energy Action Plan was discussed. Clerk to send questions on the Community Energy Action Plan to Cllrs with a response deadline.			Clerk
099/24-25	Clerk's report and requests Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED that a ticket is purchased for the Clerk to attend the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) annual conference on 20 September 2024. Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED for a second ticket to be purchased for Cllr Keppel-Spoor to attend. Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED to approve an additional 6 hours of working time for the Clerk to work on filing a VAT return. The Clerk reported a correction to the claiming of homeworking expenses in item 100/24-25 (email to the council 30/07/24). The Clerk reported that a treasury account with Lloyds has been opened and will be functional once all signatories have completed the forms (minute ref 232/23-24).			Agreed Agreed Agreed
100/24-25	Income & Expenditure a) Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED to approve the batch of payments up to and including the Clerk's salary and expenses. Cllr Few proposed and it was AGREED for the remaining payments to be approved.			Agreed Agreed
	Npower	Electricity Invoice for June 2024 - DD paid 17/07/2024 Sub-total pre-authorised by Council	£ 115.62 £ 115.62	
	HHA Grounds Maint. Middle Level Commissioners Middle Level Commissioners Benwick Village Hall Benwick Village Hall A Barnes S Lowry S Lowry	July 2024 Cemetery Maintenance 90-1805-6 Annual drainage rates 16-0010-8 Annual drainage rates Invoice 2431 – Community Lounge March 24 Invoice 2432 – Community Lounge April 24 Expenses & salary Community Lounge reimbursement Community Lounge float advance August 24 Subtotal to authorise for payment now	£ 419.87 £ 150.81 £ 109.68 £ 192.00 £ 192.00 £ 627.44 £ 212.75 £ 100.00 £ 2004.55	
		TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 2120.17	
	b) The Clerk's report on the July 2024 bank balances can be found at Appendix 1.			
101/24-25	Correspondence a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 10/07/24, 18/07/24, 30/07/24) b) Fenland District Council (FDC) Press Release (emails 10/07/24 (x4), 18/07/24 (x2), 23/07/24, 30/07/24 (x2)) c) FDC Agenda for Council meeting (email 10/07/24) d) FDC Agenda for Planning meeting (email 18/07/24) e) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 10/07/24, 18/07/24, 30/07/24) f) Cambridgeshire Matters (email 30/07/24) g) Benwick in Bloom BBC Cambridgeshire (email 18/07/24) h) Doddington Diary (email 30/07/24) i) Middle Level Commissioners Stakeholder Update (email 23/07/24) j) SLCC News Bulletin (email 18/07/24)			
102/24-25	Planning There were no planning applications to review at this meeting.			
103/24-25	Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives Cllr Lowry reported that they intend to turn two allotment plots into a community garden.			
104/24-25	Agenda Items/Next Meeting The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 2 September 2024. Items to be included on agenda to be with the Clerk by Monday 26 August 2024.			

Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2025	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	02/08/2024		
Approved by		Chair	
Date	05/08/2024		
Balance per bank statements at end	31/07/2024	£	£
Current Account		21,307.12	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		42,855.93	
			64,163.05
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
	22907	106.56	
	22915	484.11	
	22922	192.00	
	22923	192.00	
			974.67
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024			63,188.38
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2024)		58,327.80	
Add: Receipts to date		15,405.38	
Less: Payments to date		11,360.82	
Closing Balance		62,372.36	

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£4,277.21	in trust	
Verge Planting	£1,067.13		
Cemetery Extension	£6,604.17		
Street Lighting	£9,426.58		
The Pound	£2,410.00		
Village Sign	£2,000.00		
War Memorial	£6,000.00		
Mooring	£7,961.16		
Allotments	£2,191.35		
General Reserve	£24,711.97		
		E M TOTAL	£37,660.39