

Bengeo Rural Parish Council Meeting 19th January 2026

Email: clerk@bengeoruralparishcouncil.gov.co.uk Website: www.bengeoruralparishcouncil.gov.uk

MINUTES

<u>Present:</u>		<u>In Attendance:</u>
Cllr Tony Ellis (Chair)	Cllr Neil Blackaller	Victoria Preuss – Clerk
Cllr Matthew Clutterbuck	Cllr Jayne Abrey	Cllr Ken Crofton

25/26 – 041	Apologies
25/26 - 042	Declarations of Councillors’ interests pertaining to agenda items. None
25/26– 043	Minutes The minutes from the November 2025 meeting were approved.
25/26 – 044	Public Participation A resident from Chapmore End attended the meeting to discuss safety concerns following the recent car accident on the 28 December 2025 on the B158 at the Chapmore End junction. The Parish Council has raised this with East Herts – Highways, and unfortunately the junction does not meet the criteria to necessitate a review. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council and the resident would raise the issue of refreshing the road marking again with East Herts, as the previous request was rejected.
25/26 - 045	Internal Audit a – This is a standing item on the agenda, and all open actions have been closed. This will be reviewed at the end of year meeting.
25/26 - 046	Planning Applications None
25/26 - 047	Finance a – The Parish Clerk presented the latest finance sheet including invoice details, powers to spend and reconciliation to the cash book was presented to the Parish Council for review and approval. The Parish Council noted the invoices that had been paid since the previous meeting, including the deposit for replacement fencing with Farm & County Supplies. In accordance with the Financial Regulations the payment of the deposit for the fencing was carried out in the presence of the Chair – Cllr Tony Ellis on 23 December 2025. b - The spend to date against the budget was reviewed and noted by the Council. c – Budget 2026/27 – The Parish Clerk presented the updated draft budget for 2026/27 for consideration and approval. The draft budget took into account a small uplift for 2026/27 costs. It also reflected a 3.2% salary increase for the Parish Clerk and a reduction in hours from 7.5hrs to 5.5hrs a week. The reduction in hours is due to moving to bi-monthly meeting.

	<p>In conjunction with the discussion of the 2026/27 budget, the Parish Council reviewed and discussed the proposed Precept submission. To support the proposed budget, a small increase in the Precept for 2026/27 was included. The increase will cover any inflationary increases for services funded by the Parish Council. The proposed Precept for 2026/27 was £25,000. The need for the increase was discussed and agreed by the Council.</p> <p>The Parish Council approved:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3.2% increase in salary for Parish Clerk - a reduction in weekly hours for the Parish Clerk from 7.5hrs to 5.5hrs a week. - 2026/27 budget for Bengoe Rural Parish Council - Precept for 2026/27 - £25,000. <p>d – The current reserves were reviewed and are being held to support future maintenance of the new play area.</p>
25/26 - 048	<p>Chapmore End</p> <p>The hedge opposite the Woodman has been cut by the contractors. No more fly-tipping has been reported on the BOAT, but this will continue to be monitored.</p> <p>Tonwell</p> <p>The two Christmas Trees for the village were purchased, with one given to the school and one put up on the village green at the bottom of Bourne Honour.</p> <p>Fencing quotes – following the receipt of the quote it was circulated to all Councillors for review and consideration. The quote was accepted and proceeded with, with work due to start late February. The latest quarterly inspection report was circulated and reviewed. No high-risk areas were highlighted.</p> <p>Crouchfields</p> <p>Nothing to note.</p>
25/26 -	<p>Items to Note</p> <p>a – The Parish Clerk informed the Council that they had actioned a change to the Council insurance policy. That they had increased the fidelity guarantee from £25,000 to £50,000 at no extra cost.</p>
<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>16 March 2026</p>	