

BENINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Email: clerk@beningtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Benington Annual Parish Council meeting held in Benington School Hall
15 May 2024

MINUTES

Present: Cllr S Rew (Chair) Cllr R Hewlett (Vice Chair)
Cllr F McClure Cllr S James

In attendance: Jo Ransom (Clerk), Ken Crofton County Councillor Herts CC, 10 members of the public (1 left at 8.30pm)

1) Apologies

- Cllr D McLean, Cllr C Radford, Cllr T Deffley

2) Election of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Rew asked for nominations for the election of Chairman. Cllr James nominated Cllr Rew. Cllr McClure seconded the motion and those present were in favour. Cllr Rew was duly elected as Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3) Election of Vice Chairman, signing of acceptance of declaration of office

Cllr Rew proposed Cllr Hewlett. Cllr McClure seconded the motion and all present were in favour. Cllr Hewlett was duly elected as Vice Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4) Declaration of Interests

- Clerk will send all Cllrs a copy of the pecuniary interests' form for completion as required by EHDC. **Action: Clerk**

5) Minutes of the last meeting

a) Acceptance

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17 March 2024 were accepted by Councillors as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

b) Review of Actions

- Actions covered below

6) Village Pond

- 3 quotes were requested and only 1 received. This was accepted unanimously by the Councillors present and the works agreed to begin. **Action: Clerk**

7) Roads

- Wildlife signage. The PC agreed to investigate more signage at the pond to raise awareness of the ducks. Concerns were raised at the potential danger of deer crossing the roads. Agreed to identify numbers of appropriate sites for warning signs to be placed and Cllr Crofton will follow up with highways. **Action: Cllr Hewlett**
- A Walkern resident has flagged the lack of road markings at the junction of Benington Rd and Walkern Rd – fault number 401003998663. Cllr James has also reported this fault. Works are scheduled to take place by Highways in the summer

- Clarion have made a few improvements to the roads in Three Stiles and Blacksmith's Hill. The parking area has a number of potholes still to be rectified.
- Other issues including broken drain covers and the Clerk will pass details on to Cllr McClure to check progress. **Action: Clerk**
- The drain issues in Three Stiles with flood water eroding the road and pavements still requires remedial work to limit future damage. The Council agreed to talk to a local resident with knowledge concerning the ownership and history of the problems. **Action: Cllr McClure**
- Speed survey to be carried out by Herts CC to support a consistent 30mph limit throughout the village. **Action: Cllr McLean**
- Missing 30mph sign at Old School Green – highways ref no. 401003784573. Councillors agreed to purchase a replacement sign and to look into 30mph 'sticker' heads as many signs are now faded. **Action: Cllr McLean**
- Walkern Rd/Shummary Lane - road flood relating to irrigation ditches enquiry logged as 23/HCS/1208. A 12 week notice of road closure has been instigated by Highways and work should be carried out in July. **Action: Cllr Crofton**
- Damage to Benington welcome sign, Church Green. Several complaints have been raised and there was concern that this could take too long if left to Highways. **Action: Cllr Crofton**
- Road cleaning is due to be carried out by EHDC and NHDC. The Councils have requested that road parking is at a minimum during the clean. Notice of cleaning to be given to the PC. **Action: Cllr Hewlett**
- The heritage streetlight by the concrete road to Walkern Hall was damaged and removed and a replacement light is required. **Action: Clerk**
- Weeds overgrown on the village triangle/green are impacting on visibility at the road junction. A review to take place. **Action: Cllr Rew**

8) **Planning Update from East Herts District Council**

- Planning Decision granted – 10 Burns Green Benington rear extensions
- Planning Decision granted – Lingfields tennis courts
- Planning consultation – 9 Whempstead Rd single storey rear extension
- Planning consultation – 68 Whempstead Rd significant works

9) **Recreational facilities**

- A representative of the Recreation Committee/Trust provided a comprehensive update to the meeting. The original plans and basic structure are not considered viable as the costs of completion would be substantial. Those present agreed that a review of the purpose of the amenity should take place and it was agreed that the group needs more support to meet the challenges and complexities of this project. A meeting will take place with volunteers from the PC, residents and Cllr Crofton.

Action Cllr Crofton

- The committee has engaged with several companies to agree support for accessing funding to improve the playground facilities. As a minimum, the area requires suitable matting around each piece of equipment and the investigation of drainage ditches to reduce surface water and flooding.

10) Fair

- The PC agreed to provide a £500 donation to the Fair committee. The Fair will take place this year on Saturday 13th July.

11) School

- No update

12) Finance

Accounts, expenditure and income for period 19 March 2024 to 15 May 2024

12.1 Expenditure to 19 March 2024 to 15 May 2024

Date paid	Name	Details	Total
4 April	Tina Piggott	Litter picking and bin emptying March 2024	£165
4 April	NCD Grounds Maintenance	Grass cutting March 2024	£192
4 April	J Ransom	Clerk Salary, Tel & Broadband March 2024, stamps £3.75	£472.84
4 April	HMRC	Clerk Salary tax month 12	£108.40

12.2 Income 19 March 2024 – 15 May 2024

Precept - £10831.50

Bank Interest to 23 April - £37.91

12.3 Accounts for the 4th quarter 2022/23

The accounts were presented and approved by those present. The Chairman advised that the Internal Audit had been completed by McCash and Hay, who confirmed that the books and papers were in good order.

12.4 Approval of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2024

The Chairman took the Parish Council through the Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24, following which Section 2 The Accounting statements 2023/24 were presented. The Chairman proposed that both the Section 1 - Annual Governance statement 2023/24 and Section 2 - Accounting statements 2023/24 be approved by the Parish Council, and that the Chairman and the Clerk sign the Annual Return. Cllr Hewlett seconded the motion and all present were in favour. The Chairman and Clerk duly signed Sections 1 & 2 of the Annual Return. The Clerk will return all relevant documentation to the External Auditor. **Action: Clerk**

13) Correspondence received

- Crime statistics for April indicated 2 burglaries in Benington
- A resident has flagged up potential building works at the Cabbage green site
- Village hierarchy study was received from East Herts
- A resident pointed out that fencing works near the school appears to be incomplete and has created an unsightly mess on the verge
- An anonymous email relating to various issues including signage and the poor condition of the playground facilities. Most of the points made were discussed during the meeting as detailed above

14) Members points of information

- It was agreed re-siting the new bench at Flatbacks would increase the area as a village amenity **Action: Cllr Hewlett**
- Signage required for the new defibrillator **Action: Cllr Hewlett**

15) Date of next meeting

- **Wednesday 10 July 2024 at 8.00 pm in the School Hall**

16) Public participation

- Took place during the meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date: