

# BENWICK PARISH ASSEMBLY

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Benwick, held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in Benwick Village Hall, commencing at 6.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllrs: L Keppel-Spoor (Chair); J Richardson (Clerk) and 6 members of public

## **1. Chairperson's Address**

Cllr Linda Keppel-Spoor opened the meeting by introducing herself as Vice Chairman of the Benwick Parish Council. She welcomed and thanked residents for attending this Annual Assembly for 2017.

**Apologies received from Cllr Chapman**

## **2. Confirmation of Minutes**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the Annual Assembly Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016 were correctly recorded and that they were signed as being a true record.

## **3. Benwick Parish Council Chairman's Report**

Through diligent financial planning and prudent expenditure the Parish Council managed to minimise the increase in the Parish Precept for 2015/16 and going forward into 2017/18.

In addition: the financial status of the Council is strong with healthy earmarked reserves for key projects which will benefit the village- as detailed in the clerks financial statement

This year the council have focused on the play park project. After several years of contributions by current and past councillors, and the help of Fenland District Council, the park is weeks away from being open. The official date being 3pm on 16 Jun 2017. It offers facilities for all ages and we believe is a significant upgrade on the old park.

In addition, we are at the start of a major extension of the Cemetery. The current available plots are becoming limited and the plan is to extend the pathways to open up the area available. Funds will come from the earmarked Council reserves and some grant funding from the Burnt House Grove Windfarm Fund. At this time we are advertising for Tenders to carry out the work and we envisage to have this completed by late 2017.

An ongoing issue, consistently brought up by parishioners at the Council Meeting, is "dog poop". The Council has supported a number of initiatives, eg, signage, spray painting, poster competitions, which have had limited success. The Council asks all parishioners to support any reduction in dog poop, whether you're a dog owner or not.

On a final note, the Council is looking to Co-opt 3 additional members to the council. Anybody who is interested should contact the Clerk for details.

## **4. Financial Report**

The Clerk's financial report is at Appendix 1

## **5. Village Organisation Reports:**

### **Benwick In Bloom**

Unfortunately, Benwick in Bloom lost two valued members Pat Cuthbert and Valerie Gobie of the original committee through retirement. The hard work and efforts from all committee members and volunteers saw the village achieve a Silver Gilt in the Anglia in Bloom competition 2016. We have entered the Anglia in Bloom competition again this year and judging will take place during July,

2017. The majority of the tubs in public places were replaced and replanted making a uniformed and impressive display throughout the village. The collage in the Bus Shelter has been received with huge compliments from many residents and visitors to the village. Disappointingly the baskets that were donated to add an 'In Bloom' touch were stolen, but the whole area around the bus shelter, the agricultural garden, has improved greatly and an area of interest, admiration and accolade to all. This year we will again dress the Bus Shelter and keep a watchful eye! Benwick in Bloom will continue with the maintenance programme on Lilyholt Road corner and Skiefs Row. Lilyholt Road corner will benefit from a three tier self watering fountain display that has been obtained from funding received from the Burnthouse Wind Farm Fund. The funding also covered eight self watering planters for the Whittlesey Road Bridge. Benwick in Bloom arranged for the metal railings to be refurbished prior to the planters being installed. The paint was provided by Cambridge County Council and the labour by the Payback team. In addition, it was agreed that further decoration would enhance the look with the squares in the top railings being painted gold. This was completed by Roy and Doreen Morton. We have also obtained funding from Ransom Moore for the church yard, which has enable us to purchase some equipment and plenty of plants. There is a large diamond shape which will be planted with a magnolia in the middle, surrounded by lavender, two further magnolias will be planted along with four cordylines within the foot print of the original church. Further bulbs and plants have been purchased from the funds for other areas of the church yard. A tidy up around the Village Sign will be carried out as it is looking neglected. An information board for Pill Box opposite the church yard is being made and should be in situ prior to the Anglia in Bloom judging day. The garden competition is being advertised in shop, Benwick Bugle and local papers as well as Facebook. All properties are included and the prizes will be awarded for best front garden, baskets and planters. Our volunteers carry out regular litter picking, this keeps the village looking well-kept and a great place to live. During September we will again host our celebration tea/coffee and cake afternoon in the pub after judging in September. The AGM was held on 2nd May and the following committee members were elected: Jill Hindle – Chair

### **Benwick Ladies**

Lyn was one of our Speakers from Doddington up dating us on Progress on Doddington Academy School Kenya which they support.

Speaker from Facet. Craft evening making Santa out of a sock. Night of Curling and Chat.

Macmillian Coffee Evening which we raised over £400-00. Strawberry tea and Quiz night.

Christmas Party with Secret Santa. Anne suggested we applied for a grant from Burnt House

Drove Windfarm for our trip to House of Commons in April which was granted.

They meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month

### **Forget Me Not Club**

The aim of the club is to provide recreation and leisure time for the inhabitants of Benwick and the surrounding area who are aged 55 years and over. With this in mind we try to give a varied programme.

Over the last year we have had games evenings, speakers including Jan Munt from Ely cathedral and David Palmer, the auctioneer. We held a cheese/wine and quiz evening, a beetle drive, our harvest festival, our annual bingo and the Christmas party when we were entertained by Upwood Ukuleles. Several members enjoy the outings to Guyhirn for Ten Pin bowling. However we can no longer fill coaches for our summer day trips. At the beginning of this month we celebrated 58 years as a club for the birthday party we all enjoyed a ploughmans supper followed by entertainment provided by Tom Kennedy. New members are always welcome when we meet at 6.30 pm in the village hall on the first Thursday of the month.

### **Burnthouse Drove Wind Farm & Ransonmoor Community Fund**

Both of these serve Benwick, Doddington and Wimblington. BurntHouse is run by Cambridgeshire Community Foundation and accepts applications for grants between £250 and £6000. The next round of grant applications need to be in by 1<sup>st</sup> August. Ransonmoor is run by Fenland District Council and accepts applications up to £5000 and next round of applications need to be in by 1<sup>st</sup>

September. Both have panels which sit and consider the applications. Benwick groups have benefitted from these grants and groups are encouraged to submit more applications.

#### **6. Update on new Cemetery Footpaths**

The Parish Council have applied to BurntHouse Drove Wind Farm and have been successful in gaining a grant of £6000. New footpaths are to be installed and currently they are out to tender for this work. Anyone interested in tendering for this work should contact the Clerk.

#### **7. Setting up of Speedwatch In Benwick**

To date there have only been 4 volunteers for this and 5 is needed to form a team. Valerie Gobie will put an advert on Facebook for this.

#### **8. Dog Fouling within the village**

Suggestions were requested as to what can be done to tackle this. Comments received were that on the footpaths in the village there appears to be less dog fouling but it is increasing by the cemetery.

#### **9. Vacancies for Parish Councillors**

There are currently 3 vacancies for Parish Councillors and anyone interested should contact the Clerk.

#### **10. Open Forum**

The footpath between Chapel Gardens and High Street was raised, this has been patched up by Highways but it is not considered satisfactory.

It was commented that people were disappointed that only one Parish Councillor was in attendance.

It was asked what the arrangements are for the opening of the Play Park on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 15.00.

It was asked if anything is being done to upgrade the footpaths in the village. It was pointed out that this is the responsibility of CCC Highways.

It was asked if anyone is looking after the War Memorial and Village Sign now. This item will be on the Parish Council Agenda in the near future.

It was also asked what is happening about a Xmas Tree in the village, and the Health and Safety issues surrounding this was pointed out. It was suggested that Doddington PC be contacted as to how they organise their Xmas lights.

The mooring sign has been installed and comments were made as to how nice this is.

The Chair, Cllr Linda Keppel-Spoor, thanked all the various Groups for their reports and everyone for attending.

Meeting Closed at 7.10 p.m

# BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

## FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2017

The total income for 2016-17 was £ £15,476.16 (15-16 £18,232.09)  
£

Maintenance Grants:	Precept	£10,715.00
Council Tax Support Grant	Council Tax Support Grant	£1,272.00
	Concurrent	£985.00
	Grass Cutting	£703.88
Rents:	Town	£875.00
	September Gardens	£155.00
Recycling Credits		£39.07
VAT Refund		£234.67
Burials		£294.75
Bank Interest		£124.67
Rate Refund		£77.12
<b>SUB TOTALS:</b>		<b>£15,476.16</b>

Total Expenditure for the year was £11,076.56 (15-16 £13,418.92)  
£

Rates		£475.79
Room Hire		161.25
Subscriptions:	NALC LCR Magazine	17.00
	CAPALC	294.41
	Cambs Acre	45.00
	SLCC	88.00
	Clerks & Councils Magazine	12.00
Maintenance	Verges	700.74
	Cemetery	3,465.00
Insurance		621.49
Professional Charges	Internal Auditor	120.00
	External Auditor	100.00
	ICO	35.00
Sundries		195.00
Telephone/Internet		79.42
Post & Stationery		199.32
Travel		34.65
Clerk's annual office expenses		150.00
Training		218.50
VAT Paid		312.46
Wages/PAYE-NI		3,218.31
S137 Payment	British Legion Poppy Wreath	30.00

Donations/Charity		200.00
Mooring		303.22
TOTALS:		11,076.56

This resulted in Retained Surplus for year of £4,399.60 (15-16 £4,813.17)

with Earmarked Reserves of

<b>Parish Plan</b>	<b>£532.89</b>
<b>Verge Planting</b>	<b>£1.40</b>
<b>Cemetery Extension</b>	<b>£14,357.50</b>
<b>Street Lighting</b>	<b>£10,000.00</b>
<b>The Pound</b>	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<b>War Memorial</b>	<b>£2,000.00</b>
<b>Mooring</b>	<b>£696.78</b>
<b>Play Park</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>

Assets amount to £90,442