



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council meeting on Monday 7 April 2025 at Benwick Village Hall

Meeting opened 19:30

Present

Cllrs S Lowry (Vice Chair), J Ablewhite, B Taylor, R Few, R Emmitt, L Keppel-Spoor. Clerk A Barnes. 4 members of the public.

242/24-25 – Apologies for Absence

Received and accepted from Cllr Chapman.

243/24-25 – Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ablewhite declared an interest in item 255/24-25 in relation to the Village Hall.

Cllr Lowry declared an interest in items 249/24-25 and 255-24-25 in relation to the Village Hall and Community Lounge.

244/24-25 – Public Participation

Public time opened at 19:32.

A thank you was received from Benwick in Bloom for the donation of £200 towards plants.

Benwick in Bloom will be planting wildflowers near the bridge. The group will enter the Anglia in Bloom competition again this year.

Cemetery maintenance concerns were raised, reporting long grass and Christmas wreaths still in the bins.

Reports of dog fouling. Clerk to request signage from Fenland District Council.

Public time closed at 19:40.

245/24-25 – Confirmation of Minutes

Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Monday 3 March 2025 be approved and signed.

246/24-25 – County & District Councillors Reports

No reports received.

247/24-25 – Action Log

Councillors and the Clerk reviewed progress against actions assigned to them on the action log.

Updates are detailed under relevant agenda items.

248/24-25 – Defibrillators

Cllr Taylor reported that a potential sponsor has come forward for a defibrillator on Whittlesey Road. They will update the council once confirmed.

249/24-25 – Community Lounge

Cllr Lowry updated that a new year of funding community lounges has commenced. Grants received from Turf Fen and Cambs ACRE, the latter has funded 50 hours of village hall hire.

The Community Lounge will have to be temporarily paused for a few weeks due to a personal matter.

Upcoming events include:

Easter Egg Hunt – 17 April

Family Fun Day – 17 May

250/24-25 – Highways Matters

A LHI bid site visit took place for Lilyholt Road. The County Council Highways team are looking into providing a traffic survey for this section of road outside of an LHI bid.
The newly purchased MVAS unit has been delivered, Cllr Ablewhite will install.

251/24-25 – Cemetery and September Gardens

A quote has been received for access track improvements at £1,450. Cllr Few queried grants for using recycled materials. Clerk to investigate options and report to the council.

252/24-25 – 2025–2028 Contract Awards

The council discussed and agreed the next 3-year maintenance contracting options using the pack provided as follows:

Cemetery, Mooring & The Pound Maintenance:

Cllr Lowry proposed Contractor 2, Cllr Ablewhite seconded and it was AGREED.

Verges Maintenance:

Cllr Ablewhite proposed Contractor 5, Cllr Taylor seconded and it was AGREED.

The council noted that this decision means an £160 overspend on the amount budgeted for verges maintenance in the 2025/26 budget.

253/24-25 – Clerk's Report and Requests

The Clerk reported an increase of followers on the parish council social media page. The internal audit is booked for 15 May. The Clerk reminded the council that May will be a longer council session due to the Annual Parish Assembly and Annual Parish Council meeting.

254/24-25 – Policy Reviews

The council reviewed the proposed Benwick Parish Council Risk Assessment. Cllr Lowry proposed this was adopted without amendments and it was AGREED.

255/24-25 – Income & Expenditure

Member considered, Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED to approve the following account payments:

Electricity Invoice (Feb 2025) – £160.46

Cemetery Maintenance (Mar 2025) – £419.87

Verge Cutting (Jan–Mar 2025) – £200.00

CAPALC Membership & Data Protection – £481.57

ICCM Membership – £105.00

Clerk Salary & Expenses (Mar 2025) – £586.51

Community Lounge Reimbursement (Mar) – £4.50

Community Lounge Advance (Apr) – £100.00

Village Hall Hire (50 hrs) – £500.00

Total Expenditure Approved: £2,557.91

The Clerk's report on the March 2025 bank balances and reconciliation statement can be found at Appendix 1.

Banking:

Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED for the council approved to approve a transfer of £8,500 from the existing current account to the new provider.

Cllr Lowry proposed and it was AGREED for the council to pay the cemetery maintenance contractor £2 owed from April 2024.

256/24-25 – Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted, with no comments made:

Rural Services Network

Fenland District Council updates

CCC Highways Maintenance Programme

NALC, CAPALC, HMRC updates

Website contact (Resident)

257/24-25 – Planning

No applications were considered.

258/24-25 – Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives

No new actions or updates.

259/24-25 – Agenda Items / Next Meeting

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is Monday 12 May 2025. Items for the agenda should be submitted to the Clerk by Monday 31 March 2025. The next Parish Council meeting is Thursday 1 May 2025.

Meeting closed at 20:35



Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2025	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	03/04/2025		
Approved by		Chair	
Date	07/04/2025		
Balance per bank statements at end	31/03/2025	£	£
Current Account		11,503.44	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		42,855.93	
			54,359.37
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
			0.00
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024			54,359.37
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2024)		58,327.80	
Add: Receipts to date		24,975.97	
Less: Payments to date		28,946.40	
Closing Balance		54,357.37	

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£2,248.15	excluded 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	£27,474.88		
		E M TOTAL	£26,882.49