



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Thursday 9 May 2024 at Benwick Village Hall

Present	Cllrs M Chapman, L Keppel-Spoor, R Few, R Emmitt, J Ablewhite, R Taylor and S Lowry. Clerk A Barnes and four members of the public.	
001/24-25	Election of Chairman Cllr Keppel-Spoor proposed and Cllr Emmitt seconded that Cllr Chapman continue as the Chairman. This was AGREED. The Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.	Agreed
002/24-25	Election of Vice Chairman Cllr Chapman proposed that Cllr Keppel-Spoor remained as Vice-Chair. Cllr Ablewhite proposed Cllr Lowry for the role of Vice-Chair. Councillors voted in the majority for Cllr Lowry to be appointed Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.	Agreed
003/24-25	Apologies for absence Cllr Woollard (Fenland District Council).	
004/24-25	Declarations of Interest Cllrs Ablewhite and Keppel-Spoor declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 022/24-25 and 030/24-25 in relation to the village hall. Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 030/24-25 in relation to reimbursement of expenses for the Community Lounge.	
005/24-25	Working Parties and Representatives Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that any working parties required be appointed at the time they are needed. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that Cllr Ablewhite remain as the village hall Parish Council representative, with Cllr Lowry also representing.	Agreed Agreed
006/24-25	Banking arrangements a) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that Cllr Lowry be added as a signatory to the banking arrangements, with Cllrs Keppel-Spoor and Few remaining as signatories.	Agreed
007/24-25	Internal Auditor a) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the AGAR form is signed off and an exemption for external audit also completed. b) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to use Mr I Cooper for the internal audit as in previous years.	Agreed Agreed
008/24-25	Public time Public time was opened at 19:42. No issues or items were raised. Public time was closed at 19:43.	
009/24-25	Confirmation of Minutes To approve and sign the minutes of the council meeting held on 8 April 2024. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes be finalised with the following amendments: 1. 281/23-24 Date of next meeting change from Wednesday 9 May to Thursday 9 May 2. Appendix 1 – reformat to remove earmarked amounts from February.	
010/24-25	County & District Councillors Reports No reports received.	
011/24-25	Review of Standing Orders and Financial regulations a) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to add a variation to section 5 of the standing orders such that council policies will be reviewed within a 12 month period of last review date, not necessarily at the annual parish council meeting. b) The council had not received the updated financial regulations in enough time to discuss them at this meeting. This will be added to the agenda for the June meeting.	Agreed
012/24-25	Review of Contractual arrangements a) The verges contract from Cambridgeshire County Council is confirmed to be same as 2023/34 (£703.88) 23 April 24.	

	<p>b) The verges contract with Mr N Oliver expired 4 April 2024. Cllr Chapman proposed that this was extended for a further 12 months, providing up to date public liability and method statement documentation is on file. This was AGREED.</p> <p>c) The cemetery maintenance contract with HHA Grounds Maintenance was extended by 12 months at March meeting (minute ref 254/23-24).</p> <p>d) The membership of SLCC for the clerk expires 31 December 2024.</p> <p>e) The membership of CAPALC (including NALC and the data protection officer scheme) expires 31 March 2025.</p> <p>f) The membership of ACRE is due for renewal now. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that we renew this membership for the cost of £65 and that the payment is added to this month's payments.</p> <p>g) The electricity supply remains with Npower, including Direct Debit payment of their bills.</p> <p>h) The parish council continues to use the village hall as the primary supplier of venue for council meetings.</p> <p>i) Cable Test Ltd remains as the repair and maintenance contractor for the streetlights.</p> <p>j) Chess ICT remains as the web host provider.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Agreed</p>
013/24-25	<p>Review of Inventory of Land and other assets</p> <p>The asset register has been updated to reflect the purchase of 2 new defibrillator units received February 2024.</p> <p>Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the risk register be reviewed again at the June meeting to look at how residual values correlate with insured values.</p>	Agreed
014/24-25	<p>Arrangements for Insurance Cover in respect of all insurable risks</p> <p>The current insurance policy expires 19 June. Quotes are being obtained and will be circulated to Councillors for approval at the June meeting. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that quotes are also obtained for 3 year policy durations if this gives the parish council a significant financial saving.</p>	Agreed
015/24-25	<p>Review of policies as per standing orders for the Annual Meeting of the Council</p> <p>Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the policies listed below are updated as per the table of proposed changes at Appendix 1.</p> <p>a) Email contact privacy policy</p> <p>b) Privacy notice</p> <p>c) Information and Data Protection policy</p> <p>d) Freedom of Information policy</p> <p>e) Policy on filming or recording meetings</p> <p>f) Media policy</p> <p>g) Complaints policy</p> <p>h) Disciplinary and grievance policy</p> <p>i) Clerks contract and employment procedures</p>	Agreed
016/24-25	<p>Annual review of other Council Policies</p> <p>Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the policies listed below are updated as per the table of proposed changes at Appendix 1.</p> <p>a) Safeguarding policy</p> <p>b) Expenses policy</p> <p>c) Equality policy</p> <p>d) Retention and disposal policy</p> <p>e) Memorial safety policy</p> <p>f) Website accessibility statement</p> <p>j) Donation awarding policy</p> <p>k) Code of conduct for members</p>	Agreed
017/24-25	<p>Expenditure incurred under s137 of LGA 1972</p> <p>The only expenditure under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972 during 2023/24 was £26.00 spent in November 2023 for the Remembrance Day poppy wreath.</p>	
018/24-25	<p>Future meetings</p> <p>Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council, up to and including the next annual meeting of the council, are to be held:</p> <p>Monday 3 June 2024</p> <p>Monday 8 July 2024</p> <p>Monday 5 August 2024</p> <p>Monday 2 September 2024</p> <p>Monday 7 October 2024</p> <p>Monday 4 November 2024</p> <p>Monday 2 December 2024</p> <p>Monday 6 January 2025</p>	Agreed

	Monday 3 February 2025 Monday 3 March 2025 Monday 7 April 2025 Monday 12 May 2025																						
019/24-25	Confirmation of Minutes Duplicate item.																						
020/24-25	Action Log The Cllrs and Clerk provided an update on actions assigned to them in the action log, details are included within the minutes under the relevant items.																						
021/24-25	County & District Councillors Reports Duplicate item.																						
022/24-25	Village Hall Cllr Ablewhite reported that the legal elements of the documentation are being worked on. The amended lease will be sent to the Clerk once finalised. Cllr Ablewhite also reported that there is some damage to the village hall wall where a member of the public has driven a vehicle into the book swap hut and caused also damage to the village hall brickwork. Cllrs Ablewhite and Taylor requested for the procurement of a BT telephone box to be put on the agenda next month, this was AGREED.	Agreed																					
023/24-25	War memorial Cllr Chapman reported that there has been no update on our application for the war memorial since the last meeting. Cllr Lowry circulated with the council a design and quotation for the perimeter of the war memorial.																						
024/24-25	Community lounge Cllr Lowry updated that the community lounge is going well. There were over 20 attendees at the most recent session. The grant funding has been extended for 2024/25. The community lounge will also host a family fun day on June 29. This will include a table top sale, the money paid by stall holders will be donated to the East of England Air Ambulance. The community fridge initiative is on hold whilst a new surplus supplier is found.																						
025/24-25	Highways matters Cllr Ablewhite reported that the MVAS signage is working well with the solar panel.																						
026/24-25	Defibrillators 2 new defibrillator units have been ordered using the funding kindly donated by Mr J Eglon. The councillors noted their thanks to Mr Eglon for this very generous gift to the village. Cllr Chapman reported that the defibrillator unit is not in the casing at the school. Contact the school to establish if it is being returned or is no longer going to be situated there. Order replacement pads and the pack containing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).	Clerk Clerk																					
027/24-25	Cemetery and September Gardens Cllr Lowry highlighted that the grass cuttings have not been removed by the contractor who maintains the cemetery. Write to the contractor to raise concerns, including that grass cuttings are drying on the memorial stones.	Clerk																					
028/24-25	Portrait of His Majesty King Charles III Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the village hall committee choose the location of the portrait within the village hall as this is the location of parish council meetings, but that it remains property of the parish council.	Agreed																					
029/24-25	Clerk's report and requests The Clerk highlighted that they are on annual leave between 29 May and 9 June. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that they will be the point of contact for any urgent matters and will also take notes at the parish council meeting Monday 3 June.	Agreed																					
030/24-25	Income & Expenditure a) Members to consider and approve the following accounts for payment.																						
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Npower</td> <td>Electricity Invoice for March 2024 - DD paid 23/04/2024 (inc. VAT)</td> <td>£ 157.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sub-total pre-authorised by Council</td> <td>£ 157.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HHA Grounds Maint. A Barnes</td> <td>April Cemetery maintenance (inc. VAT)</td> <td>£ 419.87</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S Lowry</td> <td>Expenses & salary</td> <td>£ 541.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S Lowry</td> <td>Community Lounge reimbursement</td> <td>£ 218.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S Lowry</td> <td>Community Lounge sundries advance</td> <td>£ 50.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cable Test Ltd</td> <td>Street light repair</td> <td>£ 162.74</td> </tr> </table>	Npower	Electricity Invoice for March 2024 - DD paid 23/04/2024 (inc. VAT)	£ 157.72		Sub-total pre-authorised by Council	£ 157.72	HHA Grounds Maint. A Barnes	April Cemetery maintenance (inc. VAT)	£ 419.87	S Lowry	Expenses & salary	£ 541.36	S Lowry	Community Lounge reimbursement	£ 218.99	S Lowry	Community Lounge sundries advance	£ 50.00	Cable Test Ltd	Street light repair	£ 162.74	
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		TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 1999.68	
	b) The Clerk's report on the April 2024 Bank Balances is at Appendix 2.			
031/24-25	Correspondence a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 14/04/24, 16/04/24, 23/04/24, 30/02/24) b) FDC New bin on Ramsey Road (email 29/04/24) c) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 14/04/24, 29/04/24, 03/05/24) d) CCC Way 2 Go Road Safety Newsletter (email 29/04/24) e) Groundwork promoting Tesco Stronger Starts (e-mail 29/04/24) CCC Highways Proposed TTRO 24-795 f) CCC Cambridgeshire Matters (e-mail 30/04/24) g) CCC Highways Events Diary (e-mail 03/05/24) h) Cambridgeshire ACRE Newsletter (email 29/04/24, 30/04/24) i) Middle Level Commissioners drop in events (email 14/04/24) j) Member of the public fallen rowan tree (email 16/04/24) k) Fenland District Council Cyber Crime training (29/04/24) l) Email from resident (01/05/24)			
032/24-25	Planning There were no planning applications to review at this meeting.			
034/24-25	Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives No items to discuss this month.			
035/24-25	Clerk's Appraisal Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED for a motion to exclude the public in accordance with section 1(2) of the public bodies act 1960 that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of this item.			Agreed
036/24-25	Agenda Items/Next Meeting The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 3 June 2024. Items to be included on agenda should be with the Clerk by Monday 27 May 2024.			

Meeting closed at 20:40