

**Brinkley Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Parish council meeting at 7pm on 27<sup>th</sup> January 25**  
**At Brinkley Memorial Hall**

**Present:** Cllr M Coley, Cllr N Beamish, Cllr S McIntyre, Cllr Monks, Hayley Livermore, Cllr John Trapp

| Item     |   | Action |
|----------|---|--------|
| 24-25/46 | <p><b>Public Forum</b></p> <p>None</p>  |        |
| 24-25/47 | <p><b>Apologies of absence</b></p> <p>Cllr Sharp, Cllr A Aubert</p>   |        |
| 24-25/48 | <p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>None</p>  |        |
| 24-25/49 | <p><b>Approval of minutes 4<sup>th</sup> December 24</b></p> <p>Deferred to the next meeting</p>  |        |
| 24-25/50 | <p><b>District and County councillor reports</b></p> <p>DC and CC report appended to these minutes.</p>   |        |
| 24-25/51 | <p><b>Planning since the last meeting</b></p> <p>T1 Sycamore - Fell and remove, tree overshadowing garden, will interact with LV power cable in future, replant with prunus sp. T2 Sycamore - Fell and remove, tree overshadowing garden, will interact with LV power cable in future, replant with prunus sp. T3 Birch - Crown reduce in height to an approximate height of 12m (a reduction of 2m) and shape</p> <p> </p> |        |

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Cricket Field Cottage High Street Brinkley Newmarket Suffolk CB8 0SF- **Status Undecided**

T1 Poplar - Re-pollard to previous pruning points. Tree is pollarded at approximately 3m in height  
T2 Poplar - Re-pollard to previous pruning points. Tree is pollarded at approximately 3m in height  
T3 Willow - Re-pollard to previous pruning points. Tree is pollarded at approximately 5m in height.  
With ongoing consent to repeat the works on a 3-5year cycle for the future 10 Years (until 2035)| Cricket Field Cottage High Street Brinkley Newmarket Suffolk CB8 0SF- **Status Undecided**

24-25/52

**Meeting dates for 2025**

The parish council will meet in 2025 on:  
May 19th, July 21st, 15th September and 3rd December.

24-25/53

**Website and emails**

It is recommended that all parish councils have a website and email addresses with a domain ending in .gov.uk. The clerk has obtained costs from Vision ICT which are:

- [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) Domain (first 2 years): £125 + VAT
- Renewal (every two years): £65 + VAT
- Mailboxes: £20 + VAT per mailbox, per year

It was agreed to proceed with moving to a .gov.uk domain for the website and email addresses for all councillors and the clerk. Proposed by IM, seconded by SM and agreed by all.

24-25/54

**Maintenance list and Grasscutting contract**

It was agreed that the village sign needs painting, the noticeboard needs painting and the phone box needs cleaning and possibly painting. A budget of £1000 was agreed for this work. Clerk to obtain quotes. Proposed by SM, seconded by IM and all in favour.

We have received a quote from our existing grounds maintenance contractors with a 4.5% increase on last years costs. It was agreed to enter a 3 year contract with the price staying the same the second year and increasing by inflation in the third year. Proposed by IM, seconded by NB.

24-25/55

**Finance**

1. **Cheques for signature-**  
Chq683 H Livermore- £75.88

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**2. Bank reconciliation and budget update**

As of 31/12/24 there was £20156 across the 2 accounts. We expect there to be spends of another £1150 to the end of this tax year and we have £2000 that we owe LHI. This totals 17006 which is 1.75x our precept. Spending is in line with budget.

**3. Budget and precept 25/26**

Budget for 25/26 was circulated before the meeting and agreed.

It was agreed that the precept will remain the same as last year at £9706. Proposed by IM, seconded by NB and agreed by all.

24-25/56

**Parish matters**

1. Allotments- The parish council is making progress with the purchase of the land on which the allotments sit having been successful with a S106 and Facilities improvement grant. We are hoping this will be completed by April 2025.  
It was agreed that in order for some of the allotment plots to be in a state to be let, some work is needed and a budget of £250 was agreed for this work.
2. Play area- We will hopefully make an application for a grant for another new piece of play equipment later this year.

**District Councillors' Report to Parish Councils**

Finance and Assets Committee on 30 January 2025

At this meeting, the following decisions were made:

1. The first draft of the 2025/26 Budget was discussed. The Director Finance recommended that the District Council Tax should increase by £5 (for a Band D property), but the Conservatives' amendment to have no increase in Council Tax was agreed.
2. The Crematorium project has now moved from RIBA stage 3 to RIBA stage 4, after the original design was value-engineered, and the outcome will be brought to Full Council in May.
3. The draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2025-2028 was formally adopted.

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The Government has launched a review of Local Government Authorities with a view to improving efficiency. The Leader of the Council is reluctant to have any changes made; it is not clear what is the view of the other Conservatives; the Lib Dems and Independent are aware that changes will have to be made, and their discussion is based on what is best for the residents.

**Cllrs Charlotte Cane MP and John Trapp**

**County councillor A Sharp Report**

**Buses**

At the Transport & Infrastructure Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> November, two proposed new routes were discussed along the B1102 corridor, one going through Bottisham and the Wilbrahams and ending at the sixth form colleges and Addenbrookes. Officers stated that they were unable to provide details about the new routes as this was commercially confidential due to ongoing negotiations but would be released shortly.

I have continued to chase for the information, even if it was on a confidential basis, but with no success. However, now it has been announced that the procurement has failed and the whole process must restart, which is very frustrating. The mayor has pushed through a proposal to retain bus fares at £2 per journey, after the Government's decision to increase the fare to £3 from 1<sup>st</sup> January. This will be funded by some of the money not used on the extra routes, but only until the end of June 2025, as the budget is not available after then, which is a totally unsustainable use of public money.

Whilst lower fares are welcome, they need to be sustainable and lower fares are no use when there is no bus service, as promised as part of the 200% increase in the mayoral precept, which residents have seen no extra bus services yet. The handling of the extra bus services has been very poor by the Combined Authority.

**Council Reorganisation**

There has been a large amount of press coverage around the proposed white paper issued by the Government. It is true that there are too many layers of local government, with the Combined Authority, County Council, District Councils, Parish Councils and Cambridge has the GCP as well. It seems inevitable that one layer, probably the County Council will go, with one or two unitary authorities set up. As Cambridgeshire already has a mayor, it is unlikely that they will be in the first wave, so it is likely that the County Council elections in 2025 will go ahead, but changes will come into place over the next few years, with the GCP becoming part of the Combined Authority jurisdiction.

**Conservative Motion on tax on Family Farms**

At the County Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December, a Conservative motion asking the Council to support writing to Government expressing their disagreement with the measures proposed

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received majority support, except for Labour members of Council. Whilst this will do little to persuade Government of the error that they have made, it does demonstrate the feeling in what is a rural county.

Brinkley Junction I am aware that a meeting between officers and Stuart took place in December to discuss the improved signage that was granted by the LHI bid and expect this to have some effect. I have had discussions with officers around the Road Safety process in terms of junctions such as the one in Brinkley and work has been undertaken using data and road layout evaluation. I have raised again during the budget setting round of Highways & Transport Committee last week, the inadequate budget for type of junction that we have in Brinkley, which doesn't fall into major junction work, such as the Swaffham Heath crossroads, which cost in excess of £750,000, but is bigger than the LHI scheme. This increase is something that is not in the Joint Administration's plans currently, but will continue to challenge. In terms of Sat Nav accuracy, National Highways have been in discussion with Google and Apple, because this is occurring across the country. I am aware of five in my division, and I am sure that there are others that I am not aware of. Currently, I am informed that National Highways have not had much success with the Tech companies, but it is an issue that I will continue to seek updates on.