

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL ON -THURSDAY 3 APRIL 2025 AT 7.30 PM

Present

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

Also in attendance - District Councillor D Busby - Tree Warden, Footpath Warden, Speedwatch Coordinator & 6 members of the public

Cllr Munday welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Clerk had received notification that a resident wished to record the meeting but has cancelled so no-one was planning to film or record this meeting.

Cllr Munday told Councillors that some Parish Councils ask for a reason for absence from Councillors who are unable to attend a meeting so the Council can accept the apologies if there is a valid reason for absence. Being a Councillor is a responsible position and if a Councillor is going to be absent the Council need to know that there is a genuine reason for that absence. The Clerk confirmed if a Councillor fails to turn up for a meeting six months in a row –they are no longer a Councillor. However, if apologies have been accepted then the six month rule starts again. This will be an agenda item at the May meeting.

Action: Agenda item at the Annual Parish Council meeting

1. To record apologies for absence, Cllr D Jones (Hol), Cllr A Thomas & County Cllr Georgia Hall
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 March 2025 -. The minutes were approved as a true record and were duly signed.

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell Seconded Cllr K Spicer All in favour CU

5. Matters arising from the Minutes –. Page 1271 item 5 Work has been completed by Ed Seeley re brambles next to 28 West Mill Green and gate area has been strimmed. SCC are going to do work on dropped drain outside The Coral and the potholes on the bridge by Little Dodnash - Oakleigh Update - Enforcement Officer carried out a site visit and noted the alleged works to the roof and building, subsequently the developer has been contacted making them aware of the need to act accordingly to apply for permission relating to demolition, or to carry out remediation. They may also choose to submit amendments to their current planning permissions. **Page 1273 item 14** -Reviewed and updated Council Policies are on the Parish Council Website. Rest of the items are covered by agenda items

Public Session

District Councillor D Busby - Briefing Notes for Town & Parish Councils had been received and circulated to Councillors - **APPENDIX 1** in the minute book and on the website. He spoke about Brockley Wood - no news – it's in the hands of the BDC Legal Team. Joint Local Plan – housing allocations for Bentley is 140 over a 20 year period. This is not a firm figure and we will have to see how it develops. Whatever work is done will be adopted by the Unitary Council – Devolution and Local Government.

County Councillor G Hall – had sent her apologies and report **Appendix 2** in the minute book and on the website.

6. **Planning Applications –**

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

b) **To give comments on any new applications in hand & discuss appeals** –

DC/25/01493	Windy Farm, Capel Road	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing Use or Operation or Activity including those in breach of a Planning Condition. Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (As amended) – Confirmation of use of annexe/outbuilding as a separate dwelling
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Applicant was re-applying following refusal by Babergh – it was proposed not to comment on this application. **NO COMMENT**

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

NB: Noticed on District Cllr Helen Davies List – application for 13 West Mill Green – As Clerk hadn't received any notification from Babergh she e-mailed and was told that this type of application is not one which we they are required to consult third parties apart from neighbouring properties that share a boundary with the application site – This is because the applicant is seeking confirmation that their proposal is permitted development under the prior approval scheme for a larger home extension. The application details can still be viewed on our website and there is nothing to stop the Parish Council from making comments if they so wish.

c) **To discuss SCC PROW's response re DC/24/05240** - SCC are proposing if Babergh Planning approve the Fruit Farm application they want a condition put on the developers to pay for an upgrade to Footpath 55 to make it a bridleway. This is the footpath from Case Lane that joins up with Pond Hall Lane. There is no direct access from the site to this footpath. SCC want to make it into a bridleway for cyclists and horses – this is very dangerous District Councillor Busby could see no reason for them doing this and charging £5K – it should be a CIL request. After a long discussion it was proposed that a letter be sent directly to B#DC Planning with a copy to the the Public Right of Way Team saying this particular part of the Highways proposal is not appropriate.

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

Action: Letter to be sent to Public Right of Way Team
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c) **Brockley Wood – To discuss re-Consultation Response** – Cllr Munday explained that the reason why this was going out to re-consultation – late submission of revised plans by the applicant. She went on to explain about the siting of the washing and concrete crushing plant and the fact that we were trying to get the applicant to move it to another site within the quarry as it is only 300 metres from Bentley Old Hall. She also made the point that it had been said that the Parish Council was against the extraction of sand and gravel and this is not the case - it is making the case for improvements to the Lorry Route Management Plan to try to protect the village and the environment from the estimated 160 HGV lorries per day using the quarry. Bentley Parish Council is also objecting to the impact of the plant siting on the valued landscape and Old Hall – it was therefore proposed that the response be sent to SCC. The meeting was told that there is still three days for anyone to comment.

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

7. **Potential designation of a Bentley Historic Core Conservation Area - Update** – Mentioned by District Councillor Busby in Public Session above – our Heritage Expert has responded to Babergh in full.

8. **Report by Exception – Tree Warden/Footpath Warden/Bentley Barn /Speedwatch – Tree warden** – Nothing to report. **Footpath Warden** – Two items – Footpath 55 – there were

two incidents at the farm – Farmer was hit by a tractor & pedestrian hit by a fork lift. **Bentley Long Barn** - Nothing to report- **Speedwatch**- There has been one session since my last report, this was held on Capel Road when eight vehicles were reported. The highest recorded speed was 40.

9. **Change of Bank and Online Banking – Update** - Clerk reported that the Switch Form had been completed and sent to Lloyds. The new bank account is ready to go. Babergh Precept Team and VAT have been informed of the change of bank details.

10. **To discuss purchase of Solar Panel for SID** - Quote for Solar Panel and mounting £434.23 VAT 86.85 = £521.08 - SCC's cost for upgrading a normal post to a post capable of holding a solar SID will be £630 = £1,151.08 in total. After some discussion it was proposed that a post and solar panel be purchased. Clerk will inform Elan City.

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell Seconded Cllr K Spicer All in favour CU

11. **To review Neighbourhood Plan** – The meeting was told that the drop in session was very successful with lots of comments and residents were informed why we are reviewing the plan now. We need to make sure we get the right number of houses in the places we want them built. Our Consultant is looking at the current NHP to see what policies need updating or changing. There are potential residential sites that have been submitted for consideration by Babergh and we may need to do a local call for sites. An independent consultant will review all sites for suitability. The revised draft of the NHP will then be reviewed by the community – it will take some time but we have started the process. Cllrs Spicer & Campbell attended the meeting held by James Cartlidge and were amazed at the amount of Councils that did not have or want a Neighbourhood Plan – James Cartlidge did mention East Bergholt NHP as an example of how not to do it or what happens if you don't have one. We have a very experienced NHP Consultant who will guide us through the process. We have a Government Grant to pay him – it does not come out of PC precept. Cllr Munday thanked Cllrs Spicer and Campbell for attending the meeting on behalf of Bentley Parish Council.

12. **Trimming Trees on Silver Leys Green – Update** - Andrew Graham - Arboricultural Officer Babergh – Visited Silver Leys and can see no reason at this time to undertake any works to trees under BDC ownership.

13. **To discuss grant re Lighthouse Women's Aid** – The Clerk read out a letter received from Lighthouse Women's Aid and after some discussion it was proposed that £100 be put in budget and donated at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May.

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

14. **To adopt changes to Financial Regulations** – The Clerk told the meeting that following last month's meeting SALC had sent through changes to Procurement – items 5.4, 5.7 and 5.11 in the Financial Regulations. These changes have been made and Councillors have received the changes it was therefore proposed to adopt the changes.

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell Seconded Cllr K Spicer All in favour CU

15. **To agree & sign Neighbourhood CIL Expenditure Report** - Councillors had been sent copies of the Neighbourhood CIL Expenditure Report and it was proposed that it be signed and sent off to Babergh. It will also be put on the website. It was also proposed to make PIIP part of the Neighbourhood Plan review.

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell Seconded Cllr J Wheals All in favour CU

Action: Send report to Babergh

16. **Affordable Housing – Update** – This has been kept on the agenda as affordable housing allocations can't be included in our Neighbourhood Plan. An e-mail has been received from Sunila Osborne – Housing Enabling Officer at Babergh suggesting a meeting. Clerk will write and arrange date for a meeting.

Action: Contact Sunila Osborne with dates

17. **Clearance of Land in the Copse – Update -** Stage One - clearance has been completed. Cllr Munday thanked Cllr Feltwell for the work he has done. Cllr Feltwell told the meeting this was started in May 2024 – getting quotes to clear the land – we put in a bid for funding in June and in August were told we had been unsuccessful. September – obtained three quotes – October – nothing to report so taken off the agenda. On 24 January funding became available but work had to be completed by the end of March – a bid was put in to do Stage One – 53 tree stumps were taken out – native trees were left. The Second Stage – Contact School to find out what they would like. Suffolk Rural have agreed to oversee any proposals that come through – the plan is to also get ideas from residents. Dedham Vale Tree Surgery did an amazing job and have the right equipment to do an industrial sized job. Working Group – Cllrs Feltwell and Spicer.

18. **Traffic Calming – Weight Restriction– Update –** We have finally got SCC to agree that both our village roads need **Unsuitable for HGV** signs. We need four signs at a cost of £6K – County Councillor Georgia Hall has agreed to give £3K from her Locality Budget – do we want to pay £3K? SCC have requested that the Brockley Wood applicant pay £20K for a weight restriction but it will take time – about 18 months before these are in place. A discussion followed and it was proposed that we go ahead and that the £3K costs be met by CIL money. The signs will now be ordered.

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

19. **Playing Field Society –** Following discussion at the Playing Field Society meeting held at 7pm when it was agreed that Brantham Athletic be given a three month trial to use the facilities on a Thursday evening for the sum of £40 per month and to review further use at a meeting at the beginning of July. Clerk to draw up agreement with Conditions. It was also agreed to send letters to residents at The Oaks and Case Lane re the proposed use of the field. Cllr Feltwell recommended a sign – No football traffic. Cllr Bamford was prepared to make a telephone call to make Brantham Athletic aware there has been an issue with one of the residents.

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

Action: Clerk draw up contract and letters to residents

20. **To receive Correspondence** – The Clerk drew Councillors’ attention to the following E-mails: E-mail x 1 National Grid re Norwich to Tilbury targeted statutory consultation 2 x SCC re Problem reports – The Corral & Bergholt Road – work is to take place!! 1 x Lighthouse Women’s Aid – applying for grant – 1 x PKF Littlejohn – AGAR 2024/25 re external audit 2 x Babergh re Oakleigh and bin emptying prices for 2025/26 £83 per bin 4-emails from Residents re NHP Drop in Sessions/ Recording/ Dec minutes/clarification on costs.

21. **Exchange of information by Councillors and matters for consideration at future Meetings– Cllr K Spicer:** Pot Holes – Dropped drain - Station Road – Baptist Church – Line of tarmac worn away – Outside Rowan Acres

Action: Report to SCC

22. **To Authorise Payments-** The following payments were authorised en bloc

101810	C Hawes	Cable lock – bin - To be ratified	£8.99
101811	Tangent	PA System – Village Hall - To be ratified	£50.00
101812	Places4People	Neighbourhood Plan Review - To be ratified	£3,320.64
	Ed Seeley	Cutting back brambles 28 W Mill green/gate	£560.00
	Bentley V Hall	Hall Hire 4 sessions + Broadband	£113.91
	Dedham Vale Tree Surgery	Clearance of copse	£2,400.00
	Bentley Community Shop	Keys cut – re West Mill Green	£20.00
	Peter Baldwin	Grass cut & strimming	£150.00
	Parish Online	Mapping Software	£90.00

HMRC	Clerks Tax		£33.40
Mrs J Scott	Clerks Salary – Mar	£615.76	
	Minus tax	<u>-£33.40</u>	
		£582.36	£644.39
	Plus Expenses	<u>£62.03</u>	
		£644.39	

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

23. **To confirm date of next scheduled meeting** – Annual Parish Meeting Thursday 17 April & Annual Parish Council Meeting Friday 9 May 2025.

24. **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 B Feltwell Seconded Cllr M Munday All in favour CU

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: