



# BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 6 January 2025 at Benwick Village Hall

<b>Present</b>	Cllrs M Chapman, S Lowry, J Ablewhite, L Keppel-Spoor, R Few, B Taylor and R Emmitt. Clerk A Barnes.	
<b>185/24-25</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b> No apologies were received for the meeting.	
<b>186/24-25</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 192/24-25 and 193/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall and the Community Lounge. Cllr Ablewhite declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 194/24-25 and 198/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall.	
<b>187/24-25</b>	<b>Public participation</b> Public time was opened at 19:31. Benwick in Bloom have been awarded a grant to be used for biodiversity and would like to join the community garden / allotment project, working with the parish council. Fenland District Council (FDC) are selling the parcel of land behind the bus shelter as part of a package of assets for sale. There is a streetlight out on Whittlesey Road. Clerk to report. Cllr Taylor to obtain reference number. Public time was closed at 19:39.	Clerk Cllr Taylor
<b>188/24-25</b>	<b>Confirmation of Minutes</b> Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes of the parish council meeting on Monday 2 December be approved and signed.	Agreed
<b>189/24-25</b>	<b>County &amp; District Councillors Reports</b> There were no reports received for the meeting. Cllr Ablewhite raised the Government announcement for local government transformation. Clerk to request that District and County Councillors keep the parish council informed.	Clerk
<b>190/24-25</b>	<b>Action Log</b> Councillors and the Clerk reported progress against actions assigned to them on the action log, details are included in the minutes under the relevant items.	
<b>191/24-25</b>	<b>Defibrillators</b> Cllr Taylor reported that there is one remaining unit to be installed at Cricketers Way.	
<b>192/24-25</b>	<b>Village Hall</b> Cllr Ablewhite reported that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) legal department have been chased regarding the lease agreement. A side gate for the village hall has been procured and is awaiting installation. This will have a combination lock so it can be used as a designated fire escape when required. There are two other fire exits for the hall.	
<b>193/24-25</b>	<b>Community Lounge</b> Cllr Lowry reported that the Christmas dinner event went well. The Children's Christmas party also went very well. There have since been people come forward to volunteer to help with future events. The Community Lounge re-starts on Wednesday 8 January. Lots of residents are donating unwanted items to the Community Fridge. Saturday 17 May has been designated for a Family Fun afternoon. This will include stalls inside the village hall. There will be games and a bouncy castle. Food and drink will be chargeable this time due to the grant funding decrease.	
<b>194/24-25</b>	<b>War Memorial</b> There was no update on the war memorial for this meeting.	
<b>195/24-25</b>	<b>Highways matters</b> Cllr Chapman reported on the site visit that took place to discuss the LHI Bid proposals on 19 December 2024. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that a bid be submitted covering data capture and modification to the junction(s) of Lilyholt Road.	Agreed Cllr Chapman
<b>196/24-25</b>	<b>Cemetery and September Gardens</b> Improved water provision including a central path was discussed for the September Gardens allotment plots. This basic infrastructure would enable other projects like the community allotment. Cllr Chapman proposed that quotations for a central path (recycled materials) and	Agreed

	water access to all plots are obtained by the Clerk. Cllr Few requested quotes for improving the roadway also obtained. This was AGREED.		Clerk
197/24-25	<p><b>Clerk's report and requests</b> The Clerk ran through the report for December 2024. The idea to have council drop-in sessions was favoured, with Cllr Ablewhite adding that district and county councillors could be invited as well. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED for the Clerk to purchase SLCC Clerk's manual at a cost of £47.50.</p>		Agreed
198/24-25	<p><b>Income &amp; Expenditure</b> Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the itemised payments below. Cllr Lowry abstained from voting on the Community Lounge reimbursement and advance payments. Cllr Ablewhite abstained from voting on the Village Hall payment.</p>		Agreed
	Electricity supplier	Electricity Invoice for November 2024 - DD paid 18/12/2024 <b>Sub-total pre-authorised by Council</b>	£ 164.41 <b>£ 164.41</b>
	Cemetery contractor	December 2024 Cemetery Maintenance	£ 419.87
	Verges contractor	Verges maintenance October to December 2024	£ 200.00
	Cambs ACRE	Membership Renewal 2025	£ 72.00
	Village Hall	Village hall hire March to August 2024	£ 126.00
	Salaries and Expenses	Salary and expenses December 2024	£ 761.63
	Community Lounge	Community Lounge reimbursement December 2024	£ 88.70
		Community Lounge advance January 2025	£ 100.00
		<b>Subtotal to authorise for payment now</b>	<b>£ 1768.20</b>
		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED</b>	<b>£ 1932.61</b>
	a) The Clerk's report on the December 2024 bank balances can be found at Appendix 1.		
199/24-25	<p><b>Annual Budget Setting</b> The discussions of the budget working group on 17 December 2024 in relation to the Benwick Parish Council budget 2025/26 were considered. The draft 2025/26 budget was consulted line by line. a) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the expenditure lines. b) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to accept the budget forecasts. c) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the general reserves to be at 100% of necessary expenditure. d) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve a precept amount of £14,000. e) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the itemised and general reserve levels. f) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to include the ambition of general reserves being at 100% of necessary expenditure for all future budgets within the relevant policies.</p>		Agreed Agreed Agreed Agreed Agreed Agreed Clerk
200/24-25	<p><b>Correspondence</b> a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 07/12/24, 17/12/24) b) Fenland District Council (FDC) Press Release (emails 10/12/24, 17/12/24) c) FDC Agendas for Council and Cabinet Meeting (emails 07/12/24 x2) d) FDC Chairman Festive Wishes (email 03/12/24) e) National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 07/12/24, 17/12/24, 23/12/24) f) CAPALC December Bulletin (email 23/12/24) g) CAPALC 80<sup>th</sup> VE Anniversary (email 02/01/24) h) Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Cambridgeshire Matters (emails 03/12/24, 23/12/24) i) Police and Crime Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (email 17/12/24) j) SLCC News Bulletin (email 03/12/24,07/12/24) k) SLCC Standards and Conduct Framework Consultation (23/12/24) l) NHS Integrated Care System Newsletter (email 03/12/24) m) Cambs ACRE Staying in Touch Newsletter (email 03/12/24)</p>		
201/24-25	<p><b>Planning</b> There were no planning applications for review at this meeting.</p>		
202/24-25	<p><b>Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives</b> Cllr Lowry reported working on a grant application to support with recycled materials to build raised beds and water harvesting for the community allotment. Wildflowers will also be planted, with the seeds harvested for future planting. There will be a composting facility. Produce grown would be supplied to the Community Fridge. It was highlighted that clearing the ditch on the Whittlesey Road side of the allotment would assist with drainage.</p>		

<b>203/24-25</b>	<b>Agenda Items/Next Meeting</b> The date of the next parish council meeting is Monday 3 February 2025. Items to be included on agenda should be with the Clerk by Monday 27 January 2025.	
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Appendix 1

<b>Bank Reconciliation</b>		<b>Financial Year ending 31 March 2025</b>	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	04/01/2024		
Approved by		Chair	
Date	06/01/2024		
<b>Balance per bank statements at end</b>	<b>31/12/2024</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Current Account		18,034.79	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		42,855.93	
			60,890.72
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
			0.00
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			
			0.00
<b>Net bank balances end 28/05/2024</b>			<b>60,890.72</b>
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2024)		58,327.80	
Add: Receipts to date		22,333.81	
Less: Payments to date		21,594.33	
<b>Closing Balance</b>		<b>59,067.28</b>	

**Earmarked Reserves:**

Community Lounge	£2,166.92	exluded from EM totals	
Verge Planting	£767.13		
Cemetery Extension	£3,324.40		
Street Lighting	£9,290.96		
The Pound	£1,000.00		
Village Sign	£2,000.00		
War Memorial	£5,500.00		
Mooring	£4,000.00		
Allotments	£1,000.00		
General Reserve	£32,184.79		
		<b>E M TOTAL</b>	<b>£26,882.49</b>