

# **BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL ON -THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2025 AT 7.30 PM**

### **Present**

Cllr M Munday - Chairman	Mrs J Scott - Clerk	Cllr B Feltwell	Cllr M Bamford
Cllr K Spicer	Cllr D Jones	Cllr A Thomas	Cllr J Wheals
Cllr J Campbell			

Also in attendance - County Cllr Georgia Hall, Tree Warden, Footpath Warden, 14 members of the public

Cllr Munday welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Clerk had received notification that a resident was going to record this meeting by Dictaphone. Cllr Munday told the meeting that the meeting was being recorded by a member of the public - Although there is a legal right to allow reporting of Council meetings the proceedings of that meeting must not be disrupted by the use of any equipment or the manner in which the reporting is undertaken. It is also important that reporting does not inhibit community involvement in the proceedings.

The Parish Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be recorded and the Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this so that any such request will be respected by those making a recording. Any member of the public who does not wish to be recorded should make this known to the Chairman now by raising their hand. No-one raised their hand.

A person or persons making a recording has no right to interrupt a Parish Council meeting by asking questions or making comments and should restrict any comments to the Public Session only.

1. **To record apologies for absence** - Cllr D Schumacher, District Councillor D Busby & Speedwatch Coordinator -
2. **To receive Declaration of Interest relating to Agenda items:** - None received
3. **Dispensations – to consider written requests for dispensation of disclosable pecuniary interest in matters relating to Agenda items** – None received
4. **To approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 6 February 2025 -**. The minutes were approved as a true record and were duly signed.

Proposed Cllr D Jones      Seconded Cllr A Thomas      All in favour      CU

5. **Matters arising from the Minutes** –. Clerk told the meeting the dropped drain outside The Corral had been reported and also the potholes on the bridge by Little Dodnash Farm – water is running down from Bergholt side - the road over the bridge is full of potholes, The damage to the roof of Oakleigh has been reported to the Enforcement Officer at Babergh. Ed Seeley was informed that his quote to clear brambles by the side of 28 West Mill Green and trim the area around the gate by West Mill Green had been accepted – he is going to undertake the work on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Vertas were informed that we had accepted their quote to cut the Playing Fields and Play Area. Rest of the items are covered by agenda items

### ***Public Session***

**County Councillor G Hall** – had sent her report **Appendix 1** in the minute book and on the website. She told the meeting that her report was in a different format and went on to highlight a few things – Suffolk Libraries – have decided to run services in-house so libraries can continue to open and deliver better services with mobile libraries etc. Devolution – Suffolk has been approved for the priority programme and are currently putting in our response to Government – SCC supports the Government proposal to replace the current two tier Council structure with a single unitary authority whilst Babergh want a two tier approach – a new role has been created

Cabinet Member for Devolution. She also spoke about Brockley Wood application which has been deferred until 24 April – she felt the £20K from Highways will not even touch the sides it would need to be at least £100K. Cllr Munday thanked County Councillor Hall for her support on Brockley Wood.

The Chairman explained that the Public Session was for the public to make comments about any items on the agenda – she asked that comments be addressed to the Council – as there might be quite a few people who wish to speak time will be restricted to 3 minutes. The whole idea of the public session is for each individual to make their point to Council so it can be taken on board when the agenda item comes up for discussion. She also reminded the meeting that if you are recording and wish to speak then the recorder should be switched off. Three residents who wanted to speak about the Fruit Farm Planning application asked if they could speak one after the other.

**Resident:** Fortuna This application looks okay initially but he is objecting to the three two storey dwellings facing the back of Fortuna that look directly into the upstairs master bedroom, two bathrooms, rear downstairs lounge and rear garden. Loss of privacy is a major thing and he felt that no regard had been given to them. There were bungalows on the previous plan and there is enough space to put these houses at the rear of Fortuna's garden. The plans have only been minimally modified to the ones submitted last year.

**Resident – Wayside** told the meeting he loved living in Bentley and thanked everyone for making his family so welcome. He echoed the above concerns regarding the plans -he welcomed the lower density and increased green space but doesn't believe the plan adequately addresses all the privacy issues for existing dwellings

**Resident:** Rowan Acres – had sent in an objection via his agent -putting aside the privacy elements he felt this application should not go ahead.

**Resident** – Apologised for disruption at February meeting – today you have a good sound system which can be heard clearly. The point he was going to bring up is not on tonight's agenda. Fruit Farm application - his objection has been sent in - Case Lane is still mentioned – the public footpath does not join up and permission will never be given to allow a connection to the footpath.

## **6. Planning Applications –**

### **a) To note decisions of Planning Authority on previous applications – None received**

<b>DC/23/05656</b>	Land at Grove Farm & Land East of the Railway Line	<b>Permission has been refused.</b>
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### **b) To give comments on any new applications in hand & discuss appeals –**

<b>DC/24/05240</b>	Land East of Capel Road	Outline planning application (Access to be considered, all other matters reserved) – Erection of 18 no dwellings (including 12 no affordable units and public open space)
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Councillors felt this application has outlined a good opportunity for affordable housing but there are significant areas which fall short of Policy BEN01 in Bentley's Neighbourhood Plan. The site has been assessed as suitable for housing and included in a submission draft of our Neighbourhood Plan in 2021.

Proposed Cllr M Bamford	Seconded Cllr j Campbell	All in favour	CU
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<b>DC/25/00912</b>	Cappadocia Restaurant A12 Northbound, London Road, Capel St Mary	Rendering of exterior
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No Comment

Proposed Cllr K Spicer	Seconded Cllr D Jones	All in favour	CU
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**RECOMMEND APPROVAL**

Proposed Cllr M Munday      Seconded Cllr A Thomas      All in favour      CU

7. **Potential designation of a Bentley Historic Core Conservation Area - Update** – The extended consultation period has now ended and Babergh are now considering responses.
8. **Report by Exception – Tree Warden/Footpath Warden/Bentley Barn /Speedwatch – Footpath Warden** – Finger Post by Bentley Manor has been replaced. Finger Post at Pond Hall Farm has been reported (511598) – Top step of stile has been repaired. **Tree warden** – The triangle Grove Road is owned by Suffolk County Council – the tree is still alive viable and safe and they therefore would not be able to grant approval to have it removed and replanted by the PC. **Bentley Long Barn** - Nothing to report- **Speedwatch**- Three sessions have been held since my last report. One at the War Memorial when no vehicle was reported, one at the Village Hall when one vehicle was reported, one on Capel Road when eleven vehicles were reported. The highest recorded speed was 43 mph, three times!!!
9. **Change of Bank and Online Banking – Update -** Clerk has taken in paperwork to Lloyds Bank in Colchester so hopefully the new bank account will soon be up and running.
10. **To discuss purchase of Solar Panel for SID** - Quote for Solar Panel and mounting £434.23 VAT 86.85 = £521.08. If we go ahead the existing pole will need to be replaced with a more robust one. Cllr Munday has contacted Suffolk Highways for quote.
11. **To approve Nine Month Accounts - April-December 2024 –** Bentley PC Financial Working Party - Cllr Jones & Cllr Schumacher had a remote meeting to agree the nine months Accounts – April-December 2024 – Councillors had been sent copies of the Receipts and Payments, Cash Book and Bank Accounts – the Clerk went through the figures and it was proposed the accounts be accepted..

Proposed Cllr M Munday      Seconded Cllr K Spicer      All in favour      CU

12. **To review Neighbourhood Plan -** This is now in progress – we have received a Government Grant and the first stage is to hold a public drop in session to inform residents why we are reviewing the Plan– this is taking place this Saturday 8 March in the Village Hall between 10 am and 1pm.
13. **Trimming Trees on Silver Leys Green – Update** – The Arboricultural Officer has been contacted again and was going to have a look at them – not heard anything yet.
14. **To review Council Policies – The** Clerk told the meeting that the General Privacy Policy, Retention & Disposal, Social Media & Electronic Communication, and GDPR Regulation Consent to hold Contact Information documents had been reviewed and updated with her new e-mail address. It was proposed that this change be accepted.

Proposed Cllr K Spicer      Seconded Cllr A Thomas      All in favour      CU

The updated Guidance for Recording of Meetings Policy was discussed and it was proposed that the changes be accepted.

Proposed Cllr K Spicer      Seconded Cllr A Thomas      All in favour      CU

15. **To Review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations - The** Clerk told the meeting that these documents had been updated last June and to date there had been no updates from SALC.
16. **To Review Risk Assessment** – The Clerk told the meeting that this should have been agreed in October but because of the pending change in banks it had been deferred. Assets had been uplifted by 2% - she will be updating asset list to send to Insurers in June/July in readiness for quote in September. It was proposed that the risk assessment be accepted.

Proposed Cllr M Munday    Seconded Cllr J Wheals    All in favour    CU

17. **To receive Internal Control Report - Councillor** Schumacher was happy to sign off this report before the next meeting. It was therefore proposed that it be accepted.

Proposed Cllr M Bamford    Seconded Cllr M Munday    All in favour    CU

18. **Replacement tree–Grove Road/Capel Road – Update** - Covered under Tree Warden Report see item 8 above.

19. **Affordable Housing – Update –** It was proposed that this be taken off the agenda and be made part of our Neighbourhood Plan review.

Proposed Cllr M Munday    Seconded Cllr K Spicer    All in favour    CU

20. **Clearance of Land in the Copse –** Cllr Feltwell told the meeting that clearance is due to go ahead on 24 March – if there is any problem contact the contractor. If they see any nests the tree will be left and done later in the year.

21. **Traffic Calming – Weight Restriction– Update –** A new document has been uploaded on the SCC Planning Portal re Brockley Wood application. Suffolk Transport Strategy have asked for a weight restriction to be put on Church Road and Bentley Hall Road as one of the planning conditions – to be paid for by the applicant. We have been working with SCC and had to pay for a traffic survey – and were told it was not suitable for a weight restriction but they did agree to four signs - Road unsuitable for HGV's - at a cost of £6K - County Councillor Hall has very kindly offered to pay £3K to cover half the cost – do we want to cover the other half? The traffic situation if Brockley Wood goes ahead is 160 HGV's coming into the quarry through our roads. The Lorry Management Plan requires us to communicate with the details of the HGV and for them to compare with their CCTV. These HGV's are doing a lot of damage and with A14 closures these lorries are diverting through Bentley.

22. **Playing Field Society –** The Parish Council now have the keys to the two Maritime units. There has been an enquiry from Brantham Athletic to use the field. Jon Haines was contacted and he agreed to speak with them. Brantham propose to use the venue from April to September throughout the Summer months for mid-week training sessions and some games at the start and end of the season. After some discussion it was agreed that in principle we are happy for them to use the facility but need to discuss times, number of vehicles – we also need to find out School timetable for use of the School field (School Fete is on 22 June 2025). Cllr Bamford was happy to meet up with someone from Brantham Athletic to talk it through.

<b>Action:</b> Clerk to contact Brantham Athletic arrange for them to meet Cllr Bamford
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Black bin - all waste can be put in the one bin. Notice to be put in Bentley Bugle.

23. **To receive Correspondence** – The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to the following E-mails: 7 x Residents – Minutes/Churchyard/Proposed Conservation Area/Fruit Farm application & request for delay re Conservation Area due to significant slavery connection 1 x Vertas confirmation of grass cutting quote 1 x Ed Seeley confirmation clearance etc West Mill Green – 20 March 1 x EE increase in Broadband £2.42 1 x One Suffolk website hosting increase £66 per annum 1 x Horticultural Society re Horticultural Accounts – **Agenda item** ?– 3 x Suffolk County Council Problem Reports/Tree Grove Road 1 x Probation Services Community Payback Teams 2 x Brantham Athletic Football Club – re Playing Field 1 x Elan City – Quote for Solar Panel for SID

24. **Exchange of information by Councillors and matters for consideration at future Meetings–** None

25. **To Authorise Payments–** The following payments were authorised en bloc

101806		Cheque Cancelled	
101807	Maritime Football Club	Sale of both green container units	£2,500.00
101808	HMRC	Clerks Tax	£33.40

101805	Mrs J Scott	Clerks Salary – Mar	£615.76	
		Minus tax	<u>-£33.40</u>	
			£582.36	£1,139.16
		Plus Expenses	£106.80	
		Room Allowance	<u>£450.00</u>	
			£1,139.16	

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell      Seconded Cllr M Bamford      All in favour      CU

26. **To confirm date of next scheduled meeting** - Parish Council Meeting Thursday 3 April 2025  
Preceded by Playing Field Society Meeting 7.00 pm

27. **To consider exclusion of the public & press in the public interest due to the confidential nature of business to be transacted** It was proposed that the public be excluded

Proposed Cllr M Bamford      Seconded Cllr D Jones      All in favour      CU

**CHAIRMAN:**

**DATE:**