

BENWICK PARISH ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly of Benwick, held on Monday 23rd April 2018 in Benwick Village Hall, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs: M Chapman (Chair); L Robinson; A Cade; L Keppel-Spoor, D Connor (CCC), J Richardson (Clerk) and seven members of the public

1. Chairperson's Address Cllr Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Apologies received from Cllr A Miscandlon

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Annual Assembly Meeting held on 14th May 2017 were correctly recorded and that they were signed as being a true record.

3. Benwick Parish Council Chairman's Report

The Parish Council still has a vacancy for a Parish Councillor, and would welcome anyone who would like to volunteer.

The Parish Council started the year in a mixed way with poor performance by the cemetery contractor, which was resolved by appointing a new contractor, who appears to be doing a good job.

Then we moved to the opening of the new Play Park, this has taken over a decade of work from current and previous councillors and thanks go to everyone, including FDC, for their work on this project.

Started new cemetery extension and put new paths in. This year the plan is to mark out new plots and the money is already in earmarked reserves for this work.

No meaningful level of co-operation from allotment plot holders was forthcoming and had to close down the allotments in order to remove the weeds. The weeds have been removed and Community Payback have cleared the plots. The rubbish currently on the allotments should be removed soon, to allow for ploughing and marking out of new plots.

Local Highways Improvement bid was submitted and there will be three village gates installed this year and hopefully this will help to slow traffic down.

100 years since the end of WW1 and there will be an effort to clean up war memorial for this occasion

The Parish Council performed under its budget for the year, due mainly to grant funding received for its projects, and this has enabled the precept rise to be kept to a minimum

The Audit was passed with flying colours and the Clerk was thanked for her work and diligence.

Challenges this year are the new GDPR regulations, completion of cemetery, allotments back to being rented out, street lighting maintenance programme, due to FDC outsourcing this work, dog excrement patrols from FDC and finally The Tour of Cambridgeshire Cycle Race is on 3rd June 2018

4. Financial Report

The Clerk's financial report is at Appendix 1

5. Village Organisation Reports:

Benwick In Bloom

Benwick In Bloom continue to blossom with many floral displays due to the hard work and efforts from all the committee and volunteers, once again achieving a silver gilt award and special prize

for the splendid displays produced by the Benwick nursery in the annual Anglia in Bloom competition in 2017. We have entered the Anglia in Bloom competition again this year and judging will take place during July 2018. The new whittlesey road bridge planters proved very impressive as did the 3 tier planter in Lilyholt Road.

We will continue to dress the bus shelter and agricultural garden which has now become an area of great interest.

We have seen the new addition of the WW1 Roll of Honour scroll added to the wall of the village hall, a poppy project is currently in hand and will be completed in readiness for the Remembrance Sunday, we are looking to further enhance this area round The Pound with the addition of a memorial half tree seat, funding for this project has been applied for.

We are running a Cancer awareness period with a limited amount of Yarn Bombing to bring peoples attention, also celebrating the forthcoming royal wedding. The churchyard lavender now planted up with the addition of 5 magnolia shrubs to further enhance this area. We have two more areas of historical interest waiting to be completed. Plant troughs have been added to the Pub frontage and more to be placed on the wall of the shop car park.

We have had many donations of spring bulbs kindly donated by residents, these will be planted up in due course. The village sign baskets will again be planted. The garden competition will again be judged during July. Our volunteers carry out regular litter picks, this helps to keep the village looking well kept and a great place to live.

The AGM date is to be arranged during May. Chair is Jill Hindle, Treasurer Clare Billington, Secretary Janet Fountain.

We are always looking for further projects and areas that could be improved, this helps make the village look well kept and encourages people to take a pride in their local area.

Benwick in Bloom meet regularly at the Five Alls for fish and chips including Bloom business. Everyone is welcome.

Benwick Ladies

We meet every third Thursday in the month in the Church rooms at 7.00pm, at the moment we have 21 fully paid up members. All new members will be made welcome.

We had five speakers through the year and had an evening meal brought in by China Red.

Our outing to Parliament came through an invitation by Steve Barclay and transport was paid for through a grant from Burnt house wind farm.

We have also had a Strawberry tea, McMillian nurses evening, Craft evening, and a Christmas party.

Forget Me Not Club

Within our constitution it states "The object of the club shall be the provision of recreation and leisure time for meetings, lectures, classes and outings with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants of Benwick and the surrounding neighbourhood, without distinction of sex or of political, religious or other opinions, in the interests of social welfare."

With this in mind that is our aim.

Over the last year speakers have included 'Fenland Stories, London Theatrical Costumier, Growing Old Disgracefully, Doddington Hospital when it was a Workhouse, Metalcraft and a Musical Family. These were both varied and entertaining. Two speakers/entertainers we have organised for the coming year are the Upwood Handbell Ringers and David Palmer, the TV Auctioneer, who wears the coloured waistcoats when we can take our own items for valuation. Other social events include a club birthday party and this year it is a sausage and mash supper with apple crumble and custard followed with entertainment. The club was formed in 1959. We have a quiz evening with cheese and wine, a harvest festival and a Christmas dinner with entertainment.

Over the last few years our membership has fallen so we are unable to fill coaches anymore. However we have had outings to Hartford Mill for lunch, Ten Pin Bowling at Guyhirn and a Christmas shopping trip to Milton Keynes.

We do welcome new members aged 55 and over, male or female.

Burnthouse Drove Wind Farm & Ransonmoor Community Fund CCF

Burnt House Drove Wind Farm has been running for a few years now. To date they have awarded over a £108K in grants of that Benwick has had just shy of £25K. The fund serves the local area including Benwick, Doddington, and Coates. Several village projects have benefited, and there is still a healthy fund available.

Ransonmoor (run by FDC)

To date donated £39K of which Benwick has had £7K. Meet twice a year to review applications and give out funds. Healthy funds are still available.

6. Update on new benches project for the village

The Parish Council have applied to Ransonmoor (for new benches in the cemetery and also Chapel Gardens) and BurntHouse Drove Wind Farms (for the new war memorial bench) and have been successful. Highways have also agreed to make good the tarmac in the War Memorial area.

7. Vacancies for Parish Councillor

There is currently 1 vacancy for a Parish Councillor and anyone interested should contact the Clerk.

8. Open Forum

Dog excrement is still an ongoing problem. Dog patrols by FDC should help with this.

Footpaths on Whittlesey Road are getting overgrown by the verges (PC Agenda Item)

Lots of litter, including blue hair nets and lunch bags, maybe from Greenvale employees. (PC Agenda Item) Cllr Connor offered to visit Greenvale

Potholes are also a problem. Cllr Connor reported that pot hole machines are now in operation and each district should have 18 weeks per year usage. (PC Agenda Item regarding Highways visits)

The high costs of FDC council tax rates was raised.

Funding for the village hall railings and ramp have been approved.

Cllr Connor reported that he sat on the LHI Panel.

FDC are looking to make the villages pay for the maintenance and power for their street lights.

This is an ongoing issue but no official letter has been received as yet. The Parish Council is watching this matter carefully and will attempt to join with other Parish Councils to fight this if needed.

Minor Injuries Unit and Outpatients at Doddington has been visited to see the current situation by Cllr Connor.

Meeting Closed at 20.30 p.m

Appendix 1

BENWICK PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2018

The total income for 2017-18 was £ 24,295.37

(16-17 £15,476.16)

£

Maintenance Grants:	Precept	£10,715.00
Council Tax Support Grant	Council Tax Support Grant	£848.00
	Concurrent	£985.00
	Grass Cutting	£703.88
Rents:	Town	£875.00
	September Gardens	
VAT Refund		£3989.37
Burials		£80.75
Bank Interest		£98.37
Grant Funding		£6,000.00
SUB TOTALS:		£24,295.37

Total Expenditure for the year 2017-18 was £31,768.49

(16-17 £11,076.56)

£

Rates		423.07
Room Hire		165.00
Subscriptions:	NALC LCR Magazine	17.00
	CAPALC	301.64
	Cambs Acre	46.25
	SLCC	78.00
	Clerks & Councils Magazine	12.00
Maintenance	Verges	700.80
	Cemetery	1,805.70
Insurance		648.39
Professional Charges	Internal Auditor	120.00
	External Auditor	100.00
	ICO	35.00
Sundries		129.12
Telephone/Internet		95.45
Post & Stationery		181.72
Travel		39.60
Clerk's annual office expenses		150.00
Training		79.00
VAT Paid		3,827.24
Wages/PAYE-NI		4,260.39
S137 Payment	British Legion Poppy Wreath	30.00
Donations/Charity		130.00
Mooring		563.12
Cemetery Paths		14,200.00
Allotments		630.00
Play Park		3,000.00
TOTALS:		31,768.49

This resulted in Overspend for year of £7,473.12

(16-17 £4,399.60)

Earmarked Reserves of

Parish Plan	£532.89
Verge Planting	£151.40
Cemetery Extension	£8,157.50
Street Lighting	£11,500.00
The Pound	£2,000.00
War Memorial	£2,000.00
Mooring	£1,633.66
Allotments	£370.00

Assets amount to £ 105,508.37