

BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT BENTLEY VILLAGE HALL THURSDAY 14 MAY 2026 AT 7.30 PM

Present

Cllr M Munday - Chairman Mrs J Scott – Clerk Cllr M Bamford Cllr B Feltwell
Cllr K Spicer Cllr A Horne Cllr J Wheals Cllr M Whiteman
Cllr J Campbell

Also, in attendance: Tree Warden, Footpath Warden, Speedwatch & 5 members of the public.

The outgoing Chairman Cllr M Bamford welcomed everyone to Bentley's Annual Parish Council Meeting. The Clerk received no notification of anyone planning to film or record this meeting.

1. **To Elect Chairman for Forthcoming Year** – Cllr Bamford told the meeting he had taken on the position of Chairman for the last year as there were so many things going on in the village but he would now like to step down. It was proposed that Cllr Munday be elected Chairman for the forthcoming year. There were no other nominations. Cllr Munday was willing to stand and was therefore duly elected. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form was duly signed and witnessed.

Proposed: Cllr J Wheals Seconded Cllr K Spicer All in favour CU
- a. **To appoint Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year** – Cllr Wheals also decided to step down as Vice Chairman. It was proposed that Cllr Whiteman be elected as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year. There were no other nominations. Cllr Whiteman was willing to stand and was therefore duly elected. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office form was duly signed and witnessed.

Proposed: Cllr M Bamford Seconded Cllr A Horne All in favour CU
3. **To record apologies for absence:** Cllr D Jones, District Councillor Marc Rowland
It was proposed that apologies be accepted.

Proposed Cllr M Munday Seconded Cllr B Feltwell All in favour CU
4. **To Receive Declarations of Interest relating to Agenda. Items** – None received
5. **Dispensations – to consider written requests for dispensation of disclosable pecuniary interest in matters relating to Agenda items** – None received.
6. **To appoint Council Representatives** – The Tree Warden, Footpath Warden, and Cllr Wheals were all willing to carry on and it was proposed they be elected en bloc.

Proposed: Cllr K Spicer Seconded Cllr M Whiteman All in favour CU

Cllr Munday said if she was to take on role as Chairman she would like to pass Website/Village Correspondent over to someone else. Councillor Whiteman agreed to take on the Website/Village Correspondent.

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

Mr C Hawes – Tree Warden Mr T Hamstead – Footpath Warden
Cllr M Whiteman – Website/ Village Correspondent Cllr J Wheals – Folly Farm Representative
7. **To approve payment of subscriptions for 2026/27 -** It was proposed that the SALC membership fee be paid

SALC £402.54 Community Action Suffolk Membership free

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

9. To approve minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2 April 2026 – The minutes were approved as a true record and were duly signed.

Proposed: Cllr A Horne Seconded Cllr K Spicer: All in favour CU

10. Matters Arising from the minutes: – Page 1330 – item 5 – Letter of thanks was sent to County Councillor Georgia Hall – item 6 Babergh District Council were informed of the Co-optation of Cllr Whiteman. – Page 331 item 10 – CIL expenditure form was sent to Babergh and put on the Council website – item 12 An e-mail was sent to resident Rest covered by agenda items.

Public Session

County Councillor Darius Laws - We have yet to meet our new County Councillor.

District Councillor Marc Rowland – Had sent in his report and Babergh's Briefing Notes for Town & Parish Councils report has been circulated to Councillors – **APPENDIX 1** in the minute book and on the website. Clerk will re-send Councillors a copy of the report.

Resident: Asked if the Parish Council had got quotes to cut the hedge at West Mill Green – also some trees in the Copse adjacent to the Playing Field were dead and there were also rats – He was told the PC would consider making this an agenda item at another meeting – Tree Warden was asked to investigate the trees. The Hedge would be discussed under agenda item 17.

Action: Agenda item – Next Playing Field Society meeting – Spinney adjacent to West Mill Green

Planning Applications

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

DC/26/00847	Maltings Church Road	House,	Permission has been granted.
DC/26/01240	Bluebell Shrub	Oaks, Hazel	Planning Permission without Compliance of conditions has been granted subject to conditions

- b) To give comments on any new applications in hand –

DC/25/04244	Malting Farm, Church Road	Discharge of conditions DC/25/04244 Conditions 4 (Render Sections)
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- c) **Brockley Wood** – Brockley Wood Liaison Group not yet had another meeting. Cllr Bamford will attend and will carry on with it.

- 11.a) Bentley Conservation Area – Signage – Nothing to report on this particular item.

- b) Recording Veteran Trees – Take off agenda

- c) Conservation Area Trail & Information Boards – Heritage Trails – We now have completed art work which is on the table for anyone to view – it's the artist's view of the Conservation Area with drawings of the buildings of historic significance, and all the veteran trees. This will be used to produce the information board as part of the Management Plan of the Conservation Area. It needs to be digitised to enable printing onto aluminium or GRP. Three quotes had been obtained all very similar in price – Councillors were passed samples and all agreed that the Fitzpatrick Woolmer aluminium was the better option and it was proposed that their quote be accepted. This will be paid for by the Ganzoni Trust grant and Locality Budget grant.

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

12. **Report by Exception – Tree Warden/Footpath Warden/Bentley Long Barn/Footpath Warden & Speedwatch– Tree Warden** – Nothing to report. - **Footpath Warden** – Reported two fallen trees – East Bergholt and Capel – At the last meeting he had been asked about the footpath by Hubbards Hall – no access to Bentley Manor – this needs to be removed from the sign and replaced with “no vehicular access to Bentley Manor”. **Bentley Long Barn** – No further news - **Speedwatch** - Two sessions have been held, one on Capel Road when twelve vehicles were reported and one at the Village Hall when seven vehicles were reported. The highest recorded speed and a record for Bentley was 54 mph passing the Village hall. No-one has come forward as yet to take on the role of Speedwatch Co-ordinator – Cliff is keeping it going until someone can be found and is doing the minimum – it was suggested that the advert be put on Bentley Facebook page and in the Bugle.

13. **To accept Clerk’s Resignation** - Councillors thanked the Clerk for her 23 years service and accepted her resignation – wishing her a happy retirement.

Proposed: Cllr M Whiteman Seconded: Cllr K Spicer All in favour CU

Cllr Munday proposed a working party made up of Chair, Vice Chair and retiring Chair – to deal with recruitment and report back to the Parish Council.

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

14. **To Award Grants to Village Organisations for Financial Year 2025/26** – It was proposed that the following grants be paid. All were within budget.

Bentley Outdoor Bowls	S19	£200
Bentley Bluebells WI	S137	£200
Friends of Capel Library	S137	£200
Tuesday Club	S137	£200
Bentley Carpet Bowls	S19	£200

Proposed: Cllr M Whiteman Seconded: Cllr K Spicer All in favour CU

15. **To Award Grants to Other Organisations for Financial Year 2025/26** – A grant application had been received from the CEVC Primary School - for new coloured re-cycling bins at a cost of £117.50 – Cllr Spicer felt that this cost should be met by PTA funding. There was doubt whether the PC was allowed to give school a grant – Clerk will investigate and report back to the next meeting.

Action: Clerk to contact SALC re grant to school

16. **Development in South East Babergh – Update** - Now called 3 Valleys Parish Council Alliance Group – is a group of parishes whose shared objective is to work collaboratively as a group of South West Babergh parish councils in a constructive partnership with Babergh District Council regarding allocation of housing in South Ipswich.. Together, they aim to ensure that development allocated through the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan is proportionate, appropriate, and genuinely sustainable for each parish. A meeting was held with Robert Hobbs – Babergh on 30 April to discuss. The amount of housing submitted for consideration during Babergh’s ‘Call for sites’ was discussed – especially the land Bentley side of the A12 – the meeting was told that the likelihood of more housing in Bentley remains high and Councillors will do their best to mitigate this.

17. **To discuss Hedge – West Mill Green** - The Parish Council has accepted liability for this hedge but they will not be paying for a contractor to maintain it . The Parish Council finances are very tight this year and we cannot spend further taxpayer’s money on this – the alternative would be to remove but this was not supported. It was therefore proposed that the Parish Council maintain the Playing Field side of the hedge and the resident maintains his side.

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

18. **To discuss Annual Playground Inspection Reports-** Councillors had been issued with a copy of the Inspection Reports. Clerk read out work required which was noted and will be acted upon. It was all low to medium risk. It was proposed that the report be accepted – cheque (£180) to be passed for payment at tonight’s meeting. Goal nets and posts were discussed – it was agreed to purchase new nets – quotes to be obtained.

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

Action - Obtain quotes for goal nets

19. **To discuss & Adopt IT Policy -** Councillors had been issued with a draft IT Policy document – Point 8 – As we don’t have mobile devices it was agreed this should be taken out. Also Point 10 – Reporting Security Incidents - the IT Administrator should be the Clerk – with these changes it was proposed that the IT Policy be adopted and put on the website.

Proposed: Cllr M Whiteman Seconded: Cllr A Horne All in favour CU

Action: Make necessary changes and put on PC website

20. **Horse & Rider Accident – Signage – Update -** The Clerk told the meeting she had contacted SCC and County Councillor Hall – Melanie Hall – SCC has got the details – Clerk will contact Melanie Hall for a progress report. Cllr Campbell reported another near miss two weeks ago – a speeding car came upon two horses – by the pub.

- PROPOSED* - 21. **Traffic diverting through the Village – Update –** Cllr Bamford told the meeting he had arranged a meeting with Councillors Paul West & Chris Chambers – unfortunately both those Councillors have lost their seats – so its on hold at the moment. Possible signage outside Collins exit – telling traffic to turn right. Continue reporting any TARS lorries going through the village on Brockley Wood Ventures website. – Date, Time, Direction of Vehicle. HGV Monitoring Group to be organised by Cllr Horne. Notices to be put in Bugle and Bentley Facebook page.

22. **Siting of Weight Restriction Signs – Church Road – Update –** The consultation period is now over so we need to contact them for the results to see whether they are going ahead with the signs.

Action: Contact SCC

23. **SID – Update -** Cllr Horne told the meeting he had recently uploaded stats onto the PC websites in the form of reports and graphs. APNR record vehicle speed, times and registration numbers. He is going to re-fix SIDS now he has the straps.

24. **Neighbourhood Plan Review – Update –** Once Babergh have reviewed the sites for development, work will start on our NHP review. Babergh have promised some funding to support NHP and Bentley have applied.

25. **Affordable Housing – Update -** This is on hold at the moment until a decision from the Planning Inspector re the Fruit Farm Site is received.

26. **The Copse –** The Eco Council/School Council’s brief for the garden at the Copse was received at the Playing Field Society meeting. A plan of the Copse was handed to Councillors which had a stone tile or gravel path, a chess table, a pond, tree stumps, wild life area, forest area bird house, bug hotel, bird bath and a Community Flower garden. These ideas will be passed to older students at Otley College for their input by Cllr Feltwell..

27. **Playing Field Society – Date of next Meeting – 2 July 2026 –** The presentation by Eco Council/School Council was received. Brantham Athletic will be approached re Portaloo and keys for the storage unit. Dog fouling on the School field was also discussed.

Action: Contact Brantham Athletic – re Portaloo & keys

28. **To receive Correspondence** – The Clerk drew Councillors’ attention to the following E-mails
 3 x Suffolk County Council Equestrian Warning signs/Weight Limit Draft Drawings/ANPR
 Timetable – Bentley 18-25 May 4 x Resident November Minutes/ APM Draft minutes 1 x
 resident re Hedge 1 x Brantham Athletic Thanks for agreement confirming conditions &
 asking to use field 30 May – 1 x Play Inspections – Annual Report 1 x Babergh District
 Council Enforcement Case – Oakleigh – Not considered to be expedient to pursue further.

29. **Exchange of information by Councillors and matters for consideration at future meetings**
 – **Cllr Spicer** – The pub has spoken before about putting a gate to the field at the end of the car
 park which would take up one space when it was open. She has written to Babergh to find out
 if an official planning application is needed.

30. **To Authorise Payments** - The following payments were authorised.

SALC	Membership Subs 2025/26		£402.54
David Bracey	Annual Play Inspections		£180.00
Cllr M Munday	McAfee Subs renewal		£79.99
J Scott	Expenses Annual Parish Meeting		£7.88
P Baldwin	Grass Cut/strim Closed Churchyard		£150.00
HMRC	Clerk’s Tax		£55.20
Mrs J Scott	Salary - April	£663.43	
	Minus tax	<u>-£55.20</u>	£691.78
		£608.23	
	Plus Expenses	<u>£83.55</u>	
		£691.78	
Cllr M Munday	Invoice for digitising work		£80.75

It was proposed that these be paid en bloc.

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

Action - Agenda item for June meeting – Change bank signatories

31. **To confirm Date of Next Scheduled Meeting** – Thursday 4 June 2026

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

CHAIRMAN:

M Munday

DATE:

4/6/26