



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 11 May 2026 at Benwick Village Hall

Meeting opened: 19:30

Present

Cllrs M Chapman (Chair), R Few, L Keppel-Spoor, R Emmitt, J Ablewhite and R Taylor.
Cambridgeshire County Councillor M Fisher, Clerk A Barnes and 4 members of the public.

001/26-27 Election of Chairperson

Cllr Keppel-Spoor proposed, seconded by Cllr Ablewhite that Cllr Mark Chapman remain Chair of Benwick Parish Council for the forthcoming municipal year. This was AGREED.

Cllr Chapman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the meeting.

002/26-27 Election of Vice-Chairperson

Cllr Ablewhite proposed, seconded by Cllr Keppel-Spoor that Cllr Lowry be appointed Vice-Chairperson for the forthcoming municipal year. This was AGREED.

As Cllr Lowry was not present at the meeting, the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed on 21 May 2026.

003/26-27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lowry and accepted by the Council. The Council also asked that best wishes be passed on.

004/26-27 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

005/26-27 Working Parties and Representatives

The Council reviewed the current working parties and representatives.

Cllr Chapman proposed and it AGREED that no formal working parties were required at this stage and that working groups would be established on an ad-hoc basis as required.

006/26-27 Banking Arrangements

Cllr Chapman proposed that the current Lloyds Bank signatories remain unchanged. This was AGREED.

The approved signatories remain Cllrs Chapman, Keppel-Spoor, Lowry and Few.

008/26-27 Internal Auditor

The Council received and noted the Internal Auditor's report for the financial year ending 31 March 2026.

Cllr Chapman proposed that progression of the tree survey action identified within the audit takes place, this was AGREED.

Cllr Chapman proposed that Legra be appointed as Internal Auditor for the 2026/27 financial year and this was AGREED.

009/26-27 Audit and Accounts 2025/26

The Council completed and reviewed Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

Cllr Chapman read each governance statement individually. Statements 1–8 were answered “Yes” and AGREED. Statement 9 was recorded as not applicable and Statement 10 was answered “Yes” and AGREED.

Cllr Chapman proposed approval of the accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2026 and confirmed that the figures presented were correct. This was AGREED.

The Council noted that the Notice of Public Rights period would run from Wednesday 3 June 2026 to Tuesday 14 July 2026 inclusive.

010/26-27 Public Participation

Public time opened: 19:47

A resident reported that the water butt situated beside the village hall had been vandalised and detached from the downpipe. The Village Hall Committee is aware of the matter.

Concerns were raised regarding electric scooters and e-bikes being used on pavements within the village. The Clerk will contact the local neighbourhood policing team and provide future parish council meeting dates. The possibility of police representatives joining the parish council WhatsApp group was also discussed.

A resident reported concerns regarding an out-of-control dog. It was noted that the police had not taken action.

The Council discussed the traffic lights currently in place at Forty Foot. Cllr Chapman confirmed that the works related to barrier repairs.

Cllr Keppel-Spoor advised that a traffic count had taken place within the village on 8 May and expressed concern that the results may not be accurate due to the Floods Ferry and Ramsey Road closures. The Clerk will contact Highways to advise that the parish council already holds vehicle count data for Doddington Road and Lilyholt Road.

Public time closed: 20:00

011/26-27 Confirmation of Minutes

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED to approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13 April 2026.

012/26-27 County & District Councillors' Reports

No formal written reports were received.

Cllr Fisher advised residents to request an incident number when reporting issues to 101.

Cllr Fisher advised that there is new legislation relating to dogs, including enhanced police powers regarding dangerous or unruly dogs.

Cllr Ablewhite asked for an update regarding Floods Ferry resurfacing works. Cllr Fisher advised that the majority of the hard surfacing works had now been completed.

013/26-27 Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Council reviewed the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Cllr Chapman proposed adoption of the amendments to the Standing Orders and this was AGREED.

Cllr Chapman also proposed adoption of the amendments to the Financial Regulations and this was AGREED.

014/26-27 Review of Contractual Arrangements

Cllr Chapman proposed renewal and continuation of the Council's existing contracts and memberships. This was AGREED.

015/26-27 Review of Inventory of Land and Other Assets

The Council reviewed the Asset Register. Cllr Chapman proposed that no changes were required and this was AGREED.

The Clerk will add the recently purchased MVAS unit to the Asset Register.

016/26-27 Arrangements for Insurance Cover in Respect of all Insurable Risks

The Council reviewed the insurance arrangements and insured values.

Cllr Chapman proposed acceptance of the revised insured limits and this was AGREED.

The Clerk will confirm insurance cover for the MVAS units.

017/26-27 Review of Policies as per Standing Orders for the Annual Meeting of the Council

The Council reviewed the relevant council policies and accepted the review schedule dates proposed by the Clerk.

Cllr Chapman proposed that the review schedule was followed and this was AGREED.

018/26-27 Annual Review of Other Council Policies

The Council reviewed the relevant council policies and risk assessment documentation.

Cllr Chapman proposed adoption of the amendments to the Code of Conduct as suggested by the Clerk and this was AGREED.

Cllr Chapman proposed that the review schedule was followed for all other policies and this was AGREED.

019/26-27 Expenditure Incurred under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972

The Clerk advised that the only expenditure incurred under Section 137 during the previous year related to the purchase of the Remembrance wreath.

Cllr Chapman proposed that a wreath again be purchased during the 2026/27 financial year and this was AGREED.

020/26-27 Future Meetings

Cllr Chapman proposed that there be no meeting held during August 2026 and this was AGREED. All remaining proposed meeting dates were AGREED.

021/26-27 Action Log

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

Regarding the war memorial Cllr Ablewhite proposed, seconded by Cllr Taylor, that work to scope the replacement of the surrounding railings continue separately from any refurbishment works to the war memorial structure itself. This was AGREED.

022/26-27 Dog Fouling Posters

Cllr Chapman advised that Benwick Primary School had expressed interest in participating in the dog fouling poster initiative.

The Council discussed providing prizes and publicity arrangements. A proposed budget will be brought to a future meeting by Cllr Chapman.

The Clerk also presented examples of Fenland District Council signage, who can be used to place an order if the council opts to.

023/26-27 Highways Matters

Cllr Chapman asked councillors to consider potential future Local Highways Improvement scheme opportunities.

Cllrs Taylor and Ablewhite confirmed that the new MVAS unit would be installed on Ramsey Road.

Cllr Ablewhite will forward MVAS data to the Clerk.

024/26-27 Cemetery and September Gardens

The Clerk advised that quotations were currently being obtained for a replacement allotment gate.

025/26-27 Moorings

The Council discussed the possibility of establishing a public slipway on the riverbank. Cllrs Ablewhite and Taylor will discuss the matter further with the Middle Level Commissioners and report back to a future meeting.

026/26-27 Cost of Living – Parish Council Opportunities

The Council discussed the oil crisis resiliency fund and supporting residents with applications for assistance.

Cllr Chapman proposed that the parish council support the initiative and this was AGREED.

027/26-27 Clerk's Report and Requests

There was no Clerk's report for this meeting.

028/26-27 Income and Expenditure

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

Pre-authorised by Council:

N Power – Electricity consumption 01/03/26–31/03/26 (direct debit): £154.77

Authorised for payment:

Zurich – Parish council insurance 19/06/26–18/06/27: £1105.02

Clerk's salary and expenses (April 2026): £705.38

ID Verde – Cemetery maintenance (April 2026): £273.00

Legra – Internal Audit 2025/26: £269.00

Total expenditure authorised: £2507.17

It was further AGREED to approve the April 2026 bank reconciliation. This was signed by Cllrs Chapman and Keppel-Spoor at the close of the meeting.

032/26-27 Correspondence

The listed correspondence was received and noted by the Council.

033/26-27 Planning

The Council considered planning application F/YR26/0283/TRTPO at 3 High Street, Benwick relating to works to four trees. The Council confirmed its support for the active coppicing and management of trees.

034/26-27 Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives

No matters were raised.

035/26-27 Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 1 June 2026.

Agenda items should be submitted to the Clerk by Friday 22 May 2026.

Meeting closed: 08:50



Appendix 1

Bank Reconciliation		Financial Year ending 31 March 2027	
Benwick Parish Council			
Prepared by Abbey Barnes (Clerk & RFO)			
Date	08/05/2026		
Approved by		Chair	
Date	11/05/2026		
Balance per bank statements at end	30/04/2026	£	£
Current Account (Lloyds)		19,128.20	
Cambridge and Counties Bank		44,770.18	
			63,898.38
Less: Unpresented Cheques			
Cheque Number	amount		
			0.00
Add: Any unbanked cash in transit			0.00
Net bank balances end			63,898.38
The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book, as follows:-			
Opening Balance (01 April 2026)		56,624.58	
Add: Receipts to date		8,901.27	
Less: Payments to date		1,627.47	
Closing Balance		63,898.38	

Farmarked 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	EM TOTAL	£23,176.22
Mooring	£3,905.24		
Allotments	£700.00		
General Reserve	£63,898.38		