



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 2 September 2024 at Benwick Village Hall

Present	Cllrs M Chapman, S Lowry, L Keppel-Spoor, R Few, R Emmitt, B Taylor and A Ablewhite. Clerk A Barnes. Cllr T Taylor (Fenland District Council). Five members of the public.	
105/24-25	Apologies for absence No apologies were received for the meeting.	
106/24-25	Declarations of Interest Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 113/24-25 and 120/24-25 in relation to the Community Lounge. Cllr Ablewhite declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 112/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall.	
107/24-25	Public participation Public time opened at 19:32 There was a query about the repair or replacement of the village sign. Cllr Taylor updated that quotes have been received and the preferred option is to refurbish the existing sign. The resident with the damaged kickboards on Lilyholt Road is aware and will carry out repair work when they can afford to. The recent footpath repairs along Lilyholt road are already cracking. Clerk to report. The fencing of the building plot in the High Street has blown down and needs repairing, Clerk to write to the owner. The FACT bus will be providing refreshments on Saturday 19 October for Benwick in Bloom volunteers who will be planting bulbs around the village. Clerk to advertise this event on the Facebook page. Photos taken of the cemetery were shared. The footpath is overgrown, the water tap is overgrown with ivy and there are dried cuttings on the memorial stones. Cllrs Chapman and Keppel-Spoor will attend. Cllr Chapman highlighted that the verge and cemetery maintenance contractors are due for renewal next year. Thanks to Cllr Lowry for the breast cancer awareness afternoon tea, £360 was raised. The public footpath along Nene Parade is overgrown and becoming impassable. Cllr Chapman will speak to the resident and will ensure our verge contractor is also aware. The Jubilee tree seat at the end of the High Street needs the tree growth cutting back to allow people to use the seat. Clerk to report to Highways. Groups are congregating behind the village hall and have been climbing on the roof as well as displaying disrespectful behaviour to other village residents. Cllr Ablewhite reported that the village hall committee are looking at access to the rear of the hall. Cllr Chapman requested that further instances of this are reported to the Clerk. Public time closed at 20:00.	Clerk Clerk Clerk Cllrs Chapman /Keppel-Spoor Cllr Chapman Clerk
108/24-25	Confirmation of Minutes Cllr Keppel-Spoor proposed, Cllr Lowry seconded and it was AGREED that the minutes of the parish council meeting on Monday 5 August be approved and signed.	Agreed
109/24-25	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.	
110/24-25	County & District Councillors Reports No reports received for the meeting. Cllr Ablewhite highlighted some of the topics raised in public time and requested that Cllr T Taylor pass some of these on to the relevant FDC departments. Clerk to forward relevant information. Clerk to also contact Cllr D Connor regarding ongoing CCC Highways reports.	Clerk
111/24-25	Defibrillators One of the two recently purchased units is now in situ on Lilyholt Road at the Chapel Gardens end. We are still looking for a suitable location around Cricketers Way. The council would like to thank Mr Eglan for his generosity in purchasing the units and for the work in identifying suitable locations.	

112/24-25	Village Hall Cllr Ablewhite updated that the work to rebuild the damaged wall at the village hall has been completed. There is currently a good level of village hall bookings. Work on finalising the lease with CCC continues. Under the new lease agreement, the money will be raised annually.		
113/24-25	Community Lounge Cllr Lowry updated that for July and August 431kg of food was saved from landfill by the community fridge initiative. Community Lounge events for September and October include St Johns Ambulance doing a defibrillator demonstration, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue covering safety in the home and P3 talking about what is on offer to elderly residents. On Saturday 28 September the Community Lounge will be running a Harvest Festival event. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the Cambs ACRE Community Lounge grant funding (second award of £2000 to March 2025) is accepted by the council. Cllr Chapman requested that the Clerk review the diversity and equality policy and safeguarding policy in order to ensure we are adhering to the terms and conditions of the grant. These are to be included on the agenda at the next meeting. Cllr Chapman highlighted that any equipment purchased will need to be added to the asset register and stored / maintained appropriately.		Agreed Clerk
114/24-25	Highways matters Cllr Ablewhite updated the speed sign data is downloaded and ready to be shared. Clerk to speak to Doddington parish council and see what they do.		Clerk
115/24-25	Cemetery and September Gardens Two members of the public have reported the overgrown hedgerow alongside the allotment and Whittlesey Road. Clerk to ensure the work is being undertaken to cut back the hedgerow along the roadside and down the access track.		Clerk
116/24-25	Transition to .gov.uk domain The council reviewed four quotations from web design and hosting companies to transition our website and create email accounts under a .gov.uk domain. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that Benwick parish council will utilise Parish Online for website and email account services. Clerk to ascertain the legal requirement for historical data on the website.		Agreed
117/24-25	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Better Buses Consultation The council discussed the consultation and had several queries about the proposed services and how they would be funded, as well as the impacts on the most rural parts of the county. Clerk to request a CCC representative attend the October parish council meeting to discuss further.		Clerk
118/24-25	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Community Energy Action Plan Cllr Chapman highlighted the community actions element of the action plan. Councillor to consider any possible opportunities for discussion at the next meeting.		All Cllrs
119/24-25	Clerk's report and requests The Clerk reported that the parish council Facebook page now has 47 followers. In order to increase engagement, the Clerk would like to have a calendar of future posts. Cllr Taylor suggested a post about the Christmas Lights and something from Benwick in Bloom.		
120/24-25	Income & Expenditure a) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the batch of payments up to and including the Clerk's salary and expenses. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED for the remaining payments to be approved.		Agreed Agreed
	Npower	Electricity Invoice for July 2024 - DD paid 17/08/2024 Sub-total pre-authorised by Council	£ 118.67 £ 118.67
	HHA Grounds Maint. A Barnes S Lowry S Lowry	August 2024 Cemetery Maintenance Expenses & salary Community Lounge reimbursement August 2024 Community Lounge float advance September 2024 Subtotal to authorise for payment now	£ 419.87 £ 436.78 £ 422.53 £ 100.00 £ 1379.18
		TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 1479.85
	b) The Clerk's report on the August 2024 bank balances can be found at Appendix 1.		

121/24-25	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 10/08/24, 13/08/24, 24/08/24)</p> <p>b) Fenland District Council (FDC) Press Release (emails 10/08/24 x3, 13/08/24, 18/08/24 x3)</p> <p>c) FDC National Disorder email (10/08/24)</p> <p>d) FDC Chairman's Coffee Morning (10/08/24)</p> <p>e) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 10/08/24, 18/08/24, 24/08/24)</p> <p>f) Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Capital Maintenance Programme 24/25 (email 13/08/24)</p> <p>g) CCC Policy and Insight Kings Speech Email briefing (24/08/24)</p> <p>h) Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) Death certification (email 13/08/24)</p> <p>i) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) Conference (email 10/08/24)</p>	
122/24-25	<p>Planning</p> <p>The council reviewed the following planning applications:</p> <p>1) F/YR24/0630/F at 28 Doddington Road, Benwick PE15 0UT. No planning related observations were made.</p> <p>2) F/YR24/0656/F at White Fen Farm Whittlesey Road, Benwick PE15 0XJ. No planning related observations were made.</p>	
123/24-25	<p>Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives</p> <p>No biodiversity or habitat initiatives were discussed at this meeting.</p>	
124/24-25	<p>Agenda Items/Next Meeting</p> <p>The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 7 October 2024. Items to be included on agenda should be with the Clerk by Monday 20 September 2024.</p>	

Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2025	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	02/09/2024		
Approved by	Chair		
Date	02/09/2024		
Balance per bank statements at end	31/08/2024	£	£
Current Account		19,786.83	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		42,855.93	
			62,642.76
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
	22907	106.56	
	22915	484.11	
	22997	192.00	
	22998	192.00	
			974.67
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024			61,668.09
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2024)		58,327.80	
Add: Receipts to date		15,624.21	
Less: Payments to date		13,484.04	
Closing Balance		60,467.97	

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£3,799.39	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	£22,807.58		
		E M TOTAL	£37,660.39