



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 7 October 2024 at Benwick Village Hall

Present	Cllrs M Chapman, S Lowry, L Keppel-Spoor, R Emmitt and B Taylor. Seven members of the public.	
125/24-25	Apologies for absence The Clerk and Cllr R Few sent apologies for the meeting.	
126/24-25	Declarations of Interest Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 132/24-25 and 133/24-25 in relation to the Community Lounge and the Village Hall.	
127/24-25	Public participation Members of the public presented evidence regarding accidents that have occurred just outside the village on Whittlesey Road that has damaged property and endangered lives. The cause is believed to be due to excessive speed and the tight bends on that section of road. It was the view of the residents in attendance that the national speed limit was too high a speed for those road conditions and suggested that the 30mph speed limit for the village should be extended further out to cover these bends. Cllr Chapman proposed covering this issue under item 134/24-25. The council was advised that the kickboard extending from a fence on the corner of Lillyholt Road had moved further out onto the pathway. It was reported that the light on the 'give way' sign on the junction of Whittlesey Road and Doddington Road was still not working. It was also reported that the salt store on the river bank between the 2 bridges was reported as being unstable and liable to tipping over.	
128/24-25	Confirmation of Minutes Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes of the parish council meeting on Monday 2 September be approved and signed.	Agreed
129/24-25	County & District Councillors Reports No reports were received for this meeting.	
130/24-25	Action Log Councillors discussed known updates on actions in the action log in the Clerk's absence, details are included within the minutes under the relevant items. In regard to the action on the war memorial Cllr Chapman proposed that the 2 quotes received for the memorial survey are sent to the War Memorial Trust and continue the process. This was AGREED.	Agreed
131/24-25	Defibrillators One of the defibrillator units still needs to be installed at the agreed location.	
132/24-25	Village Hall No update for this meeting.	
133/24-25	Community Lounge Cllr Lowry updated the meeting on recent activities, including the successful Autumn Festival. He also stated that the funding round for 2025/26 was in progress and hopefully would enable activities to continue. The meeting was also informed that ACRE had sent in a spreadsheet which needed to be filled in for the projected spend until March 2025. It had been agreed with the Clerk that she would complete the historical spend and Cllr Lowry and Chapman would complete the forward projection for approval of the Council.	
134/24-25	Highways matters There was no update on the MVAS speed sign operation for this meeting. Cllr Chapman proposed it was AGREED that the Clerk would approach the Highways Department to arrange an on-site meeting to discuss the high level of incidents on Whittlesey Road.	Agreed Clerk
135/24-25	Cemetery and September Gardens The Council had received a request to allow bee hives on an allotment plot. After some discussion it was thought that it was not prudent to allow this, but that there may be a suitable site on the Old Church grounds which form part of the Benwick in Bloom Project. Benwick in Bloom members were asked to consider allowing some Bee Hives before any approach to the Church Authorities was made.	

136/24-25	Policies review Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the reviewed Safeguarding policy and Equality and diversity policy be accepted and published.			Agreed
137/24-25	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Better Buses Consultation The Council had no overall policy view or comment on the document as it relied on too much specialist knowledge.			
138/24-25	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Community Energy Action Plan The council had no comments on the Community Energy Action Plan.			
139/24-25	Clerk's report and requests The Clerk's report was discussed. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED for a budget of £380.00 to be spent on procuring a laptop and software for the Clerk, becoming a parish council asset assigned to the role. Cllr Lowry will liaise with the Clerk regarding Chair / Vice-chair training.			
140/24-25	Income & Expenditure a) Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the itemised payments below. Cllr Lowry abstained from voting on Community Lounge reimbursement / advance payments.			
	Electricity supplier	Electricity Invoice for August 2024 - DD paid 18/09/2024 Sub-total pre-authorised by Council	£ 120.09 £ 120.09	
	Cemetery contractor Verges maintenance	September 2024 Cemetery Maintenance Verges maintenance July/August/September 2024	£ 419.87 £ 240.00	
	Professional memberships	Cemetery professional membership fee 2024/45	£ 100.00	
	Training and Events	County Association annual conference tickets (x2)	£ 150.00	
	Salaries and Expenses Reimbursements	Salary and expenses September 2025 Community Lounge reimbursement September 2024	£ 598.74 £ 216.37	
	Grant funding spending advance	Community Lounge float advance October 2024 Subtotal to authorise for payment now	£ 100.00 £ 1824.98	
		TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUTHORISED	£ 1945.07	
	b) The council did not discuss the bank balances and reconciliation in the Clerk's absence. The Clerk's report on the September 2024 bank balances can be found at Appendix 1.			
141/24-25	Correspondence a) Rural Services Network Bulletin (emails 05/09/24, 16/09/24, 23/09/24) b) Fenland District Council (FDC) Press Release (emails 05/09/24 x3, 26/09/24 x2, 23/09/24, 29/09/24 x2, 01/10/24 x2) c) FDC Licencing Gambling Consultation (email 23/09/24) *decision required d) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin (emails 05/09/24, 16/09/24, 23/09/24, 29/09/24) e) NALC Legal Update (email 16/09/24) f) Cambridgeshire Community Foundation Grants Bulletin (email 05/09/24) g) CCC The Library Presents – Autumn 2024 (email 23/09/24) h) CCC Cambridgeshire Matters Newsletter (05/09/24, 29/09/24) i) Cambridgeshire Acre Community Action Newsletter September 2024 (email 30/09/24) j) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Healthier Futures Newsletter (emails 05/09/24, 01/10/24) k) SLCC News Bulletin (email 05/09/24) l) Doddington Diary October 2024 (email 30/9/24) m) Middle Level Commissioners Newsletter October 2024 (01/10/2024)			
142/24-25	Planning No planning applications were received for review at this meeting.			
143/24-25	Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives The council noted that a response had not yet been received regarding refunding the purchase of wildflower seed.			
144/24-25	Agenda Items/Next Meeting The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 4 November 2024. Items to be included on agenda should be with the Clerk by Monday 28 October.			

Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2025	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	07/10/2024		
Approved by	Chair		
Date	07/10/2024		
Balance per bank statements at end	30/09/2024	£	£
Current Account		18,287.56	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		42,855.93	
			61,143.49
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
	22907	106.56	
	22915	484.11	
	22997	192.00	
	22998	192.00	
			974.67
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024			60,168.82
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2024)		58,327.80	
Add: Receipts to date		15,624.21	
Less: Payments to date		14,983.31	
Closing Balance		58,968.70	

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£3,276.86	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	£21,308.31		
		E M TOTAL	£37,660.39