

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL ON -THURSDAY 3 JULY 2025 AT 7.30 PM – PRECEDED BY A PLAYING FIELD SOCIETY MEETING AT 7PM

Present

Cllr J Wheals - Chairman
Cllr K Spicer

Mrs J Scott - Clerk
Cllr J Campbell

Cllr B Feltwell
Cllr A Thomas

Cllr M Munday

Also, in attendance - Tree Warden, Footpath Warden & 7 members of the public

In the absence of Cllr Bamford Cllr J Wheals signed the Declaration of Acceptance of office and took on the role of Chairman for the meeting and welcomed everyone. The Clerk received no notification of anyone planning to film or record this meeting.

1. **To record apologies for absence**, Cllr M Bamford, Cllr D Jones–It was proposed that their apologies be accepted.

Proposed Cllr K Spicer Seconded Cllr J Wheals All in favour CU

Cllr D Schumacher - absence

2. **To receive Declaration of Interest relating to Agenda items:** - Cllr Munday declared a non-pecuniary interest in Planning item 6 application no DC/25/02632 Redwoods.

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 Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 5 June 2025**
-. The minutes were approved as a true record and were duly signed.

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

5. **Matters arising from the Minutes – Page 1289** - Cllr Bamford had scythed along the back of 28 Mill Green's fence to clear a metre or so of nettles & brambles so resident can now access along the back of his fence. **Page 1290 item 10** – Accounts have been sent to PKF Littlejohn for auditing – **item 12** website has been updated- Rest 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.

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

Resident: It has been confirmed that the hedge is on the Parish Field and the resident is still worried about the height of the hedge at the side of his bungalow 28 West Mill Green He was told that this will be inspected and three quotes obtained. He told the meeting that a friend was willing to flail the hedge for the Parish Council free of charge. The Tree Warden was not happy for that to happen. The resident was told that the hedge is the responsibility of the Parish Council and there are rules we have to abide by. This will be an agenda item at the next PC meeting.

Action: Hedge at side of 28 West Mill Green – Agenda item

Resident – Asked about the RTA – Station Road near level crossing. She was told that we have made SCC aware of container traffic coming through the village when work is taking place on the Orwell Bridge for a long time – our roads are not suited to the size of these vehicles. Cllr Munday e-mailed County Councillor Georgia Hall on 26 June telling her we wouldn't be

progressing the HGV signs – if Brockley Wood application is approved the applicant has agreed to pay £20K towards the cost of traffic regulation - but that the problem remains of the unsuitability of stretches of Station Road for HGV traffic – which is being experienced daily now with queuing traffic at peak times while repairs are being carried out on the Orwell Bridge. A one direction priority system was asked to be considered. The RTA involved a container lorry and a car and County Councillor Hall was informed by e-mail this morning that the road was closed for several hours with container lorries attempting three point turns in our narrow road and then diverting through single track Church road to avoid going back to the A12 at a time when children were leaving the Primary school -walking along narrow pavements with massive HGV's attempting to squeeze past parked cars. The Police who attended the accident confirmed the road is so narrow it should be one way traffic only. Cllr Munday suggested that residents write to their local MP – the PC will also write a letter.

Resident: Asked about the public being excluded from meetings to discuss sensitive items – he understood that discussions remain private but decisions should be made public – will all the decisions from these “in camera” meetings be open to the public? He quoted from Local Government Act 1972 Section 12 paragraph 41 and Section 228 (1).). He was told that some information was exempt from release under Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act and also if there was ongoing legal action (such as Brockley Wood application which was still to be determined). The Clerk will contact SALC to clarify.

Resident: Told the meeting that on 11 July Bentley Toddler Group will be finishing due to health problems and lack of numbers. The Parish Council were very sad to hear the news and thanked her for her long service to the village.

Action – Write to local MP – Contact SALC to clarify confidential items.

6. Planning Applications –

a) To note decisions of Planning Authority on previous applications –

DC/25/02303	Ruseley, Hazel Shrub	Permission without compliance of conditions has been granted subject to the following conditions
DC/25/01934	Hazel Shrub House, Hazel Shrub	Permission has been granted

b) To give comments on any new applications in hand & discuss appeals – Cllr Munday non-pecuniary interest – took no part in discussion

DC/25/02632	Redwoods, Bergholt Road	Proposed garage conversion with a link extension to the main dwelling and erection of 2 no outbuildings
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RECOMMEND APPROVAL

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell	Seconded Cllr J Campbell	6 in favour	1 abstention
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DC/24/05240	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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Bentley Parish Council are not convinced that the application is policy compliant and this is raised by the Strategic Planning Team at Babergh. The “local need” identified by the applicant relates to Babergh rather than Bentley. The application is not supported by any mechanism as to how the affordable housing would be managed. It therefore does not meet the requirements of BEN 1 Policy in our Neighbourhood Plan. No Local Needs Assessment has been done. Bentley PC are meeting with Housing Enabling Officer to discuss affordable housing later this month.

Proposed Cllr K Spicer	Seconded Cllr J Wheals	All in favour	CU
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RECOMMEND APPROVAL

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

- c) Brockley Wood – To discuss re-Consultation Response – Brockley Wood application was not on the agenda for the June Development & Regulation Committee meeting as expected - the next meeting will be on 22 July. The application has to be reconsidered following the designation of Bentley Conservation Area. Babergh have submitted a strong objection asking for the permanent removal of the concrete crushing plant on site and re-location of the wash plant.
7. Bentley Conservation Area - Update – The Conservation Area has been designated by Babergh District Council however, the Conservation Area Appraisal Management Plan needs to be updated. Babergh have made recommendations and we will need to engage the services of our Heritage Expert. Babergh are not in a position to help with costs but our District Councillors might have funding available from their Locality Budgets – we will be contacting District Councillors Busby and Davies.

8. Report by Exception – Tree Warden/Footpath Warden/Bentley Barn /Speedwatch – Tree warden – Watered the trees in the Community Orchard – Sandra Bond is offering to do the watering and also cut the grass between the trees. She is also moving the water tank. Silver Leys Green – one Hawthorn has died two other trees need attention – Clerk will contact Babergh. Footpath Warden – Nothing has been reported and nothing to report. Bentley Long Barn - Nothing to report- Speedwatch- In the absence of Speedwatch the Clerk read out the report – No sessions have been held. On Wednesday the 25th June I attended the latest Babergh East Police and Parish Forum at Capel St Mary. I attended to make my views known about the Police's decision to remove Capel Road from the list of sites within the village at which Speed Watch are authorised to carry out sessions. I pointed out that this was the most relevant site to observe offenders in terms of numbers and that it had operated safely there for at least ten years and if it did not now meet their criteria there were others that did not too. I advised that I had been in contact with her colleagues who run the scheme to no avail. My comments were noted by the Inspector present and she advised she would take this up with her colleagues who run the scheme.'

Action: Contact Babergh re trees on Silver Leys Green Grove Road

9. Change of Bank and Online Banking – Update - Clerk reported that forms have been received to transfer the two other accounts to Lloyds.
10. To ratify decision made at the Annual Parish Council Meeting not to go ahead with Signage re SCC quote – It was proposed that the decision be ratified as if Brockley Wood application is approved the applicant has agreed to pay £20K towards the cost of traffic regulation order for a Weight Restriction on Bentley Hall Road/Church Road.

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

11. To discuss tree on Grove Road Triangle – Requested to be an agenda item under Tree Warden report in June minutes. SCC want it left alone – take off agenda.
12. To review Neighbourhood Plan –Update The meeting was told the Government have decided to cut back on funding for support of Neighbourhood Plans. Cllr Feltwell felt the Parish Council had a duty to protect the village and we can use CIL money –He was told that our consultant is in the process of putting together a quote so we are waiting for him to get back to us.
13. To ratify the decision to respond to SCC's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Deadline 11/6/25) - It was proposed that this decision be ratified.

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

14. To discuss Village Gateways - Cllr Campbell felt that Gateways do make people aware of the speed but bearing in mind the discussions above regarding needing CIL funds for the

Conservation Area and Neighbourhood Plan work it was felt that this should be put on hold for the foreseeable future.

15. **Affordable Housing – Update –** Clerk to arrange Team meeting with Babergh Housing Enabling Officer and Hastoe. Cllr Feltwell was disappointed that Hastoe had not looked at the empty houses in Bentley – now the only bus to Bentley might be taken off – Ipswich have got a lot of affordable houses with facilities close by. He was told there are young people in Bentley who wish to stay in Bentley.
16. **The Copse – Update –** Cllr Feltwell told the meeting that the Copse had been cleared and grass seed put down – the hot weather has not helped but there is enough grass seed to go over it again. Cllr Spicer had attended the School Council who are very interested in being part of the design and very keen to get involved – Otley College will also be involved. Tree Warden told the meeting he had been pulling out weeds and Footpath Warden had offered to cut down the spindly Ash and overhanging branches of the conifers by West Mill Green.
17. **Suffolk Highways proposals re Not Suitable for HGV's – Update –** See Public Session & item 10 above.
18. **Playing Field Society – To discuss e-mails from residents re Football, Play Area and repairs to Case Lane Playing Field entrance “kissing gate” –** Brantham Athletic Youth will be using the field on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in July and August – the terms of their contract to be changed. Signs have been purchased and are now in place. Equipment on Play Area was discussed. Case Lane entrance to Playing Field was discussed also resident's complaint.
19. **To receive Correspondence –** The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to the following E-mails: SCC x5 Problem reports Bergholt Road, Weeds triangle Grove Road / Level Crossing Issues Station Road and pothole Bergholt Road/ Brockley Wood – withdrawn from Junes' Committee 2 x Places4people re Neighbourhood Plan – 1 x PTA re Colour run at Bentley Fayre 2 x District Councillor Helen Davies re Greater Ipswich or Not? 1 x Anglian Water – burst watermain in field beyond Little Dodnash farm – info only no road closure – 1 x Housing Enabling Officer Babergh re meeting and 1 x Cllr Munday re RTA Station Road. Clerk read out letter from Bentley Bowls Club re hedge at Bowling Green – MM sending Clerk e-mail re hedge heights - The Parish Council cannot get involved with boundary issues.
20. **Exchange of information by Councillors and matters for consideration at future Meetings–**
Cllr K Spicer - County Broadband had dug a trench across the road by Silver Leys – the filling has now disappeared leaving a trench across the road – Clerk will report to SCC. **Cllr M Munday**: - Send letter to Dave Busby who is unwell thanking him for all the help he has given us.

Action: Report trench across road by Silver Leys – Letter to District Councillor Busby

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

Cllr B Feltwell	Signs	£234.00
Cllr B Feltwell	Grass Seed for Copse	£209.25
Dedham Vale Tree Surgery	Levelling Copse reading for seeding	£1,440.00
Bentley Village Hall	Hall Hire & Broadband	£102.00
Peter Baldwin	Grass cut & strimming	£150.00
HMRC	Clerks Tax	£38.80
Mrs J Scott	Clerks Salary – June	£615.76
	Minus tax	<u>-£38.80</u>
		£576.96
	Plus Expenses	<u>£67.02</u>
		£643.98

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell	Seconded Cllr K Spicer	All in favour	CU
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22. **To confirm date of next scheduled meeting** – Parish Council Meeting Thursday 4 September 2025. Preceded by Playing Field Society Meeting at 7pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: