

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2 JULY 2025 AT 7.30 PM AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL

Present

Cllr M Munday - Chairman Mrs J Scott - Clerk Cllr M Whiteman Cllr B Feltwell
Cllr M Bamford Cllr J Wheals

Also in attendance County Councillor Darius Laws Speedwatch Co-Ordinator & 3 members of the public.

Cllr Munday welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. The Clerk had received notification that a resident was planning to record this meeting. Cllr Munday read out the notice re recording a public meeting – a notice had been put on the door to let residents know that tonight's meeting was to be recorded. The resident had been sent Guidance for the Recording of Meetings at Bentley Parish Council. However, he failed to attend.

1. **To record apologies for absence**, Cllr K Spicer, Cllr D Jones, Cllr J Campbell, Cllr A Horne District Councillor M Rowland, Tree Warden and Footpath Warden. It was proposed that apologies be accepted.

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

2. **To receive Declaration of Interest relating to Agenda items:** - Non- Pecuniary Declarations were received from Councillor B Feltwell, Cllr M Bamford & Cllr J Wheals who all have shares in The Case is Altered Community Pub Ltd. - Cllr Munday also declared a non-Pecuniary interest as her husband has shares.

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 4 June 2026-**
. The minutes were approved as a true record and were duly signed.

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

5. **Matters arising from the Minutes – Page 1340 – item 10** – End of year accounts have been sent to PKF Littlejohn – the Notice of Public Rights was put on the notice board **Page 1341 item, 12** – Cllr Whiteman is now a signatory on the bank accounts. Equestrian warning signs are now in place. Rest covered by agenda items

Cllr Bamford asked if he should stand down as a signatory. It wasn't thought necessary – so we have four signatories.

Public Session

Cllr Munday welcomed our new County Councillor to Bentley - **County Councillor Darius Laws** - who told the meeting that he was here to be a useful conduit to the Parish Council. He promised to open doors, speak for us and was happy to receive e-mails. He was however, quite busy – he works for James Cartlidge on a Friday -his initial impression is to support Councillors – he has a small Locality Budget and if he can help in any way – he will work quietly behind the scenes. Cllr Munday told him that Bentley had received a lot of support from his predecessor – Georgia Hall – who had paid for the 30mph Roundels and the recently installed equestrian warning signs. She went on to tell him that Bentley was quite a rural village – there is a weight limit on Bentley Hall Road and Church Road as a result of the Brockley Wood quarry – we would like a weight limit through the village as well.

Cllr Wheals told the meeting that cars were turning the wrong way at the triangle at Grove Road – the signage is misleading.

The oak tree at the triangle was brought up – it is now dead - Suffolk County Council wouldn't let us replace it. This will be an agenda item at the September meeting.

Action: Oak tree at Grove Road Triangle
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District Councillor M Rowland – Briefing Notes for Town & Parish Councils had been received and circulated to Councillors - **APPENDIX 1** in the minute book and on the website.

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

DC/26/00105	44 Silver Leys	Approved Conditions
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b) To give comments on any new applications in hand & discuss appeals –

DC/26/02385	1 Hazel Shrub Cottages, Hazel Shrub	Erection of single storey rear & 2 storey side extensions, revised windows & new porch. (Following demolition of existing extension)
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RECOMMEND APPROVAL With the proviso that the design and materials meet the design codes in the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan

Proposed Cllr M Bamford	Seconded B Feltwell	All in favour	CU
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c) Brockley Wood – Information re Community Liaison Group – Cllr Bamford reported that he had attended the meeting held on 17 June. At present they are building access road to the wash area and various machinery. They seem to be complying with conditions. There has not been many inappropriate truck movements and they are planting some hedging along the boundary. At the moment they are trying to be reasonable about everything but in the next year they will start importing more stuff. Next meeting September.

7.a) Bentley Conservation Area – Signage – Nothing to report.

b) Conservation Area Trail & Information boards – The Information Board is being delivered tomorrow – do we want an official opening? It was decided to leave it until September. The Tosca plaque has also been done – this will be put on another wall in the shelter. Bob Munday and Cllr Whiteman will fix the board which is very heavy. Ganzoni Trust will be informed to explain how we have used some of the grant they allocated. Cllr Munday will get in touch with Church Warden re available dates for an “unveiling” together with refreshments etc in the Church.

c) Heritage Trails – Nothing to report.

8. Report by Exception – Tree Warden/Footpath Warden/Bentley Barn /Speedwatch –
Footpath Warden- No report available. **Tree warden** –No report available. **Bentley Long Barn** – Cllr Bamford told the meeting that we had heard nothing from Babergh – he was minded to write to the press about this Grade 1 listed building which was falling into disrepair. If Councillors had no objections. There were no objections – the Barn is in the Conservation Area. **Speedwatch**. - Nothing to report sessions wise. Councillors may be aware that the Police are holding a national speed campaign 'Operation Lifesaver' from the 1st July to the 14th July. He has provisionally arranged three sessions during this period.

9. To formally adopt the Code of Conduct - Comment by Internal Auditor – The Parish Council should formally adopt its Code of Conduct at least once each Council term, typically after ordinary elections every four years & whenever the Code is updated or legislative/guidance changes occur. It was proposed that The Code be adopted and that a table be inserted at the end of the document – with the dates it was adopted.

Proposed Cllr M Bamford	Seconded; B Feltwell	All in favour	CU
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Action: Table inserted at end of the document
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10. **To agree termination date of current Clerk's Contract -** Cllr Munday said this was sad but necessary – Contract end date is normally 12 weeks from resignation letter – which would be 24 July. Candidates are being interviewed in the next week – so it was proposed that the current Clerk's contract should end on 31 July 2026 to allow time for a handover with the new Clerk.

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

11. **To discuss a request for removal of non-functioning Electric Fencing adjacent to footpath between Church Road & Potash Lane –** Cllr Bamford said this broken down electric fence was designed to keep dogs from running on the field – it is not serving any useful function, is a visual eyesore and looks as though at some stage it has trapped a deer. After some discussion it was proposed that a letter be sent to the landowner – Don Baker – asking if it could be removed or replaced when needed.

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

Action: Letter to landowner

12. **Response to Babergh's Joint Local Plan –** Cllr Munday told the meeting this Consultation was very important – it gives us the opportunity to feedback on types of housing – there is to be 28,000 across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. Babergh have had two Call for Sites – one that could potentially affect Bentley is 3,000 houses on Bentley side of the A12. The consultation survey is open from Friday 5 June 2026 and closes at 5pm Friday 31 July 2026. Babergh haven't got a five year land supply any more. After some discussion it was proposed that Councillors Bamford and Munday will compile a response on behalf of Bentley Parish Council. Three Valleys Parish Council Alliance Group are also looking at this.

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

13. **To discuss request from The Case Community Pub Ltd for permission to insert a vehicular access gate onto the School Playing Field from the Pub Car Park –** Cllr Munday gave the meeting background re this request. The Parish Council now owns the school field - ownership was transferred at no cost to the Parish Council by Suffolk County Council on 12 December 2023 who also gave a grant of £3.5K in 2021 to assist with upgrading and reinforcing a car parking area for up to 30 vehicles. The work was carried out by Jon Haines of Maritime FC for parked cars to avoid damage to the school playing field surface. SCC issued a licence detailing how the field was to be used by Maritime, including specifying parking arrangements. In the transfer document there is a restrictive covenant 'not to use the Property otherwise than for school use, public recreation, sport & leisure and ancillary use' The PC should be issuing a licence to any new third party users including Brantham Athletic to control use and parking. It was thought that a fourth gate into the field would increase the security risk and putting a gate from the pub car park to the field may at some time in the future restrict how the field is used. A discussion on parking difficulties when there was an event at The Case followed – it was finally proposed that if the pub wish to pursue this the Parish Council needs to take legal advice -we should talk to The Case and ask for clear plans re the proposed gate – ie size and position also what works are proposed on the School Field re reinforcing the entrance so we can consider it – Going forward we need to review procedures regarding request by third parties to use the field for parking to make sure that things are being done properly - licence agreements, risk assessments, insurance cover etc need to be in place.

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

14. **To ratify decision re Plaque – Tosca –** The decision to have a small replica plaque for Tosca was made at the June meeting and it was proposed that the decision be ratified.

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

15. **To ratify Payments to – Fitzgerald Woolmer x 2 £2,040 & £142.80 -** It was proposed that these payments be ratified.

- 16. To discuss promoting Councillors on the Website** – Cllr Whiteman told the meeting this was about creating an official.gov.uk e-mail address for all Councillors so they can move away from using their personal e-mail address for Council business. He had created a .gov.uk address for Cllr Horne but needs to sort out a few technical problems before this can be extended to all Councillors. The plan is to promote Councillors on the website with their .gov.uk e-mail address – photographs have also been suggested.

Cllr Munday thanked Cllr Whiteman for his work on this.

- 17. Traffic Diverting through the Village** – A meeting with Cllr Christopher Hudson Cabinet Member for Transport & Highways re HGV's took place with Cllr Munday and Cllr Campbell – a question were there any planning conditions imposed when agreeing to the extension of the Folly Farm quarry regarding traffic routing via the A137 and not through the village and also concerning the unsuitability of our village road for HGVs particularly leading to and from the level crossing. Response received via e-mail from SCC – *HGV lorries -Station Road - checked with the Minerals and Waste Planners, and no specific conditions were imposed on the quarry to compel HGV drivers to take the shortest route to the A137, by turning right out of the quarry, when exiting the site.* We will continue to follow this up with Suffolk Highways.
- 18. Monitoring HGV Traffic through the Village** – No report available.
- 19. 3 Valleys Parish Council Alliance Group** - This is a group of parishes who are concerned about housing developments South of Ipswich. Our NHP Consultant and representatives from Bentley PC will attend the meeting on the 13th July. Changes in the NPPF and impact on planning decisions going forward were discussed. There will be more information after the July meeting. The Group is also sending a response re the Scoping Consultation.
- 20. Neighbourhood Plan Review-Update** Nothing to report.
- 21. The Copse – Update** – Cllr Feltwell told the Playing Field Society meeting that a local resident has been cutting the grass - he doesn't require money for petrol – and is happy to do it. Both he & Cllr Spicer are waiting for Otley College to respond so they can go over and discuss the plan.
- 22. Playing Field Society – Cars at The Case** – Insurers have confirmed that they can agree to extend the insurance policy to include the one-day event. First Aider needs to be in place.
- 23. To receive Correspondence** – The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to the following E-mails: 2 x Suffolk County Council Call for more sites Minerals & Waste 15 June to 27 July/HGV use of Station Road – No specific conditions were imposed on quarry HGV's- 2 x Babergh Joint Local Plan Scoping Consultation/ Designation of three new Neighbourhood Development Plan Areas 3 x residents E-mail to District Cllr – Unlawful Street Naming/ unnamed road at IP9 2LR/ Playground Upgrade/Recording meeting 2 x CAS Insurance re Cars at Case 2 x Thanks from Bentley CECV Primary School & Bentley Bluebells WI re grants 1 x SALC Change to Councillors Register of Interest. Clerk read out the three options.
- 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

Fitzpatrick Woolmer	Panel - Tosca	£142.80
Angela Ashford	Art Work – Conservation Map	£673.00
Bentley Carpet Bowls	Donation- Bank details received	£200.00
CEVC Primary School	Donation	£117.50
Bentley Village Hall	Hall hire/Broadband	£119.55
Vertas Group Limited	Grounds Maintenance 1/7/25-30/9/26	£564.30
P Baldwin	Grass Cut Closed Churchyard	£150.00
HMRC/PAYE	Clerks Tax	£55.20
Mrs J Scott	Clerks Salary/Expenses - July	£688.91

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell Seconded Cllr M Whiteman All in favour

26. **To confirm date of next scheduled meeting** – Parish Meeting – Thursday 3 September 2026
7.30 pm – Preceded by Playing Field Society Meeting 7.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm. Clerk was presented with a beautiful bouquet.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: