



BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7 September 2026 at Benwick Village Hall

Meeting opened: 19:30

Present

Cllrs M.Chapman, L.Keppel-Spoor, R.Few, J.Ablewhite, R.Taylor, M.Fisher(CCC), T.Taylor(FDC).

Clerk A.Barnes, A.Blackhurst and 3 members of the public.

068/26-27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lowry and accepted by the Council.

069/26-27 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ablewhite declared an interest in relation to the Burnthouse Farm applications (081/26-27).

070/26-27 Public Participation

Public time opened at 19:31.

Residents raised a number of concerns regarding overgrown vegetation obscuring footpaths within the village.

A concern was raised regarding the footpath at Cricketers Way, Whittlesey Road, where vegetation was overgrowing the footpath.

Concerns were also raised regarding overgrown hedgerows along the High Street and the condition of the hedgerow between the bus stop and the alleyway.

It was reported that brambles from the former garage site on Lilyholt Road were growing onto the footpath.

A resident raised concerns regarding dog fouling along Whittlesey Road. The matter is to be included on the agenda for the next meeting. Cllr Chapman reported that there had been no response from the school regarding the matter.

Concerns were raised regarding the condition of the footbridge, including ivy growing over the structure.

A further concern was raised regarding the hedgerow alongside the Rectory, which was overgrowing onto the footpath. It was also reported that the drains along this section were blocked.

Public time closed at 19:39.

071/26-27 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 6 July 2026 were not approved at this meeting and will be considered at the next meeting.

072/26-27 County & District Councillors' Reports

No formal written reports had been received.

Cllr T.Taylor reported that local government reorganisation had been paused. Members were also advised of some anti-social behaviour involving trial bikes. A noise complaint concerning 1 High Street had been investigated.

Cllr T.Taylor advised that the District Council planning committee would no longer meet in its previous form. Planning applications would instead be dealt with within the relevant department, with the committee being retained for larger applications of 30 or more houses. It was also unclear whether the Mayor would have the ability to override planning decisions.

Cllr Fisher provided an update regarding the river footbridge. He had spoken with Adam Cobb (Highway engineer) who was satisfied that the structure was currently sound. A proposal was being considered to strip down the damaged timber and replace it with fibre reinforced plastic having a wood-effect finish.

Regarding drainage, Cllr Fisher advised that highway gullies were inspected on a two-year cycle but that blocked drains should be reported to Cambridgeshire Highways. The Clerk will report the blocked drains alongside the Rectory.

Cllr Fisher reported that the B1093/Whittlesey Road was in an unacceptable condition and would also report the condition of the B1096 Ramsey Rd. He advised that he had a meeting arranged with Highways engineers in October.

Residents were encouraged to continue reporting road defects to Cambridgeshire Highways, including making repeat reports where necessary.

073/26-27 Review of Policies

The Council considered the Donation Awarding Policy.

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the updated donation policy is adopted.

074/26-27 Action Log

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

075/26-27 Highways Matters

Cllr Ablewhite reported that the Ramsey Road MVAS unit issue has been resolved. The Ramsey Road village entry gate has been repaired. A proposed “No Through Route” sign on the Chapel Farm drove was discussed as multiple vehicles have driven down there. The clerk will speak to highways.

076/26-27 Cemetery, September Gardens and The Pound

Cllr Chapman proposed and was AGREED to invite Fenland Sustainable Futures to a future meeting

077/26-27 Income and Expenditure

The Council considered the following expenditure:

Pre-authorised by Council:

- N Power – electricity consumption 1 June to 30 June 2026 (direct debit): £98.54
- N Power – electricity consumption 1 July to 31 July 2026 (direct debit): £109.50
- Sub-total pre-authorised expenditure: £208.04

Paid under delegated authority:

- Verges Contractor – verges maintenance April to June 2026: £250.00

Authorised for payment:

- Clerk's salary and expenses (Aug 2026): £669.20
- ID Verde – verges maintenance August 2026: £273.00
- Middle Level Commissioners – drainage fees 2026/27: £155.38
- March West IDB – drainage fees 2026/27: £84.54

The subtotal for expenditure to be authorised was £1,182.12.

Total expenditure authorised was £1,640.16.

The Clerk reported that no Council income was received during August 2026.

The Clerk also reported on the August 2026 bank reconciliation (appendix 1)

Cllr Chapman proposed that the NALC 2026/27 national salary award be upheld, with back pay to 1st April 2026, this was AGREED.

078/26-27 Correspondence

The following correspondence was received and noted by the Council:

- FDC Fenland 50 Plan, email dated 14 July 2026.
- FDC Food Waste Collections, email dated 14 July 2026.
- CCC Cambridgeshire Matters, email dated 31 August 2026.
- CAPALC Bulletin, email dated 14 July 2026.

- Whittlesey Town Council Harvest Ball, email dated 24 July 2026.
- Doddington Diary, email dated 31 August 2026.

079/26-27 Planning

There were no planning applications for consideration at this meeting.

080/26-27 Biodiversity and Habitat Initiatives

No biodiversity and habitat matters were discussed.

081/26-27 Burnthouse Wind Farms Small Grants Applications

The Council considered applications received under the Burnthouse Wind Farms Small Grants Programme.

Cllr Chapman proposed and it was AGREED that the following be awarded:

Benwick jigsaw swap £150.00

Benwick School £500.00

Benwick ladies club £500.00

Benwick street pride £399.00

Benwick Christmas lights £500.00

Benwick village hall £783.00

It was further AGREED that Cllr Chapman will notify applicants and obtain bank details.

082/26-27 Agenda Items/Next Meeting

The next Parish Council meeting was proposed for Monday 5 October 2026.

Agenda items should be submitted to the Clerk by Friday 25 September 2026.

Meeting closed 20:40