



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present	Cllrs M Chapman, S Lowry, J Ablewhite, L Keppel-Spoor, R Few and B Taylor. Clerk A Barnes and two members of the public.	
162/24-25	Apologies for absence Cllr Emmitt sent apologies for the meeting.	
163/24-25	Declarations of Interest Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 169/24-25 and 170/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall and the Community Lounge. Cllr Ablewhite declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 169/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall. Cllrs Keppel-Spoor and Chapman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 173/24-25 in relation to Turf Fen.	
164/24-25	Public participation Public time was opened at 19:31. Fenland District Council are supplying signs for Benwick in Bloom to highlight the areas where spring bulbs have been planted. A resident reported bad rutting / ploughing in some areas along School Drove. After discussion the council advised reporting the issue to Cambridgeshire County Council Highways regarding public footpaths. Public time was closed 19:41.	
165/24-25	Confirmation of Minutes Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes of the parish council meeting on Monday 4 November be approved and signed.	
166/24-25	County & District Councillors Reports No reports were received for the meeting.	
167/24-25	Action Log 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.	
168/24-25	Defibrillators Cllr Taylor reported we are still waiting for one unit to be installed. They will check the registration of devices on the Circuit system.	Cllr Taylor
169/24-25	Village Hall Cllr Ablewhite updated that further redecoration works have been completed. Village hall income is higher than expenditure. The revised lease agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council has still not been finalised.	
170/24-25	Community Lounge Cllr Lowry updated that people continue to use the Community Fridge. There are 37 people attending the seniors Christmas dinner and 39 for the children's Christmas party. Cllr Lowry attended an ACRE workshop regarding fundraising and signposting to grant funding. The biggest weekly running cost is hall hire and in 2025/26 the funding in being halved. Cllr Taylor queried whether the parish council could subsidise costs.	
171/24-25	War Memorial Cllr Chapman reported nothing to update on this month. Cllr Ablewhite asked if we could look at ideas for repair / replacement of the existing railings in tandem with other works. Ideas for boundary of the war memorial, ensuring compliance with legislation, to be obtained by the Clerk.	Clerk
172/24-25	Highways matters The following was discussed. a) The highways gates and 30mph speed sign at the Doddington end of village has been damaged. Report to CCC Highways. b) The Clerk reported that quotes for MVAS units are being obtained. Cllr Ablewhite proposed, Cllr Lowry seconded and it was AGREED that one additional unit be purchased once quotes have been received and annual budget discussed. c) It was discussed and agreed that LHI bid proposals will go forward for: 1. Whittlesey Road extension of 30mph limit. Cllr Chapman to lead.	Clerk Agreed Clerk Cllr Chapman

	2. Amendment to junction of Lilyholt Road / Doddington Road. Cllr Keppel-Spoor to lead.			Cllr Keppel-Spoor
173/24-25	Turf Fen Update Cllr Chapman updated that the Turf Fen charity is in credit and most recent accounts filed. There are no records available regarding the number of people who have been helped in the past. There was a discussion around how active the charity is. Cllr Lowry can signpost people to the charity. Leaflets to publicise the charity are being produced. Cllr Ablewhite proposed, Cllr Taylor seconded and it was AGREED (with 4 votes in favour) that the Clerk seek advice on behalf of the council regarding Turf Fen oversight and parish council appointed trustees. Cllrs Chapman and Keppel-Spoor abstained from the vote.			Agreed Clerk
174/24-25	Cemetery and September Gardens Use of allotment plots and using two plots as a community allotment were discussed. Councillors were in agreement that the priority should be improving the water supply and access to plots. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the Clerk to work on options for improved access to water on the allotments.			Agreed Clerk
175/24-25	Fenland District Council Culture Bid The culture bid was discussed and deemed a good opportunity for both the Community Lounge and Village Hall Committee.			
176/24-25	Cambridgeshire Community Foundation Spring 2025 The Clerk ran through some of the grant funding currently available. Funding that could support the Community Lounge would be good as we know funding is reducing next year. Cllr Chapman to speak to the school regarding opportunities for youth activities in the village.			Cllr Chapman
178/24-25	Clerk's report and requests The Clerk ran through the report. Website development continues, councillor specific email accounts will be ready for use from January 2025. A draft budget is almost ready for review. The council agreed to a virtual meeting on Tuesday 17 December at 19:00 to discuss the budget prior to approval at January's council meeting.			
179/24-25	Income & Expenditure a) 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.			Agreed
	Electricity supplier	Electricity Invoice for October 2024 - DD paid 19/11/2024	£ 141.64	
		Sub-total pre-authorised by Council	£ 141.64	
	Cemetery contractor	November 2024 Cemetery Maintenance	£ 419.87	
	ICO	Data Protection Fee Annual Renewal	£ 35.00	
	SLCC	Annual Membership Renewal	£ 150.00	
	Salaries and Expenses	Salary and expenses October 2025	£ 928.44	
	Community Lounge	Community Lounge reimbursement October 2024	£ 190.87	
		Community Lounge advance December 2024	£ 500.00	
	Benwick Lights	Christmas Tree 2024	£ 350.00	
		Subtotal to authorise for payment now	£ 2574.18	
		TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 2715.82	
	b) The Clerk's report on the November 2024 bank balances can be found at Appendix 1.			
180/24-25	Correspondence a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 07/11/24, 13/11/24 x2, 23/11/24, 27/11/24) b) Fenland District Council (FDC) Press Release (emails 13/11/24) c) FDC Agenda for Planning Committee (email 13/11/24) d) National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 07/11/24, 18/11/24, 23/11/24) e) CAPALC November Bulletin (email 23/11/24) f) CAPALC Legal Update (email 13/11/24) g) Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Cambridgeshire Matters (email 07/11/24) h) CCC Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2025/26 (email 07/11/24) i) CCC Way 2 Go Newsletter (email 18/11/24) j) Doddington Diary November 2024 (email 07/11/24) k) Alzheimer's Society Dementia Awareness Coffee Morning (email 07/11/24)			

	l) HMRC Autumn Budget (email 07/11/24) m) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Integrated Care System Newsletter (email 07/11/24) n) SLCC News Bulletin (email 07/11/24)	
181/24-25	Planning There were no planning applications for the council to consider at this meeting.	
182/24-25	Government Consultation The 'Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings.' Was discussed. Cllr Chapman proposed that Councillors complete this individually, this was AGREED.	Agreed
183/24-25	Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives There was nothing to discuss under this item.	
184/24-25	Agenda Items/Next Meeting The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 6 January 2025. Items to be included on agenda should be with the Clerk by Monday 30 December 2024.	

Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation				Financial Year ending 31 March 2025	
Berwick Parish Council					
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)					
Date 02/12/2024					
Approved by				Chair	
Date 02/12/2024					
Balance per bank statements at end		30/11/2024	£	£	
Current Account			21,133.38		
Cambridge and Counties Bank			42,855.93		
					63,989.31
Less: Unpresented Cheques					
Cheque Number	amount				
		22907	106.56		
		22915	484.11		
					590.67
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit					
					0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024					63,398.64
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			18,822.99		
Closing Balance			61,838.62		

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£2,860.49	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	£24,178.23		
		E M TOTAL	£37,660.39