



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Benwick Parish Council Meeting on Monday 2 June 2025 at Benwick Village Hall

Meeting opened: 19:30

Present Cllrs M Chapman (Chair), S Lowry (Vice Chair), J Ablewhite, B Taylor, R Few, R Emmitt, L Keppel-Spoor. Clerk: A Barnes. Cambridgeshire County Councillor M Fisher and 3 members of the public.

031/25-26 – Apologies for Absence

None received.

032/25-26 – Declarations of Interest

Cllr Lowry declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 038/25-26 (Community Lounge).

033/25-26 – Public Participation

Public time opened at 19:31.

Cllr Fisher (Cambridgeshire County Council) introduced himself and outlined his role on the Assets and Procurement Committee, his rural background and desire to support village communities.

Concerns were raised regarding holes in the pavement at Chapel Gardens and overhanging bushes on the footpath. Clerk to report this to the housing association.

A resident mentioned the seat next to the bus shelter, this was confirmed as being a Benwick in Bloom asset.

Benwick in Bloom thanked the council for their donation towards the cost of plants, noting lavender replanting in the churchyard and wildflower planting on Whittlesey Road.

Enquiries made about the possibility MVAS speed signage placement on Whittlesey Road where there is a perceived issue of speeding.

Public time closed at 20:08.

034/25-26 – Confirmation of Minutes

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2025.

035/25-26 – County & District Councillors Reports

No reports were received.

036/25-26 – Action Log

Councillors and the Clerk reviewed progress against actions assigned to them on the action log. Updates are detailed under relevant agenda items.

037/25-26 – Defibrillators

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to add installation of the remaining defibrillator unit to the Action Log and remove it as a standing agenda item.

038/25-26 – Community Lounge

Cllr Lowry reported that the Family Fun Day on 17 May was well-attended. Thanks were expressed to Cllrs Ablewhite and Taylor (BBQ), and raffle volunteers.

A children's entertainer has been booked for the Christmas Party on 20 December 2025. Cllr Lowry has been nominated for a Pride in Fenland award.

039/25-26 – Highways Matters

No matters raised.

040/25-26 – Cemetery and September Gardens

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the Town Grounds rental rate to be set at £130 per acre for this year.

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED for the clerk to recover any previously incorrectly invoiced Town Grounds rental fees for a period of 7 years.

041/25-26 – Mooring

Cllr Ablewhite proposed, Cllr Chapman seconded and it was AGREED to allocate a £50 budget for planting around the mooring.

042/25-26 – Civility and Respect Pledge

The Clerk explained the purpose and benefits of the pledge.

Cllr Chapman proposed the council sign up to the pledge, the Council voted AGAINST signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge at this time.

043/25-26 – Internal Audit 2024/25

The Council received and noted the Internal Audit Report for the year ending 31 March 2025. Audit report recommendations included inspection of council-owned assets. Clerk to investigate requirements and report back.

It was noted that the Council will not be exempt from external audit for 2024/25.

Discussion held regarding funding for the Community Lounge. Cllr Lowry explained the new funding arrangement with Cambs ACRE is held with the Village Hall Committee. Cllr Chapman voiced concern as to whether this arrangement provided adequate legal cover for the Community Lounge. Clerk to contact ACRE regarding releasing unspent Community Lounge funds and transfer of assets to the Village Hall Committee.

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to appoint Legra Internal Audit Services for 2025/26.

044/25-26 – Audit and Accounts 2024/25

Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (AGAR Section 1)

Each statement was read aloud by the Chair and resolved individually. Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to respond YES to statements 1–8 and mark 9 as N/A, as the Council is not a sole managing trustee.

Accounting Statements 2024/25 (AGAR Section 2)

The Council reviewed and approved the Accounting Statements for the year ending 31 March 2025. The figures agreed were:

Description	2024/25
1. Balances brought forward	£58,328
2. Precept or Rates and Levies	£13,419
3. Total other receipts	£11,557
4. Staff costs	£6,146
5. Loan interest/capital repayments	£0
6. All other payments	£22,800
7. Balances carried forward	£54,358
8. Cash and short-term investments	£54,359
9. Fixed assets & long-term investments	£120,941
10. Total borrowings	£0
11. Trust funds disclosure (A + B)	N/A

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve these figures. The Chair and Clerk duly signed the AGAR Section 2 form.

It was confirmed that the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return will be displayed from 2 June 2025 to 14 July 2025, in accordance with statutory regulations. This notice will be placed on the Parish Council website and public noticeboards.

045/25-26 – Clerk’s Report and Requests

The Clerk’s report for May 2025 was noted.

046/25-26 – Policy Reviews

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the following:

- Email Contact Privacy Policy – ADOPTED
- Freedom of Information Policy – ADOPTED
- Media Policy – ADOPTED
- Safeguarding Policy – ADOPTED

The Privacy Notice was noted to only cover the website. Clerk to investigate whether further policies are needed.

Clerk to amend the wording in the Policy on Filming or Recording Meetings and bring to the July meeting.

The Website Accessibility Statement was noted as auto-updated by the host provider.

047/25-26 – Income & Expenditure

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the following payments. Cllr Lowry abstained from voting on Community Lounge items.

Legra Internal Audit Services (2024/25 Internal Audit) - £285.00

Clerk Salary & Expenses (May 2025) - £511.29

Community Lounge Reimbursement (May 2025) - £417.38

Community Lounge Advance (June 2025) - £100.00

Total expenditure approved: £1,313.67

050/25-26 – Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve the May 2025 bank reconciliation. Cllrs Chapman and Lowry signed the reconciliation at the close of the meeting.

051/25-26 – Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- FDC Press Release (emails 21/05/25)
- FDC Cabinet Agenda (email 10/05/25)
- NALC CEO Bulletins (10/05/25, 19/05/25)
- NHS Integrated Care Newsletter (10/05/25)
- Email from Cllr Fisher (10/05/25)
- Manea Parish Council Email (28/05/25)

052/25-26 – Planning

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED the Council had no observations in relation to ANW_PE311 – Benwick STW, Fountain Close.

053/25-26 – Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives

No new actions or updates.

055/25-26 – Agenda Items / Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 7 July 2025.

Items for the agenda should be submitted to the Clerk by Monday 30 June 2025.

Meeting closed: 21:42

Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2026	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	01/06/2025		
Approved by	Chair		
Date	02/06/2025		
Balance per bank statements at end	31/05/2025	£	£
Current Account (Santander)		1,726.72	
Current Account (Lloyds)		14,736.31	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		44,770.18	
			61,233.21
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
			0.00
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end 28/05/2024			61,233.21
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2025)		54,357.37	
Add: Receipts to date		10,109.98	
Less: Payments to date		3,236.14	
Closing Balance		61,231.21	

Earmarked Reserves:

Community Lounge	£1,470.04	excluded from EM totals	
Verge Planting	£100.00		
Cemetery Extension	£3,324.40		
Street Lighting	£9,426.58		
The Pound	£1,000.00		
Village Sign	£0.00		
War Memorial	£5,500.00		
Mooring	£4,000.00		
Allotments	£700.00		
General Reserve	£37,180.23		
		EM TOTAL	£24,050.98