



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 4 November 2024 at Benwick Village Hall

Present	<p>Clrs M Chapman, S Lowry, J Ablewhite, L Keppel-Spoor, R Emmitt and B Taylor. Clerk A Barnes and twelve members of the public.</p>	
145/24-25	<p>Apologies for absence Cllr R Few sent apologies for the meeting.</p>	
146/24-25	<p>Declarations of Interest Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 152/24-25 and 153/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall and the Community Lounge. Cllr Ablewhite declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 152/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall.</p>	
147/24-25	<p>Public participation Public time was opened at 19:31. A parish council donation was requested to cover the cost of spring flowering bulbs for the riverside section of the village. Clerk to add to next meeting agenda. An update on the war memorial was requested. Cllr Chapman clarified we are awaiting a reply from the war memorial trust. There was a discussion around beehives. Benwick in Bloom did not object to beehives being in situ, the next step is to approach the diocese for permission. A Benwick Christmas Lights representative reported that requests for a donated tree were unsuccessful, so a tree has been ordered at a cost of £350 including delivery. The tree needs to be in situ by 23 November. A group of residents raised concerns over the increasing heavy traffic on Lilyholt Road. The concerns were around both weight and speed restrictions, lack of road markings and the impact this is having on residents and their homes. It is reported that Anglian Water advised that the road is not built for the amount of traffic and houses it serves when they repaired a burst pipe. Some residents report cracks in their houses that continue to come back after repair. Cllr Keppel-Spoor advised they believe the road has a 3.5 tonne limit. Cllr Ablewhite advised the MVAS speed camera has an affect on how fast people drive and the parish council could look to locate one here. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to discuss this issue further under item 154/24-25. A resident reported heavy rutting on School Drove, off the corner of the High Street. A dog has broken its leg there and they are concerned about the health and safety. Clerk to investigate and progress this. Public time was closed at 19:53.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Agreed</p> <p>Clerk</p>
148/24-25	<p>Confirmation of Minutes Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes of the parish council meeting on Monday 7 October be approved and signed.</p>	Agreed
149/24-25	<p>County & District Councillors Reports No reports were received for this meeting.</p>	
150/24-25	<p>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.</p>	
151/24-25	<p>Defibrillators Cllr Taylor to progress identification of resident to host the remaining unit and check units are on the circuit app. Cllr Taylor will also store the replacements pads and consumables.</p>	
152/24-25	<p>Village Hall Cllr Ablewhite updated that the village hall is receiving good levels of bookings. The final part of redecoration works is taking place. The village hall committee are still awaiting legal agreement from Cambridgeshire County Council.</p>	
153/24-25	<p>Community Lounge Cllr Lowry updated that the community fridge is being well utilised. The race night event was well attended and covered its costs with £110 being donated to Benwick in Bloom and £110 to the Benwick Christmas lights. St Johns Ambulance have attended the community lounge to provide defibrillator demonstrations. Creative arts attend the lounge once a month. Cllr Lowry attended a lunch to thank hub volunteers, where the Community Lounge was thanked for running events over and above a 'warm hub'. Cadent are providing funding from next year and re-branding to 'centre of warmth', there will be a cap of £24 per session.</p>	

	Cllr Lowry requested a bigger Community Lounge advance at the December meeting to cover the Christmas events planned, this will go on the next meeting agenda. Cllr Ablewhite highlighted the importance of keeping the sessions going, with Cllr Chapman adding that we can consider other grant funding. Cllr Chapman congratulated Cllr Lowry on the success of the Community Lounge to date, several Cllrs echoed this.			
154/24-25	Highways matters Cllr Ablewhite updated that they have reviewed the data from the last two years on Doddington Road. 98% of vehicles are travelling at a speed of 40mph or less. Clerk to publicise data findings on the parish council website and Facebook page. Cllr Ablewhite will start a quarterly report to review data and keep an eye on trends. Cllr Ablewhite suggested an additional MVAS unit for Lilyholt Road as the sign does have an effect in slowing vehicles. Cllr Chapman proposed that the Clerk investigate the costing and options for additional data collection devices, this was AGREED. The need for LHI bids was discussed, with a potential three locations in the village. Cllr Emmitt asked about other options including narrowing of the road, with Cllr Keppel-Spoor adding the option of a change to the junction for Lilyholt Road. Cllr Chapman asked that we request for Highways to attend site to view the issues. Cllr Ablewhite added that they could potentially do their own survey. Cllr Ablewhite proposed writing to Cllr Connor requesting action following accidents on Lilyholt Road, Cllr Chapman seconded and this was AGREED.			Clerk Agreed Agreed
155/24-25	Cemetery and September Gardens Cllr Chapman reported that most of the hedgerow planted earlier in the year is alive. Cllr Chapman reported that the loose gravestone has been repaired.			
156/24-25	Clerk's report and requests The Clerk had no report or requests for this meeting.			
157/24-25	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 advance payment.			
	Electricity supplier	Electricity Invoice for September 2024 - DD paid 17/10/2024	£ 130.43	
		Sub-total pre-authorised by Council	£ 130.43	
	Cemetery contractor	October 2024 Cemetery Maintenance	£ 419.87	
	Website and emails	Website design, setup and hosting	£ 360.00	
	Maintenance Contractor	Hedgerow maintenance within the allotments	£ 300.00	
	Salaries and Expenses	Salary and expenses September 2025	£ 562.76	
	Community Lounge	Community Lounge float advance November 2024	£ 100.00	
		Subtotal to authorise for payment now	£ 1742.63	
		TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 1873.06	
	b) The Clerk's report on the October 2024 bank balances can be found at Appendix 1. Cllr Chapman requested that bank signatories have set up business banking prior to the next meeting.			
158/24-25	Correspondence a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 12/10/24 x2, 22/10/24 x2, 29/10/24) b) Fenland District Council (FDC) Press Release (emails 12/10/24 x2, 29/10/24) c) FDC Agenda for Planning Committee (email 12/10/24) d) FDC Christmas Carol Service (email 22/10/24) e) FDC Whittlesey Relief Road (email 27/10/24) f) National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 12/10/24 x2, 22/10/24, 27/10/24) g) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) AGM Meeting (email 12/10/24) h) CAPALC Government Pay Award (email 12/10/24) i) CAPALC News Bulletin (email 12/10/24) j) Cambs ACRE October Staying in Touch Newsletter (29/10/24) k) Cambs ACRE Village Hall Week (email 12/10/24) l) McCarthy Stone Christmas Connections (email 27/10/24)			
159/24-25	Planning The WA010004 Fens reservoir was discussed. Cllr Ablewhite highlighted that national infrastructure significance of the project. Councillors were keen to keep this under review and consider any impacts to the village. Cllr Chapman proposed they will take an overview role and lead on any comments from the parish council, this was AGREED. The deadline for responses is 21 November 2024.			Agreed

160/24-25	Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives No biodiversity and habitat items were discussed.	
161/24-25	Clerk's Annual Review (Closed item) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the Clerk's annual review be discussed as a closed item in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.	Agreed
161/24-25	Agenda Items/Next Meeting The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 2 December 2024. Items to be included on agenda should be with the Clerk by Monday 25 November.	

The meeting closed at 21:02.

Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2025	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	04/11/2024		
Approved by		Chair	
Date	04/11/2024		
Balance per bank statements at end	31/10/2024	£	£
Current Account		23,247.65	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		42,855.93	
			66,103.58
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
	22907	106.56	
	22915	484.11	
	23007	240.00	
	23008	100.00	
	23009	150.00	
	23012	100.00	
			1,180.67
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024			64,922.91
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		16,938.72	
Closing Balance		63,722.89	

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£2,960.49	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	£26,062.50		
		E M TOTAL	£37,660.39