BENTWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Louisa Thomson
Email: clerk@bentworthparishcouncil.org

Neal Day - Chairman, Nikki White – Vice Chairman, Veronica Parker, Scott Neville, Simon Lane, Christian Browning and David Eyre-Brook

MINUTES OF MEETING

Tuesday 6th May 2025 at Jubilee Hall, Bentworth

Present:

Parish Councillors	Clerk	District & County Councillors	Others
Neal Day Nikki White Veronica Parker Christian Browning Simon Lane	Louisa Thomson	Tony Costigan	Members of the public

25.031 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN
Proposed Veronica Parker, Seconded Nikki White, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That Councillor Neal Day is elected as Chairman. Chairman Day signed a declaration of acceptance of office.

25.032 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN
Proposed Veronica Park, Seconded Neal Day, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: That Councillor Nikki White is elected as Vice-Chairman. Vice-Chairman White signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

25.033 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors David Eyre-Brook and Scott Neville.

25.034 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED
The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 1st April 2025, copies previously circulated. **Proposed as a true record by Simon Lane, Seconded Veronica Parker and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED and signed by chairman Neal Day.**

25.035 REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR TONY COSTIGAN
Jennie Green Lane Mobile Home without planning permission

- The land has been purchased from the farmer.
- EHDC issued a stop order which was ignored.
- EHDC applied for a court injunction which took three days to get signed by a Judge.
- A hearing will be held in a week and a half time.
- The landowner has now submitted a planning application.
- Pushing for twenty-four-hour weekend cover at EHDC Planning Department to deal with any similar issues.

Devolution

- All District Councillors will lose their seats.
- Devolution is being driven at speed by Government.
- Councils will need to merge but can't agree which councils or who will be in charge.
- EHDC is financially sound and compliant which other Councils aren't.
- There is a possibility EHDC will join Hart and Basingstoke & Dean but this is still up in the air.
- This will probably take longer to sort out than the anticipated eighteen months.
- EHDC believe their money should be spent on the District prior to Devolution.

AutoSpeedWatch

- Police do not prosecute using the camera information.
- The cameras are highlighting vehicles without tax, insurance or MOT, these outnumber the speeders. These need to be reported on DVLA website by volunteers.

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25.036 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public addressed council:

- Homestart Grant Application – Homestart are a excellent charity and are highly regarded in the education system and would hope the council view the application sympathetically.
- Traffic Volumes – Could the council look again at restricting the weight / size of vehicles travelling through the village which would reduce traffic volumes.
- AutoSpeedWatch – People don't take any notice of the cameras, people either don't care or don't know they're there. There should be more signage around the village and on both sides of the cameras, so people don't know which way they're facing. Don't feel the cameras make any difference and are a waste of time and money.

25.037 COUNCIL REGULATION AND PROCEDURES

Council reviewed the regulations and procedures, **Proposed Simon Lane, Seconded Nikki White, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:** the following regulations and procedures are confirmed and fit for Purpose.

a) Standing Orders including adopting new Model Standing Order updates
b) Financial Regulations including adopting new Model Financial Order updates
c) Grant Awarding Policy & Procedure and Application Form
d) Disciplinary and Grievance Policy
e) Social Media Policy
f) East Hampshire District Council Code of Conduct
g) Complaint Handling Procedure
h) Risk Assessment

Copies to be added to the Parish Council website detailing the review/adoption date and minute reference.

25.088 REVIEW OF DELEGATED ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMITTEES

Proposed Veronica Parker, Seconded Nikki White, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: Delegated arrangements for Planning Committee are confirmed fit for purpose.

25.039 TERMS OF REFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Proposed Veronica Parker, Seconded Nikki White, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: Terms of Reference are current and fit for purpose.

25.040 ASSET REGISTER

Confirm ownership and value of the Memorial in the Church Yard will need to be added to the asset register.

25.041 INSURANCE

Having reviewed the Insurance Policy Renewal, **Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Simon Lane, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to renew with Zurich Municipal, renewal fee £350.18.

25.042 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024/25

a) Summary of Receipts and Payments for the 4th Quarter Ended and Year Ending 31st March 2025 were presented to Council as follows:

BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD on 01/01/25	£24,342.84
ADD Total Receipts	£ 309.07
LESS Total payments	£ 3,133.02
Balance Carried forward 31/03/25	£21,518.89

These cumulative funds are represented by:

Current Account Balance	£10,238.35
BB Inst Account Balance (Neighbourhood CIL)	£11,280.54
	£21,518.89

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b) Council confirmed receipt of the Annual Internal Audit Report carried out by April Skies Accounting.

c) **Proposed Veronica Parker, Seconded Nikki White and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** the council certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and they meet the criterial required to do so.
The Certificate of Exemption is signed by the Chairman Neal Day and Responsible Finance Officer Louisa Thomson.

d) Annual Governance and Accountability Return, variances report and bank reconciliation.

i) Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 – Council completed the Annual Governance Statement. **Proposed Veronica Parker, Seconded Simon Lane, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** it is signed by Chairman Neal Day and Clerk Louisa Thomson.

ii) Accounting Statements 2024/25 – The Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025 were presented to council for approval. **Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Simon Lane, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Accounting Statements 2024/25 are approved, and were signed by Chairman Neal Day, Clerk Louisa Thomson had signed before presenting to council.

e) Conflict of Interest with BDO LLP Form
Proposed Veronica Parker, Seconded Nikki White, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that no members of Bentworth Parish Council have a conflict of interest with BDO, the form was signed by Chairman Neal Day and Clerk Louisa Thomson.

f) Notice for the period for the excise of public rights
Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Veronica Parker, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: The date of announcement is Monday 2nd June 2025. Public rights notice commencing on Tuesday 3rd June 2025 and ending on Monday 14th July 2025.

25.043 PLANNING
Council considered two planning applications, their comments are forwarded to East Hampshire District Council.

a) EHDC-25-0165-FUL Crossways Trinity Road, Bentworth **OBJECT**
Detached dwelling following demolition of existing barns.

Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Veronica Parker, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: Bentworth Parish Council objects to this application as follows:

This is a completely “misleading” speculative application.
The heading for this application states that this is a full planning application for a detached dwelling following demolition of “existing barns”.
This application is not on the site of the barns and has no relation to that application. The barn application is for a barn conversion not a full demolition and was approved.
Is the applicant now planning something different for the barn and proposing to demolish it fully?

This new application is on the busy Trinity Road whereas the barn conversion is on Jennie Green Lane which is a Byway (BOAT).
On Trinity Road the site to the field has a gate crossing a highways owned and managed verge and is on a dangerous bend where the speed limit changes from 40 to National Speed limit. Highways have already confirmed they have no interest in reducing this speed limit when requested by the Parish Council and affected residents.
The proposed entrance does not offer sufficient splay for visibility when cars approach at national speed limit. This is already a major problem for neighbouring properties who experience a dangerous encounter with high-speed traffic each time they exit their properties. This location does not meet the requirement for visibility splays and should not be allowed.
The entrance mentioned is simply a gate in the fence and not a surfaced entrance to the site.
Trinity Road has severe flooding issues at the junction with Trinity Hill where the road can become virtually impassable during heavy rainfall. The Junction of Trinity Rd and Jennie Green Lane also floods. This development will create further run off which cannot be absorbed by the compacted clay soil. As this development is at the top of a hill it will create issues in both directions.

The land is virgin land adjacent to countryside and would constitute as building in the countryside and is far from the settlement boundary in Bentworth.
The site of Crossways is being over developed with multiple recent planning applications for changes to the primary home, approval to convert "The Workshop" and The change of use to a Barn Conversion having already been submitted and approved. This latest application is speculative and would over develop this small site.
This site is frequented by wildlife and the BNG EXEMPTION statement suggesting that this would be a self-build is unacceptable considering the amount of development proposed on this site. With numerous approved planning applications on this site and with no sign of any development having commenced it appears that this is all speculative probably with the intention to sell in parts with planning permission. This cannot therefore be considered as a self-build.
This is a full planning application. Bentworth has no mains drainage or gas. How will effluence be treated? How will the house be heated? Will there be solar panels? Will there be bore holes or drainage fields?
All the properties in this vicinity have bats. What efforts will be taken to support this rare wildlife that will be disturbed when trees have been felled.
This application leaves a lot to be desired. A lack of information and that which does exist appears to be misleading to draw attention away from the true nature of this application.

b) EHDC-25-0126-LDCP — Pykes Holt End Lane, Bentworth — **NO OBJECTION**
Lawful development certificate proposed - detached garden building.

Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Simon Lane, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: Bentworth Parish Council has no objection to this application.

25.044 GRANT APPLICATION
Proposed Christian Browning, Seconded Simon Lane, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: approve grant funding of £200 to Home-Start.

25.045 AUTOSPEEDWATCH – no update.

25.046 SPEED LIMIT REMINDER SIGN

Report from David Maltby

SID Report for Denyers between 20 April and 4 May.

	Total (both directions)
Vehicles Recorded	15,576
31-35mph	6,494
36-40mph	2,055
41-45mph	433
46-50mph	74
51-60mph	14
61-70mph	0
>30mph	9,070(58.23%)
>35mph	2,576(16.54%)

25.047 NEWSLETTER
Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Simon Lane, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to approve newsletter printing costs up to £65.

25.048 COMMUNITY UPDATES
Community Care – only 9 trips were undertaken last month, they have a full quota of members.
Neighbourhood Watch – nothing to update.

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25.049 PAYROLL

Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Christian Browning, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED: to approve the new payroll processing rates of £31.50 per month, an increase of £1.20 per month payable to DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd.

25.050 ACCOUNTS 2025/26

Proposed Nikki White, Seconded Veronica Parker, UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to approve the following payments:

a)	Louisa Thomson – Clerk Salary April 2025	£505.12
b)	Louisa Thomson – Clerk's expenses April 2025	£ 20.44
c)	Zurich Municipal – Insurance renewal (if approved in item 13.)	£350.18
d)	April Skies Accounting – Internal Audit	£344.40
e)	Hampshire Association of Local Councils – Affiliation Fees and NALC Levy	£326.00
f)	DCK Payroll Solutions Ltd – Payroll and Year End processing	£ 74.64
g)	S Neville – Domain Renewal	£ 23.96
h)	Hampshire County Council – S178 ASW Camera licence fee	£210.00
i)	N Day – Annual Parish Meeting refreshments	£ 50.00

25.051 MEETING DATES

a) Council confirmed meetings will be held as follows, note these may be subject to change all meetings will be advertised on the village noticeboards and the Parish Council website.

2025

June	3rd
July	1st
August	Meeting to be scheduled, if required.*
September	2nd
October	7th
November	4th
December	2nd

2026

January	Meeting to be scheduled, if required.*
February	3rd
March	Meeting to be scheduled, if required.*
April	7th Annual Parish Meeting
May	5th Annual Council Meeting
June	2nd

b) Confirm the date of the next scheduled meeting is Tuesday 3rd June 2025.

CLOSE OF MEETING – The Chair thanked all present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.52pm.

Signed……
Chair Bentworth Parish Council

3rd June 2025