



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 2 February 2026 at Benwick Village Hall

Meeting opened: 19:30

Present

Cllrs M Chapman (Chair), L Keppel-Spoor, R Few, J Ablewhite, R Taylor, R Emmitt and S Lowry. Cambridgeshire County Cllr M Fisher, Clerk A Barnes and 1 member of the public.

166/25-26 Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

167/25-26 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

168/25-26 Public Participation

Public time opened: 19:31

A lighting column on Cambridge Row was reported as not operational, Clerk to investigate.

Public time closed: 19:32

169/25-26 Confirmation of Minutes

Cllr Chapman proposed, and it was AGREED, to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5 January 2026.

170/25-26 County & District Councillors' Reports

Cllr M Fisher gave an overview of the "Nature from the Ground Up" pilot scheme. 21 parishes are to be included in the pilot. Benwick may wish to look at participating in future, the scheme can interlink with country stewardship and sites of special scientific interest (SSI) and can run alongside other grant schemes.

An update on the work on the Forty Foot bank was given. Cllr Fisher is working hard on Highways matters, accepting that Highways work has at times not been completed to the specified standard and that cyclical maintenance has not been carried out.

171/25-26 Action Log

The action log was reviewed and updates were noted under the relevant agenda items.

172/25-26 Highways Matters

The council discussed the round for LHI bid applications, there is no road / area of the village with enough supporting evidence for the council to submit an application at this time.

Cllr Ablewhite will review the speed sign data to identify traffic impacts through the village as a result of Forty Foot closure.

173/25-26 Cemetery and September Gardens

There was nothing to discuss this month.

174/25-26 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported that the parish council Facebook page had 68 followers as of 30 January. Planned February posts will promote self-service reporting (including Highways faults), the proposed Village Spring Clean and information on 2026/27 budget setting.

The next parish council drop-in session at the Community Lounge will take place on Wednesday 25 February.

Election costs queried at the previous meeting related to an uncontested parish council election in May 2023. The fee (£331.08) was invoiced in the 2024/25 financial year. The next parish council election is scheduled for 6 May 2027.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been scheduled for Thursday 23 April with Legra Internal Audit Services.

175/25-26 Village Spring Clean

The parish council discussed a village spring clean initiative. This will take place on Saturday 21 March 2026 and will be organised and delivered by Benwick Street Pride, with support from the parish council. The council will consider providing some funding for required PPE, Cllr Lowry to request this at the next meeting. The Clerk will investigate if neighbouring parishes can loan any equipment.

176/25-26 Income & Expenditure

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

Pre-authorized by Council:

N Power – Electricity consumption 01/11/25–30/11/25 (direct debit): £193.77

Authorised for payment:

Clerk's salary and expenses (January 2026) - £557.01

Cemetery maintenance (January 2026) - £273.00

Total expenditure authorised - £1023.78

It was further AGREED to approve the January 2026 bank reconciliation (Appendix 1). This was proposed by Cllr Chapman and signed by Cllrs Chapman and Lowry at the close of the meeting.

177/25-26 2026/27 Budget Setting

Carried forward from the January meeting (ref 161/25-26).

- a) The Council reviewed the proposed budget for 2026/27, including discussion from the budget working group meeting held on 16 December 2025.

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

- b) the proposed expenditure lines
- c) the budget forecasts
- d) general reserves should be maintained at 100% of necessary expenditure
- e) a request for £14,000 in precept from Fenland District Council
- f) the itemised and general reserve levels.

178/25-26 Correspondence

The following correspondence was noted:

- FDC Press Releases (12/01/26, 22/01/26)
- FDC Chairmans Afternoon Tea (22/01/26)
- NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin (22/01/26)
- Combined Authority Newsletter (22/01/26)

179/25-26 Planning

There were no planning applications for the Council to review at this meeting.

180/25-26 Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives

There were no planning applications for the Council to review at this meeting.

181/25-26 Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 2 March 2026.

Agenda items to be submitted to the Clerk by Monday 23 February 2026.

Meeting closed 20:43



Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2026	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	02/02/2026		
Approved by		Chair	
Date	05/02/2026		
Balance per bank statements at end	31/01/2026	£	£
Current Account (Santander)		0.00	
Current Account (Lloyds)		13,976.59	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		44,770.18	
			58,746.77
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
			0.00
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end			58,746.77
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2025)		54,357.37	
Add: Receipts to date		22,674.67	
Less: Payments to date		18,285.27	
Closing Balance		58,746.77	

Earmarked Reserves:

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	£4,720.00		
Mooring	£3,905.24		
Allotments	£700.00		
General Reserve	£35,570.55		
		EM TOTAL	£23,176.22