

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL ON -THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.30 PM

Present

Cllr M Munday - Chairman Mrs J Scott – Clerk Cllr K Spicer Cllr B Feltwell
Cllr J Campbell Cllr D Schumacher Cllr A Thomas Cllr J Wheals

Also, in attendance -, County Councillor Georgia Hall - District Councillor D Busby, Tree Warden, Footpath Warden, Speedwatch Co-ordinator - 8 members of the public

Cllr Monday welcomed everyone to the meeting. She said if anyone wanted to speak about agenda items in the Public Session that they be allowed to have their say without interruptions. 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, District Councillor H Davies,
2. **To receive Declaration of Interest relating to Agenda items:** - Cllr Spicer & Cllr Campbell declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 16 on the agenda and Cllr Munday declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 17 on the agenda.
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 11 July 2024** - The minutes were approved as a true record and were duly signed.

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

5. **Matters arising from the Minutes – Page 1238 item 5** – Springy Prancer knobs have now very kindly been glued into place by Bob Munday – **Page 1241 item 23** – Church Road Closure by County Broadband will now take place in October when the Harvest is complete. Vandalism on land at the back of the Playing Field – 40-50 yards damage to pea crop and fencing– it was reported to the Police – landowner installed camera - the boys were identified and have apologised to the farmer. **Bentley Old Barn - E-mail from Resident** who drove past the Old Barn and was alarmed to see several big elder bushes growing right up the wall. That building will have little or no foundation, and tree roots could very easily have it down. Rest covered by agenda items

Public Session

Residents were told that the Parish Council will be discussing the Solar Farm Application so any comments will be taken now.

Resident: Re Agenda item 6 - Asked if the Parish Council will be consulting with properties in the proposed conservation area.

Resident: Asked the Parish Council if they realised if they realised the additional costs for residents living in the conservation area for house repairs and tree pruning etc. He was told that this is in the very early stages and would be Babergh not the Parish Council to decide whether it became a conservation area. There will be a six week consultation and there are a lot of processes to go through.

Resident: item 6 and attached paper - Fully supported the Parish Council taking this proposal through – sometimes we take our surroundings for granted and don't know what we have lost until it is gone. What we have got is really special and the Parish Council would do well to commend it to the District Council.

Resident: Reported dog fouling on the School Field and asked for a notice to be put into the Bentley Bugle.

County Councillor G Hall – Had sent her Monthly report which has been circulated to Councillors **APPENDIX 1** in the minute book and on the website. She told the meeting it had been a quiet month and reported on Solar Together launches in Suffolk – residents in Suffolk can come together to invest in renewable energy sources through a group buying scheme for solar panels and battery storage – closes on 18 October. ED charging points at village halls – they can make money by selling kws – funded by National Grid. County Councillor Hall was asked if Bentley would have her support re any new Brockley Wood applications – she told the meeting that she would support Bentley.

District Councillor D Busby - Briefing Notes for Town & Parish Councils had been received and circulated to Councillors - **APPENDIX 2** in the minute book and on the website. District Councillor Busby told the meeting about a fire in Capel St Mary which was caused by a rechargeable battery being charged overnight. He was up at 3am when he saw two fire engines — he left this window open and the door closed - when he returned to his room it was full of smoke – his smoke alarm had not activated. He urged residents i) Do not charge these things overnight and ii) Make sure your smoke alarms are working.

6. **To discuss Bentley Historic Core Appraisal (see associated item 6 agenda paper)** - Cllr Feltwell said in light of what we had heard tonight about Bentley Barn and the fact that since 2018 Bentley residents have been very keen and supportive of the history and landscape around Bentley Parish - they contributed to all the hard work and research that created the Neighbourhood Plan which is now a legal document. We now have Bentley's Historic Core Appraisal which has been circulated to Councillors and is on the Parish Council website. He felt that with all this supporting data we should apply for Conservation Area Status as a priority to preserve this whole designated valued landscape for future generations. As we have all had the opportunity of reading it he proposed that Bentley Parish Council should formally request Babergh District Council to create the Historic Conservation Area at the earliest opportunity.

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

7. **Planning Applications –**

- a) **To note decisions of Planning Authority on previous applications**

DC/20/01312	Non-Material Amendment 4 Case Cottages, Case Lane	Amendments have been approved
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- b) **To give comments on any new applications in hand & discuss appeals –**

DC/24/03203	Uplands, Church Road	Construction of a wind turbine & ground mounted PV panel array
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RECOMMEND APPROVAL

Proposed Cllr J Wheals Seconded Cllr D Schumacher All in favour CU

DC/24/03379	Eleanor Gate, Capel Road	Erection of single storey front extension & porch canopy
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RECOMMEND APPROVAL

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

DC/23/05656	Land at Grove Farm & Land East of the Railway Line	Construction of a solar farm (up to 40 M-W export capacity) with ancillary infrastructure & cabling, DNO substation, customer substation
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& construction of new & altered vehicular accesses.

RECOMMEND REFUSAL – See attached response and CAA document. Cllrs commented that there didn't appear to be any changes to the design or layout but the applicant had failed to address questions regarding the sub-station – which seems to go under the railway line or the glint and glare situation.

Proposed Cllr A Thomas Seconded Cllr J Campbell 6 in favour 1 abstention

8. **Brockley Wood Planning Application** - Following a Judicial Review claim by Bentley Parish Council and a Bentley resident against Suffolk County Council, this application has now been quashed by the High Court. The parish was supported by other Bentley residents, Babergh District Council, Copdock & Washbrook Parish Council. The application will probably be re-submitted but they will have to take into account the valued landscape – we are hoping they will now listen. Costs were awarded against them so it has been an expensive time for SCC.

9. **BPC response to BDC Consultations on Joint Local Plan Part 2 – Development Plan document Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report & the Proposed Approach to the Strategic Housing |Land Availability -** BDC are consulting on how they are going to deal with sites sent to them following their call for sites. There is a proposal by Sproughton and surrounding villages to do a joint response on this. In terms of a call for sites there is a very large area to the north of Bentley towards the A12 of 240 hectares. It was proposed that Bentley be part of the joint response. Cllr Munday will respond on behalf for the Parish Council.

Proposed Cllr B Feltwell Seconded Cllr D Schumacher All in favour CU

10. **Report by Exception – Tree Warden/Footpath Warden/Capel Library/ Bentley Long Barn /Footpath Warden & Speedwatch - Tree Warden** – Nothing to report. **Footpath Warden** – Nothing to report – Reported bollard by Capel Garage to National Highways.– **Footpath Society** – Walk on 28 September 2.30 at the Village Hall - **Bentley Long Barn** – See matters arising above. **Speedwatch** – Six sessions have been held since my last report. One at the Village Hall where two vehicles were reported, three at the War Memorial where eight vehicles were reported, two on Capel Road where thirty four vehicles were reported. The highest recorded speed was 48 mph, as usual on Capel Road, but two were recorded at 42 mph at the War Memorial and Village Hall. There is a Day of Action. being held by the Police on 17 September.

11. **To approve External Audit -** Councillors had been issued with a copy of the Accounts for Year End 2023/24 – these have now been signed off by the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn) who noted that the Smaller Authority disclosed that it made proper provision during the year 2023/24 for the exercise of public rights, by answering Yes to Section 1 Assertion 4. However, as was reported last year we are aware that it failed to do this and therefore should have answered No to this Assertion. It has also disclosed that it took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from Internal & External audit, by answering yes to Section 1 Assertion 7, which on the basis of the above is not correct. Clerk has ascertained with PK F Littlejohn that she can tick Yes on next year's Audit. Notices will be posted on Notice Boards and Website. It was therefore proposed that the audit be accepted.

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

12. **To approve Quarterly Accounts 2024/25 -** The Clerk stated she Cllr Schumacher had a remote meeting to go through the accounts (Cllr Jones was unavailable) - Councillors had been issued with a copy of the Quarterly Receipts and Payments 2024/25 - Receipts for the 3 months for year 2024/25 amount to **£22,632.00** this figure includes precept £7,500, VAT repayment £1,832.99, interest (£59.02) & £13,139.99 CIL monies plus £100 inconvenience payment from Barclays. Total payments over the 3 months was **£5,705.65** which includes general admin £2,639.95 this includes Clerks salary/expenses etc, grants under the power of S137 (£800.00) – S19 (£300) – S142 citizens Advice (£100), – grass cutting/leaf clearance –closed churchyard £300 – Play Area/Gym equipment Inspection – (£140)) – VAT £285.70 **unplanned expenditure** – Planet Law Services - £1,200 Mortimer Contracts – £60 - otherwise payments are within budget. There

were three uncleared cheques amounting to £450.00 - Current Account Balance at 29 June 2024- total £27,426.37 – Family Fun Day Tracker Account (£5,967.72) which includes firework accounts and Parish Council Tracker account £9,874.49.

Proposed Cllr M Munday Seconded Cllr J Wheals All in favour CU

13. **To discuss Change of Bank and Online Banking** - Resolution - To open a Lloyds Bank account for the Parish Council to enable transfer of all funds from the three Barclays accounts and then setting up online facilities. Initially set up one Current Account with four signatories to enable internet banking with Any Two Councillors to authorise transactions. Signatories are, Marianne Munday, Robert Feltwell, Joy Scott, Michael Bamford. Once established to then create two more accounts to cover Playing Field Society and Parish Council Deposit Account with the same Councillors as online authorised signatories with Any Two to authorise. The charges are free for year one and then £8.50 per month which will be offset by the current postage costs of sending cheques. This could take up to 6 weeks. It was proposed that the resolution be accepted.

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

14. **Insurance Policy Renewal** - Cllrs had been sent all the Insurance documents – Renewal - £610.00 - last year it was 1 £549.40. Clerk had e-mailed CAS and told them we would be having a firework display this year and sent updated figures –a revised quote will take a few days. Deferred until we have a definite figure.

15. **To discuss Purchase of Chaplet for Remembrance Sunday** - It was proposed that a donation of £100 be made to the Royal British Legion for a chaplet.

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

16. **Gate into School Field from The Case – Update** – Clerk had e-mailed Babergh three times but had still not received a reply- deferred until October meeting.

17. **To discuss Funding re Bentley Bugle** - A notice was put in the last issue of the Bentley Bugle re costs to produce a printed version which are met through advertising revenue. At the moment costs are not being covered beyond next year. It also asked if residents would prefer a digital or printed version of the Bugle - the printed version was preferred. There was one kind offer of sponsorship from a resident. 400 copies cost £280 – there are 383 households so the print run could go down from 450 to 400. Councillors were asked in the interim if the Parish Council want to get involved and fund the next issue (£280) – after some discussion it was proposed that the Parish Council fund the next print run of this popular magazine.

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

18. **Horse Chestnut Tree – Grove Road/Capel Road – Update** - Tree Warden will look into suggestions for a feature tree.

19. **Printer for Clerk – Update** - Deferred

20. **Lorry Watch - Update** - Cllr Thomas reported 13 HGV's in July and 8 in August – which is a slight reduction. A tractor unit came along Station Road on the wrong side of the road – monitoring is quite difficult - maybe needs another mention in the Bugle. Cllr Munday told the meeting that SCC will be carrying out the traffic survey sometime this month.

21. **Wild Life Sanctuary in the copse** - Cllr Feltwell in the process of getting three quotes to apply for a grant from Babergh to hopefully get some funding.

22. **Affordable Housing – Update** – Hastoe was contacted by the Clerk – Eddie Bacon is back from his sabbatical and wishes to be known as Nagasura. Clerk is trying to arrange a Zoom meeting.

23. **To discuss 20s Plenty Campaign** – Deferred

24. **Traffic Calming – Weight Restriction– Update** - See item 20

25. **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan (PIIP)** – PIIP is important but needs proper consideration. It needs to be dealt with in sections – CIL money for half the cost of the Handforth Heritage Report is money well spent for the village – it was therefore suggested that this be left until 2025 – take off the agenda.
26. **Playing Field Society** – The Firework event is taking place on 2 November 2024 -Fireworks have been purchased and tasks have been distributed. The draft document re managing of the School Field rules and regulations was sent to Councillors – they will be resent for comment and once agreed will go up on notice boards.
27. **To receive Correspondence**– The Clerk drew Councillors’ attention to the following E-mails:
July/August – 3 x County Broadband re Church Road Closure, 5 x Landowner re Church Road & Vandalism 1 x Suffolk Police – Crime Reference 1 x Tuesday Club – Thanks for donation 1 x District Cllr Helen Davis – Solar Farm 1 x resident re hill out of village towards Tattingstone 1 x Maritime – Van blocking gate to School Field 1 x resident access to School Field to cut hedge 1 x Healthwatch Suffolk – Ageing well in Suffolk – Survey closes 22 September. **August -1 x Hastoe** – Eddie Bacon (Nagasura) back from sabbatical 1 x SCC re Local Green Spaces Guidance, 3 x resident re School Field Gate not locked properly 1 x Babergh District Council BMSDC Local Plan - 2 x Resident re Station Road, 1 x PKF Littlejohn – completion of Audit, 1 x District Cllr H Davies - Joint Local Plan Part 2 – Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Consultation & Proposed approach Land Availability Consultation. 1 x Suffolk Police – Your Police you say – Public meetings with PCC & Chief Constable 1 x Capel St Mary PC NHP – Further pre-submission consultation September 2024
28. **Exchange of information by Councillors and matters for consideration at future Meetings**– **Cllr Munday** – Babergh’s Call for Sites document 2024 – she will send to Cllrs - the link takes you to the actual sites.
- 29 **To Authorise Payments**- The following payments were authorised

101772	PKF Littlejohn	External Audit		£252.00
101773	Dynamic Fireworks	Fireworks		£1,235.00
101774	Peter Baldwin	August grass cutting		£150.00
101775	HMRC	Clerks Tax		£33.40
101766	Mrs J Scott	Clerks Salary – August	£615.76	
		Minus tax	<u>-£33.40</u>	
			£582.36	£584.51
		Plus Expenses	£57.95	
		Minus July Tax	<u>£55.80</u>	
			£584.51	

It was proposed that these be paid en bloc.

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

- 30 **To confirm date of next scheduled meeting** - Parish Meeting Thursday 3 October 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: