

# BENTWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Chairperson: Mrs Jenny French

Clerk: Allison Spyer

14 Barley View, North Waltham, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 2ST  
Tel: 07786 063570 Email: clerk.bentworth@parish.hants.gov.uk

## MINUTES OF MEETING

6<sup>th</sup> February 2013, 7.30pm, Village School, Bentworth

### Present:

Parish Councillors	Clerk	District & County Councillors	Others
Jenny French (Chairperson) Tony Costigan David Hawes Chris Hurley Pam Wait	Allison Spyer		11 members of the public PC Richard MacLaren Jean Cornelius Jo Ayres

**ACTION  
FOR**

- 18.15 Apologies for Absence:**  
Apologies received from Veronica Parker, Phillip Guest, Jenny Lewis
- 18.16 Declarations of Interest:**  
There were no declarations.
- 18.17 Meeting Open to the Public:**  
Gentleman broached the topic of blocked drains in the village but CH advised he would cover the subject in his roads report.
- 18.18 Minutes of the January Meeting:**  
The minutes were approved.
- 18.19 Matters arising:**  
There were no matters arising
- 18.20 CPRE Update:**  
AS confirmed to the Council that she has been in contact with both CPRE and HALC regarding the issue of membership. CPRE were unable to disclose a list of current members due to data protection laws, but they were able to advise that they had over 2000 parish councils as members. HALC's response was that there is nothing to say that the PC can't be a member although we do run the risk of upsetting local residents if they feel their money is being spent on a lobbying organisation that may be involved with controversial issues. DH and PW asked what the benefits of membership were. AS to investigate further, payment deferred to next meeting.
- 18.21 Police Update:**  
PC Richard MacLaren backed the SpeedWatch Campaign as he felt that a Community based resolution was the most suitable option and would give it his full support. The Parish Council informed RM that they had opted in for SW, volunteers have been found and funding obtained. RM will get the co-ordinators security checked and will also have the roads checked. JF informed the Council and RM that she already has SC clearance which should speed things up. RM will email CH all the start-up info.  
Recent crime in the area included a stolen car and property taken from Medstead Grange RM advised the council that local residents could email him when they were away on holiday with contact details and he would do what he could to keep an eye on their property
- 18.22 Litter Pick:**  
CH would like to organise a litter pick throughout the village, JF to organise a risk assessment in advance. Council tentatively agreed a date of Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March from 10am. JF to advise the villager as soon as the date is confirmed,
- 18.23 Localism of Council Tax Support:**  
DH has investigated NALC's request for Parish Councils to sign their template letter further and feels this applies only to councils with precepts over £100,000.00. The Council agreed with his assessment and decided not to sign. Motion proposed by CH seconded by TC and unanimously agreed by rest of council

**AS**

**RM**

**JF**

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## 18.24 Village Appearance:

DH would like to see some of the PC's reserves spent on beautification of the village for example the area around the Lords Waste. CH informed the Council that he has had meeting with Derek Rawle from Highways with regards to the area around the postbox/noticeboard and DR has agreed to install reflective posts by unofficial layby and level out the ground. There will be no cost to Bentworth PC apart from buying a packet of grass seed

AS

TC reported that many of the hedges that needed to be cut back have been cut now and that those landowners who have not cut back their hedges will be getting letters from Hants Highways. TC agreed with DH and would like to see money being spent. AS to seek permission from HCC for the PC to make improvements to The Lords Waste. AS will update at the next meeting.

## 18.25 Grants / Funding:

It was agreed that grants could be applied for to cover the cost of the pond refresh and the installation of a red telephone box in place of the modern one once costs were obtained. PW agreed to investigate the mechanism of having the telephone box replaced.

PW/AS

AS to put the information about the HCC grant for small organisations on the website.

## 18.26 Staff Management:

It was agreed that the Recruitment Committee would meet and formalise staff management and report back at the next meeting.

DH/TC/JL

## 18.27 Finance:

Payments for approval

- Allison Spyer, Salary £351.00
- Bentworth PCC, Grant £250.00
- HALC, Clerk training (split with NW) £18.00

Payments proposed by CH, seconded by TC and unanimously agreed by rest of council.

Receipts

- No current receipts

## 18.28 Internal Auditor:

The Council agreed to employ a qualified Parish Council Internal Auditor this year and it was decided that the clerk could source an IA costing up to £200.00. Motion proposed by DH, and seconded by TC. Three councillors to two voted the motion through.

AS

## 18.29 Planning Committee Report:

PW presented her report on the last planning meeting which met to discuss Cirrus, the planned Eco House along Jenny Green Lane. She advised that the Committee objected to the application on the grounds that it was outside the settlement area.

## 18.30 Stile Update:

AS read out report from JL with regards to stiles. Addendum attached. It was agreed that AS would contact HCC to find out how to get them fixed if the Landowners would not.

AS

## 18.31 Councillors Report:

*Bentworth Community Assoc:* AS to find out if they have disbanded.

AS

*Environment:*

*Footpaths:*

*Health & Safety:* JF Will be doing a risk assessment for village shortly, TC agreed to help.

JF/TC

*Open Spaces:* PW has had an offer from a resident to lift the crown on the Oak Tree on the green for free.

AS to ask VP what the process is to achieve this. In the meantime AS find arboriculturist to offer costings to survey all large trees in the village.

AS

*Pond:* PW reported that she not yet met with any potential contractors due to them cancelling or no longer being contactable. AS can forward three new contacts on to PW

AS

*Traffic & Highways:* CH reported that has organised to move the village name signs to the boundary. Flooding at the junction of Trinity Road and Trinity Hill was due to the drains being full. CH confirmed they will be cleared as will the drain by Jenny Green Lane. Derek Rawle from Highways has also agreed to repair all

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the potholes from Trinity Road up to A339 and Childer Hill. CH asked the council how they felt about installing mini-round-a-bouts on two prime locations in the village Sun Hill and Village Street, and junction of Drury Lane and Station Road. Council agreed to vote on the issue for installation. Motion proposed by CH and seconded by DH, Three councillors for, one against and one abstained. Motion passed.

*Trees:* Deferred

*Young people and families:* Deferred

*Broadband:* Deferred

**18.32 Other Reports:**

*Community Care:*

*Neighbourhood watch:*

*St Marys School:* JC asked if a footpath can be installed between the School and the Star. CH to contact JC to discuss further. JC introduced Jo Ayres new head teacher of the School. JA reported that there had been a high level of sickness within the student body recently, the appropriate course of actions had been taken and the sickness level had now rescinded.

**18.33 Meetings Attended:**

Extended Clerks Conference, AS

**18.34 Forthcoming Meetings:**

Code of conduct VP, TC, DH PW, JL, PG all attending

**18.35 Date of next Meeting:**

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm, followed by the APM

**18.36** The Chairman thanked all members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.25pm

Signed ..... Date .....

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## ADDENDUM

### Report on Hedges and Footpaths in Bentworth 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013

1. Majority of roadside hedges have now been cut.
  - Hedges- corner of Drury Lane crossroads towards woodland trust still needs cutting back
2. Stiles/Footpaths
  - All stiles on land to west of village on Wellers Place and around Gaston Wood to Village are in appalling state and need to be replaced or re-instated. Way marking is also poor. The majority of this land is farmed by Trinity Farm but has several different owners. HCC have been made aware of the issues here, in the past, but due to very little funding have been unable to do more than light clearing of a few paths last summer.
  - Stile (with steps down) Tinkers Lane end of footpath from Bentworth Hall drive has now been removed and is just an opening in the hedge.
  - Stile on footpath from Bentworth Hall drive to Holt end needs to be repaired as fairly rickety.
  - Stile bisecting track running from Tinkers Lane to Thedden Farm. I understand that this may also need repairing but I have been unable to walk this path recently due to damaged knee.
  - Metal gates have been erected, by HCC, on Dirty lane at Ashley Road end and further down to prevent use by 4x4. Unfortunately this is not stopping the motorcycles and there is to be another meeting of the Footpath Group on the 24<sup>th</sup> Feb to discuss this issue which I hope to attend.
  - It would help greatly if walkers could take note of any 4 x4's or motorcycle groups using the lanes and idea of numbers and times. If they could let me know I would be grateful.

The weather has had a significant impact on the tracks/footpaths and also on the management of hedges as it has been impossible to get hedge cutters into many of the fields due to sodden ground. The instant reaction of many people is that it is the farmer's responsibility to cut back hedges. In fact it is the landowner's responsibility whether it is a garden hedge or a field hedge; it just happens that it is farmers who often take on the task as they have the equipment.

#### Just a couple of quick points

- Field hedges cannot be cut by farmers after the 1<sup>st</sup> March or before the 31<sup>st</sup> July unless they obtain a derogation, e.g if they overhang a road.
- Farmers are also advised not to cut all hedges every year.