



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 8 January 2024 at the village hall

Present	Cllrs M Chapman (Chair), R Few, R Taylor, J Ablewhite, S Lowry, R Emmitt, S Lowry, Clerk A Barnes and 3 members of the public.	
198/23-24	Apologies for absence Cllr L Keppel-Spoor	Accepted
199/23-24	Declarations of Interest Cllr J Ablewhite declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 204/23-24 in relation to the village hall.	
200/23-24	PUBLIC TIME Benwick in Bloom has submitted sites for possible wildflower planting previously and funding is available. It was queried which mix of seeds was going to be used, they would like to see something similar to that planted in the village of Bury (low growing flowers) and also noted that it would make a good community project. Cllr Chapman commented that the council supported this project, although land is not parish council owned and there needs to be consideration regarding verge cutting. The clerk advised on advice given by HHA Grounds Maintenance to do several cuts close together before spreading seed. Cllr Emmitt added he would like to see flowers selected that attract bees and insects, not just ornamentals. Last year Benwick won an award for best small village, there is a presentation plaque - where is it? Cllr Chapman confirmed it is in the entrance lobby for the village hall side room. Benwick in Bloom were awarded a donation on £200, when will they receive this? Cllr Chapman confirmed it is the start of the next financial year. There is still an issue with dog mess, with Doddington Road and outside the village shop being noted. Cllr Chapman requested that is anyone sees it to please report to him and he will go and mark it with the spray paint. Cllr Chapman advised that it was a topic of discussion prior to the last elections. Concern was raised by members of the public regarding promises at elections not being met, lack of actions taken and poor attendance of district councillors at parish council meetings. Cllr Chapman to look at recent press release regarding dog fouling and use / amend text to put a post on the Benwick Facebook page. Cllr Taylor proposed a public thank you to everyone involved in the village Christmas lights by way of a minuted item, they were very good this year. This was seconded by Cllr Chapman and AGREED.	Cllr Chapman Agreed
201/23-24	Cllr Emmitt gave apologies for his absence last meeting. Confirmation of Minutes It was proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Chapman and AGREED to approve and sign the minutes of the council meeting held on Monday 4 December 2023.	Agreed
202/23-24	Matters Arising The clerk reported on the response from the Fire service regarding the proposed closure of Manea Fire Station. Cllr Ablewhite raised that the response did not address to how they will respond in the future, with the majority of response coming from retained crew. Cllr Taylor added that this is additional expectation for retained crews to respond to incidents outside their area. Cllr Ablewhite proposed we request clarification as to impact on the	Agreed

		Clerk
203/23-24	<p>village and which is the responding station. Cllr Ablewhite proposed, Cllr Chapman seconded and it was AGREED. Clerk to write a letter, also mentioning floods.</p> <p>County & District Councillors Reports</p> <p>Cllr Tim Taylor (FDC) emailed to inform of Flooding in Somerfield Way. Cllr Taylor clarified location and that FDC had previously reported Anglian Water could not access the school to investigate issue of backed up drains.</p> <p>Cllr Lowry reported that FDC had informed him that they would not be installing any new equipment, but that we could if we fund the safety flooring and take on maintenance. Cllr Ablewhite said Cllr Lowry has put a lot of effort into exploring options and if FDC approve it and there is no cost why would we not do it. Cllr Chapman enquired about the safety flooring. Cllr Lowry reported other local councils have put the equipment on grass. Cllr Few enquired if there was any Section 106 funding left, Clerk to confirm with outgoing Clerk.</p>	Clerk
204/23-24	<p>Village Hall</p> <p>Cllr Ablewhite reported that there has been a meeting and things are progressing well. As previously agreed, he will make contact with CCC and report back.</p>	
205/23-24	<p>War memorial</p> <p>No update this meeting.</p>	
206/23-24	<p>Coffee shop</p> <p>No update this meeting.</p>	
207/23-24	<p>Warm hubs/ Community lounge</p> <p>a) Cllr Lowry reported that there was an increase in attendees at the second event. The upcoming one (20 January) will have a focus on the poetry competition publicised by FDC. Cllr Chapman suggested a leaflet drop to promote the sessions. Cllr Taylor suggested giving them to the school. Cllr Chapman proposed a leaflet drop is organised. Cllr Lowry seconded this and it was AGREED.</p> <p>b) The Clerk highlighted that there will be ongoing consumables expenditure for the Community Lounge. Cllr Lowry anticipates this being approximately £50 per month. Cllr Chapman proposed the council pre-authorise £150 in expenses to cover the period up to end March 2024, this was AGREED.</p>	Agreed Cllr Lowry
208/23-24	<p>Cemetery to discuss and agree any actions wanted including</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the trees are being delivered 9 January. Cllr Few suggested adding a request for volunteers to the leaflets in item 207/23-24, this was seconded by Cllr Chapman and AGREED. Cllr Lowry to select a date and we can then promote.</p>	Agreed Cllr Lowry
209/23-24	<p>Clock mechanism</p> <p>The Clerk reported on feedback from the clock specialist who advises several parts for the clock are missing, they cannot be purchased and would need to be fabricated. They advise the best option is to clean and display the parts. Cllr Ablewhite asked if we can see what we can do with the clock face using a modern mechanism. Cllr Chapman enquired if solar power could be used to power it, this might then attract a grant. Cllr Ablewhite proposed the Clerk to go back to the clock specialist and cost this option, Cllr Chapman seconded this and it was AGREED.</p>	Agreed Clerk
210/23-24	<p>Defibrillators</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the council's request for match funding was accepted, meaning we can proceed with ordering two new units and cabinets at a cost of £750 each. This will need to be an additional finance item for approval under item 214/23-24. This was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED.</p>	Agreed Clerk
211/23-24	<p>Clerk to discuss and agree any actions wanted including</p> <p>a) The Clerk requested meeting actions to be recorded in an action log separate to the minutes, suggesting it would help track longer term actions. Cllr Chapman proposed the introduction of a meeting action log, this was AGREED.</p> <p>b) Cllr Chapman proposed the approval of the Clerk to attend CAPALC New Clerk Training 17 and 24 January, this was AGREED.</p> <p>c) Cllr Chapman proposed the approval of a contingency for up to 10 additional hours for Clerk R Robinson to complete handover, this was AGREED.</p> <p>d) Cllr Chapman proposed the return of remaining grant funding (£534.00) to the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation when it is requested, this was AGREED.</p>	Agreed Agreed Agreed Agreed Agreed

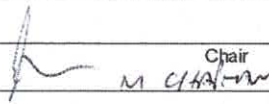
212/23-24	<p>Play Park This item was covered as part of item 203/23-24 due to an update email being sent in by Cllr Tim Taylor, FDC. Clerk to contact Cllr Tim Taylor to determine which approach he is taking to assist.</p>	Clerk						
213/23-24	<p>Highways matters a) With regard to PR0996 Proposed 30mph Speed Limit - Puddock Road, Ramsey, Warboys, Doddington and Benwick Cllr Chapman proposed a response to support the action of the council to reduce the speed limit whilst awaiting repair, providing the 30mph speed limit is a temporary until longer term solution is found. This was AGREED. b) No actions required in relation to TTRO 24-006 Forty Foot Bank, Chatteris and Doddington. c) MVAS operation. Cllr Ablewhite updated Cllrs absent from last meeting on the plan for Cllrs Ablewhite and Taylor to take on moving the MVAS units and downloading the data. Cllr Chapman advised that if the batteries die the units lose the data stored, so it's important to download regularly. d) Nothing for the LHI bid this meeting, MVAS data will assist a bid. e) The footbridge over the Old Nene River. It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED that the Clerk speak to CCC regarding an inspection and copy in Cllr Connor, this was AGREED.</p>	<p>Agreed Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Ablewhite Cllr Taylor</p> <p>AGREED Clerk</p>						
214/23-24	<p>Income & Expenditure a) It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED to approve the following accounts for payment.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="860 283 1290 1339"> <tr> <td data-bbox="860 1033 1290 1339">Npower</td> <td data-bbox="860 487 1290 1033">Electricity October - DD paid 19/12/2023 (inc. VAT) Sub-total pre-authorised by Council, paid November</td> <td data-bbox="860 283 1290 487">£ 160.67 £ 160.67</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="983 1033 1290 1339">HHA Grounds Maint. R Robinson A Barnes Cllr S Lowry N Oliver SLCC ICCM</td> <td data-bbox="983 487 1290 1033">December Cemetary (inc. VAT) Expenses & salary Expenses & salary Community lounge expenses October - December verge maintenance Membership invoice Membership invoice to 31/03/24 Subtotal to authorise for payment now TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED</td> <td data-bbox="983 283 1290 487">£ 392.40 £ 434.70 £ 750.46 £ 220.67 £ 185.00 £ 112.00 £ 24.00 £ 2119.23 £ 2279.90</td> </tr> </table>	Npower	Electricity October - DD paid 19/12/2023 (inc. VAT) Sub-total pre-authorised by Council, paid November	£ 160.67 £ 160.67	HHA Grounds Maint. R Robinson A Barnes Cllr S Lowry N Oliver SLCC ICCM	December Cemetary (inc. VAT) Expenses & salary Expenses & salary Community lounge expenses October - December verge maintenance Membership invoice Membership invoice to 31/03/24 Subtotal to authorise for payment now TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 392.40 £ 434.70 £ 750.46 £ 220.67 £ 185.00 £ 112.00 £ 24.00 £ 2119.23 £ 2279.90	<p>ALSO London Hearts Dribbling Match Funding ALSO.</p> <p>26/14</p>
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215/23-24	<p>b) The Clerk's report on the December bank reconciliation is at Appendix 1. Annual Budget Setting Working Group a) It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED to approve the expenditure lines. b) It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED to accept the budget forecasts. c) It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED to approve the general reserves to be at 100% of necessary expenditure. d) It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED to approve a precept of £13,419.00.</p>	<p>Agreed Agreed Agreed Agreed</p>						
216/23-24	<p>Correspondence a) Rural Services Network, Funding Digest (email 10/01/24, /12/2023) b) FDC Press release (email 11/01/24, 11/01/24, /12/23, /12/23, /12/2023, /12/23, /01/24) Agendas (email /12/2023, /01/24) Rural and Farming executive committee (09/01/24) c) CAPALC Civility and Respect (email resent 11/01/24) Cllr Chapman reported that he could not find this email, Clerk to re-send. d) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin (email 11/01/2024, /12/23, /12/23) Newsletter (email 13/12/2023) e) Highways - Events calendar (email 11/01/2024) f) CCC -Cambridgeshire Matters Newsletter (email /12/2023, /12/23) g) ACRE - Community Action newsletter (email /12/23) h) Middle Level Commissioners Bank Raising Briefing (email 11/01/24)</p>	<p>Clerk</p>						
217/23-24	<p>Planning a) In relation to F/YR23/1006/F - Deancroft 16E Doddington Road Benwick March Cambridgeshire Cllr Chapman proposed that the council have no planning related observations, this was AGREED.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>						

	<p>b) In relation to FYR23/1056/F - Land North Of 3 Bakehouse Close Benwick Cambridgeshire Cllr Chapman proposed the parish council opposes granting retrospective planning approval on the basis that it is in front of planning line for the property, the conversion of the existing garage was voluntarily converted into living accommodation and approving the application would set a precedent for the rest of the street to erect similar buildings. This was AGREED.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>218/23-24</p>	<p>Police Report There were no reports to discuss at the meeting.</p>	
<p>219/23-24</p>	<p>Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives including This item was largely covered under item 200/23-24. Cllr Chapman added that a section of wildflowers might be good in the cemetery. It was proposed by Cllr Chapman and AGREED that we will start with the village gateways. This was supported by Cllr Lowry who proposed starting the project in April, with planting areas agreed with Benwick in Bloom. Cllr Chapman and Cllr Taylor noted that the existing verge cutting contractor will need to be shown what we require. Clerk to determine which type of sand is required for mixing with seed.</p>	<p>Agreed Clerk</p>
<p>220/23-24</p>	<p>Agenda Items/Next Meeting Cllr Chapman proposed the next meeting on Monday 5 February 2024, this was agreed. Items to be included on agenda to be with the Clerk by Monday 29 January 2024.</p>	

Meeting closed 21:30

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Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2024	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Richard Robinson (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	02/01/2024		
Approved by  Chair			
Date	08/01/2024		
Balance per bank statements at end		31/12/2024	£
Current Account			24,094.27
NS&I			41,451.24
			65,545.51
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount	2883	184.23
Less: Mistaken credit to bank			184.23
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 31/12/2024			65,361.28
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance			58,453.87
Add: Receipts to date			21,538.75
Less: Payments to date			14,631.34
Closing Balance			65,361.28

Earmarked Reserves:

Verge Planting	£1,067.13	
Community Lounge	£2,500.00	in trust
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	£25,200.89	
	E M TOTAL	£40,160.39