



BENTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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Monday 10th March 2025

Minutes of Full Council meeting Monday 3rd March 2025 at 7:30pm Lower Hall, Bentham Town Hall.

Councillors Present: Cllr Adams, Paige, Ryan, Stannard and Taylor.

Town Clerk: C. Burrow

Assistant Town Clerk: E. Langan

County Councillor David Ireton

MOP: 2

Bentham News: 1

Chair introduced the new Assistant Town Clerk to the Council and members of the public.

218. Apologies from members unable to attend: -

218.1 To note apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Marshall and Cllr Burton

218.2 To consider acceptance of reasons for absence – if consideration of reason requested.

APPROVED

219 Declaration of Interest: -

219.1 To note declarations of interest not already declared under members Code of Conduct or members register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Cllr Taylor - 224.1

219.2 To approve dispensation requests – if dispensation request received.

NONE

220 To receive Comment & Concerns:

Public participation – to hear matters raised by members of the public or Cllrs with an interest (that are allowed to speak) either on agenda items or for future consultation. (NB: for non-agenda items members of the Council are not permitted to respond, except to ask questions for the purposes of clarification; the period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 20 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes).

MOP1 – Concern expressed on pedestrian safety around Bentham, what action will be taken? Narrow pavements, HGV mounting the kerbs, parking, traffic management, speeding, MOP suggested a consultation with the public.

Chair advised that the 20mph speed limits around Bentham are moving forward. Police are keen to resolve inappropriate use of highways and pavements that are reported.

MOP1 – asked who to approach regarding the narrow pavements>

Chair advised that this was under the remit of North Yorkshire Council Highways department, there have already been pavements widened along Robin Lane and down to the Primary School.

221 To Confirm the Minutes of the meeting on Monday 3rd February 2025 as a true and accurate record.

RESOLVED - to amend to include the date of the meeting, signed as a true and accurate record.

222 To receive the Police Report & allow members to ask questions for information - If any.

RECEIVED – Read out in full by Chair Appendix A

223 To receive a **Report from NYC Councillor** (for information only) - If any

Cllr Ireton – the North Yorkshire Council Tax budget was set last week at an increase of 4.99%. The Fire budget has been increased by 23%. Regarding the 20mph speed limit; progressing, all areas looked at apart from the school, fit the criteria for the 20mph speed limit without engineering works, the last speed check completed saw an increase of speed outside the school, there will have to be engineering works to achieve the 20mph speed limit, this will take time to implement. The tragic accident that occurred ten days ago will not feed into this, took place in an area that does not need engineering works. Cllr Ireton commented that these engineering works may need to consider local residents within the vicinity.

Cllr Stannard asked about the collapsing man hole in the road near the Primary School, Cllr Ireton will follow this up.

Cllr Ireton informed Council that the light on Cleveland Square is not owned by North Yorkshire, the underpass area is privately owned, Bentham Town Council to request ownership from the Land Registry.

Cllr Ireton left the meeting 19:50.

224 To consider and comment upon **New Planning Applications:**

224.1 APP/ZA24/26058/CPL 25 Wenning Avenue High Bentham Lancaster Application for Lawful Development Certificate for Proposed Dormer Extensions and a Proposed Garage.

Cllr Taylor left the room at 19:51

RESOLVED – No further comment.

Cllr Taylor returned at 19:56

225 To receive and note the following **Planning Decisions/Information:**

NONE RECEIVED

226 **Financial Matters:**

226.1 To receive and note current bank balances; Unity current account as £75,437.20, the Public Sector deposit account balance as £85,000.00 and the Virgin current account £234.10.

NOTED

226.2 To consider a debit card for the new bank account according to Financial Regulations restricted to a single transaction of up to £500.

RESOLVED TO AGREE – limited to spending of £2000 a month.

226.3 To consider purchasing a laptop for the Assistant Town Clerk and a tablet for a Councillor.

RESOLVED TO AGREE – purchase the laptop and tablet.

226.4 To note the pre-authorised salary and pre-agreed contractual payments.

NOTED

226.5 To approve the payments.

8991.7

Tender	Order No	Date	Supplier	Invoice Number	Description	Net	VAT	Total
DIRDEBIT	329	08.02.2025	Waterplus	8241047	Water Rates	£92.68	£0.00	£92.68
ONLINE	330	08.02.2025	Clearglass Cleaning	Feb 2025	Window Cleaning	£120.00	£0.00	£120.00
ONLINE	331	08.02.2025	Elkerlodge Services Ltd	410	Locum RFO	£660.00	£132.00	£792.00
ONLINE	332	10.02.2025	NEST	Jan	Pension	£103.34	£0.00	£103.34
ONLINE	333	10.02.2025	SKY	2163347-0	Internet	£54.95	£10.99	£65.94
ONLINE	335	11.02.2025	Whalley Swarbrick		Payroll	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00
DIRDEBIT	336	11.02.2025	Total Energies	3006681271	Electricity	£673.59	£134.72	£808.31
ONLINE	337	11.02.2025	Blachere Illumination UK Ltd	5038641	xmas lights	£556.65	£111.33	£667.98
ONLINE	338	14.02.2025	Business Stream	7184102	Water	£70.05	£0.00	£70.05
ONLINE	339	17.02.2025	Mark Burrow Electrical Ltd	1655	ELECTRICAL WORK	£405.00	£81.00	£486.00
ONLINE	340	17.02.2025	Ace Elevators	3913	Lift	£440.00	£88.00	£528.00
ONLINE	341	17.02.2025	Amazon	DS-AEU-INV-GB-2025-48570402	curtains	£19.98	£3.99	£23.97
ONLINE	342	17.02.2025	Dunelm	DS-AEU-INV-GB-2025-48570402	curtains	£158.33	£31.67	£190.00
ONLINE	343	18.02.2025	Business Stream	7205048	Water	£16.50	£0.00	£16.50
DIRDEBIT	344	20.02.2025	EE Mobile	V02315923760	Mobiles	£47.00	£9.40	£56.40
DIRDEBIT	345	20.02.2025	SSE SWALEC	2256057	Unmetered Electric Supply	£239.64	£11.98	£251.62
ONLINE	346	20.02.2025	currys		Laptop & Tablet	£614.99	£122.99	£737.98
ONLINE	347	24.02.2025		Feb	Salary	£1,151.51	£0.00	£1,151.51
ONLINE	348	24.02.2025		feb	Salary	£249.66	£0.00	£249.66
ONLINE	349	24.02.2025		feb	Salary	£1,152.31	£0.00	£1,152.31
ONLINE	350	25.02.2025	Kingsdale Projects	1382	branches gritting cemetery	£587.50	£0.00	£587.50
DIRDEBIT	351	25.02.2025	North Yorkshire Council	490011800	excess waste	£61.92	£0.00	£61.92
ONLINE	352	26.02.2025	Viking	5067009	Printing, postage, stationery	£61.49	£12.30	£73.79
ONLINE	353	26.02.2025	ADC	941753	Auto Door	£177.00	£35.40	£212.40
DIRDEBIT	354	26.02.2025	1&1 Ionos	203046712042	Internet	£28.03	£5.61	£33.64
ONLINE	355	26.02.2025	Myers Building Supplies	9/3565582	tools	£16.08	£3.22	£19.30
ONLINE	356	26.02.2025	Myers Building Supplies	9/3541115	pine corner	£7.93	£1.59	£9.52
ONLINE	357	26.02.2025	Myers Building Supplies	9/3524982	Salt	£10.18	£2.04	£12.22
ONLINE	358	26.02.2025	Myers Building Supplies	9/3522948	Salt	£35.63	£7.13	£42.76
ONLINE	359	26.02.2025	Myers Building Supplies	9/3523333	Salt	£112.00	£22.40	£134.40

RESOLVED TO APPROVE – to authorise Cllr Ryan and Cllr Adams (staff names redacted)

227 To receive information on the following ongoing issues and decide further action where necessary:

227.1 Update on the 20mph speed limits.

NOTED – email correspondence from the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St John’s Church to North Yorkshire Highways regarding ensuring the 20mph speed limit reaches beyond the church. Response from Highways is that this area is intended to include in the 20mph speed limit, changing the 30mph to 20mph.

227.2 Update on the Home to School Transport Policy.

Letter from Bentham Town Council; appendix B, response from North Yorkshire Council; appendix C.

RESOLVED to submit further communication as a FOI request requesting the cost of transporting pupils from Bentham to Settle College and from Bentham to QES in 2023/2024 and the projected savings for the years 2024/2025, 2025/2026 and 2026/2027.

227.3 Environment Agency Update (if received).

RESOLVED – there will be a meeting on Tuesday 18th March with North Yorkshire Officers and Environment Agency.

227.4 To receive an update on the parking near the Primary School.

RESOLVED – Clerk to report the parking on the pavement to North Yorkshire Policing team.

227.5 To consider the Town and Parish Council Survey for North Yorkshire Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

RESOLVED – respond; there have been no Traveller sites within the Bentham area for many years.

227.6 Defibrillator batteries are depleting.

RESOLVED – Clerk to research the cost of batteries.

228 **Staffing Matters:**

228.1 To consider the Maternity and Paternity Policy.

RESOLVED TO APPROVE

228.2 To consider the Emergency Dependents Leave Policy.

RESOLVED TO APPROVE

228.3 To consider the Compassionate Leave Policy.

RESOLVED TO APPROVE

229 **Correspondence received:** To receive information on the following new correspondences and decide further action, if any;

229.1 Angus Fire Update

Read out in full by Chair - Appendix D

229.2 Cleaner Bentham Update

Council questioned that the update was not addressed to the Bentham Town Council, request clarification.

229.3 Grasmere Car Park

RESOLVED – advise the member of public that the car park belongs to North Yorkshire Council.

229.4 Auction Mart

RESOLVED – Clerk to write a letter to Bentham Auction Mart to express how saddened Bentham Town Council are by the recent tragedy. Request what protocols and procedures are going to be put in place to ensure industrial safety?

RESOLVED – Clerk to contact parking enforcement to request increased presence once again notably Wednesday.

RESOLVED – Clerk to contact Highways to request further support with traffic issues/safety within Bentham.

229.5 River Wenning Signage

RESOLVED advise member of public that the land around the river does not belong to Bentham Town Council, contact the land owner or the Environment Agency. Comments/concerns will be past on to the Environment Agency at the meeting. The river is currently being monitored by different groups and any open water swimming may be hazardous.

230 **Bentham Business Boost Update**

230.1 To receive an update.

Cllr Paige said there was a new Bentham Business Boost committee formed, the next meeting will be on Monday 10th March 2025, applying for the Mayoral fund.

Cllr Taylor attended the Social Media training, there was a miscommunication of times/dates, however it was a really good training session.

Last training session is Tuesday 11th March 6-9pm AI in business with Creative Theory.

230.2 To consider Bentham Town Council being responsible for the finances of the proposed project.

RESOLVED TO AGREE – Clerk and RFO to enquire into VAT and holding of the money.

231 To receive **Reports from Councillors** who represent the Council on other bodies (for information only)
Cllr Ryan – there is a Bentham Playing Fields committee meeting on Tuesday 4th March 2025.
Cllr Paige – Victoria Institute have now completed their work with grants received, looking very pleasant, there is now a chargeable public toilet in Low Bentham.

232 Items for next meeting **and minor items for information only.**
Lancashire Council now in contact regarding the reported road between Low Bentham and Wennington after clarifying the North Yorkshire border.

233 Date of **next meeting:** Open Spaces – Monday 17th March 2025 7:30pm
RESOLVED – to change to Monday 24th March 2025 7:30pm

Full Council meeting – Monday 7th April 2025 7:30pm

Finance meeting – Monday 14th April 2025 7:30pm

Annual Parish Meeting – Monday 28th April 2025 7:30pm

234 To resolve that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, that the public and press be excluded further from the meeting, whilst items within **235** are considered:-

CLOSED the meeting at 21:08

235 Staffing matters:

235.1 To consider the contract and job description for the Assistant Town Clerk and clarify office opening hours.

RESOLVED TO AGREE to contract – Office opening hours will be Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 9:30 – 12:30, with appointments only on Wednesdays.

235.2 To consider the updated pay scales for Cleaner, Caretaker and Clerk.

RESOLVED TO AGREE to updated pay scales and backdate payments.

235.3 To consider the role of Relief Caretaker.

RESOLVED – to re-advertise the position as Additional Caretaker Role.

CLOSED the meeting at 21:31

C Burrow

C Burrow

Town Clerk

Monday 10th March 2025

Appendix A

We have had 41 incidents reported between 02.02.25 & 01.03.25

Reports Include General Admin from other Police force, Safeguarding, Abandon call, lost parcel, Domestic incident/harassment, Missing person found safe & well, Suspect vehicle – checked in order, civil dispute, ASB Personal, Wanted person & Abandon vehicles – DVLA

12 Reports – concern for safety/welfare/crime violence - Joint partnership working

06.02.25 - Criminal damage Low Bentham

09.02.25 - RTC – single vehicle Robin Lane

12.02.25 – Attempt oil theft

15.02.25 - Road Related offence – manner of driving on Bentham Moor Road, stopped checked

19.02.25 – RTC – HGV via person

22.02.25 – Road Related offence – HGV driver on phone – area searched no gain

How to report speeding concerns - Speed Management Protocol

www.northyorkshire.police.uk/search?q=speeding+concern

North Yorkshire Community Messaging is a free email messaging service from North Yorkshire Police providing news and updates on policing matters that are relevant to you and your local community. Sign up and receive email alerts about policing activity and initiatives in your local area as well as crime prevention advice and information. You will also have the opportunity to reply directly to your neighbourhood team and provide feedback via surveys.

www.northyorkshirecommunitymessaging.co.uk

Working to keep North Yorkshire a safe place to live, visit & work please visit www.northyorkshire.police.uk.

Please report & suspect incidents at the time on 101, online or 999 if urgent.

Useful site re Crime and policing in England which allows you to search re incident recorded in your area www.police.uk.

Contact Information:

1 Ring 999 in an emergency or to report a crime in progress.

2 Ring 101 to report incidents or provide information.

3 Ring Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111 to remain anonymous.

4 E-mail SNACraven@northyorkshire.police.uk

Kind Regards

Jayne

PCSO Jayne Grace



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Dear Ms Wilkinson,

Bentham Town Council would like to address the changes to the Home to School Transport Policy by North Yorkshire Council. We appreciate and understand the need to save money as a Council, however, we have significant concerns about the potential impact of this on our community.

School applications for the September 2025 intake are in progress, confirming the fears that Bentham people are badly affected, pupil application numbers to Settle College are considerably low. We request that steps are taken to reinstate the catchment area with those that are eligible for free school transport to Settle College.

Accessibility and Convenience: The road/journey to QES from Bentham is unsuitable for larger transport, and the journey to Settle College is of similar road distance and a far better/easier route.

County support: Settle College is within North Yorkshire, where Bentham lies, transporting pupils to QES would mean taking these pupils to a different county.

Parental Choice: this would limit parental choice, families will be forced into making a decision that may not always be in the best interest of their child, those with Special Education Needs may not be suitable for QES. Out of the potential 39 Year 6 school leavers within the area, 12 of these are applying for Settle College, this is an all time low.

Housing Decisions: Families may consider the implications of living in Bentham or perhaps consider a move due to the lack of transport to their preferred school.

Financial Implications: Families may incur additional costs if they need to arrange alternative transport solutions. This financial burden is particularly concerning for low-income families who may struggle to afford private transport. Working parents may find it challenging to manage daily schedules around no public transport options. A survey conducted in October showed that most families previously wanting to attend Settle College are now intending to apply for QES rather than pay transport costs.

Absences: Use of parental transportation and alternative routes will invariably have a negative effect on pupil attendance, a large issue within the education sector with attendance at an all-time low, having a significant impact on learning.

Community Cohesion: Settle College has been an integral part of our community for generations, fostering strong bonds and a sense of belonging among students and their families. Altering the transport services

threatens to erode this cohesion, as children may be dispersed to different schools that are even further afield, due to potential oversubscription of QES, weakening community ties.

Environmental Impact: Increased reliance on private vehicles for school transportation to Settle College could lead to higher traffic volumes and carbon emissions in our area. Maintaining the current school transport services supports our commitment to environmental sustainability by reducing the number of individual car journeys. Measures to implement a public service bus between Bentham and Settle have been rejected.

Impact on Settle College: This would have a significant impact on Settle College pupil numbers, leaving the school in a financially insecure situation, threatening employment within the area and possibly having to 'streamline' the overall school. Settle College has agreed to fund a bus for 2025 entrants, this is not sustainable, taking vital funds directly from the school budget, school budgeting and finances are as tight as they have ever been, potentially impacted on education, pastoral support and limiting resources.

Cross border schooling: With pupils from the same family potentially attending schools under differing Local Authorities and hence differing term times, family holiday options will be significantly reduced, potentially leading to attendance issues and increased financial pressures of childcare.

Bentham Town Council ask that North Yorkshire takes the following actions:

- Publish the Impact on Schools report to schools, the public and Bentham Town Council, this is a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- Publish a timetable that would reinstate catchment for 2026 round of school applicants.
- Communicate with parents who have selected a school to advise how they can alter their school choice, if they wish.

We look forward to engaging in constructive dialogue and finding a resolution that ensures the continued provision of essential school transport services to Settle College from Bentham and its surrounding area.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix C

Thank you for your email dated 11.2.25.

The Council's Home to School Travel Policy (the policy) was agreed by the Full Council at its meeting in July 2024, and was implemented with effect from 1 September. The policy was developed in response to changes to the Department for Education's (DfE's) Statutory Guidance and had the effect of aligning the Council's arrangements with that guidance.

The policy was adopted with an objective that savings would be achieved in respect of the provision of home to school transport and within the context of the significant financial pressures that the Council faces.

The Town Council's comments and concerns are noted.

In response to the specific issues raised in your letter I can confirm the following: -

Accessibility and Convenience – all home to school transport arrangements are subject to risk assessment, including in respect of the suitability of vehicles that are utilised on individual routes.

County Support – the DfE's guidance provides that the main eligibility criteria for assistance with home to school travel is that assistance should be provided for eligible pupils to the nearest suitable school with available places. This does not take account of local government boundaries.

Parental Choice – the Home to School Travel Policy relates to the arrangements for travel only, and not to admissions. Parents will continue to be able to express a preference for places at a number of schools when applying for a school place for their child.

Please note, also, that the revised Home to School Travel Policy addressed an anomaly that existed previously where some families who resided in areas where their nearest school was not their catchment school were able to claim eligibility for assistance with Home to School travel to more than one school.

Housing Decisions – The Council has committed to reviewing the implications arising from the implementation of the policy in July 2026. Whilst it is unlikely that the review will consider the impact upon housing decisions, it will consider the impact upon schools.

Financial implications – the policy includes provisions that provide extended rights for children from low-income families.

Absences – all schools are required to monitor absence rates and to work with pupils and their families to minimise these.

Community Cohesion – The comments that are made in respect of community cohesion, including the role that is fulfilled by Settle College are noted. However, the Council is aware of a range of patterns relating to school admissions that involve local cohorts of children attending different schools outside of their local catchment area (about 1 in 3 secondary age children do not attend their catchment school).

Environmental Impact – the revised policy was subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment which identified, in part, the potential benefits arising from ceasing to provide home to school transport which exceed the statutory minimum requirements.

Impact on Settle College – the Council has committed to working with individual educational establishments, including Settle College, to monitor the potential impact of the policy during the phased period of its implementation and to support them in the development of appropriate responses.

Cross Border Schooling – the concerns noted in your letter are noted, however, councillors considered that greater levels of disruption could potentially be caused to the education of pupils in the event that the policy were to be implemented immediately on a wholesale basis, rather than phased over a period of years.

Councils do consult on, for example, term dates and seek to align these wherever possible in order to minimise the disruption that may be caused when dates are not aligned, although it is acknowledged that full alignment is not always possible.

Additionally: -

- The data that you have requested in respect of the potential impact of the policy upon schools can be accessed via the following link: [Home to school travel consultation – data model summary - January 2024 analysis - update pending | North Yorkshire Council](#)
- The Council has no plans to review the policy such that the catchment areas of schools would be re-adopted as an eligibility criteria for assistance with home to school travel.

- Detailed information has been made available to parents about the policy, and further information will be provided after the offers of both secondary and primary school places have been made.

The report that was provided to the Council's Executive regarding the Home to School Travel Policy, and which provides more context to the issues that have been covered in this response, can be accessed via the following link: [Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 16 July 2024, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Kind regards

Annabel

Cllr. Annabel Wilkinson.

Morton on Swale and Appleton Wiske Division.

North Yorkshire Council.

Executive Member for Education. Learning and Skills.





Date: 3rd March 2025

Bentham Town Council

Dear Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Councillors

I write to provide a further update from Angus Fire on the work being undertaken to implement our strategy of 'Containment, Characterisation and Corrective Action/Remediation'.

Containment

We continue to make good progress on the installation of a stormwater processing plant. All tanks for holding pre-and-post-processed stormwater are now in place and the connecting pipework should be completed this week. There are nine post processing tanks in total. Their capacity is key in allowing sufficient storage while we ensure independent laboratory test results from every completed batch are thoroughly validated to meet the stringent performance limits agreed with the Environment Agency.

The stormwater treatment process has two main aspects – a primary phase of Surface Activated Foam Fractionation (SAFF), and a secondary phase of filtering, through a large carbon media vessel. After thorough research and trials conducted by Geosyntec, it has been determined that this technical solution is using the 'Best Available Techniques' for the treatment of stormwater that interacts with PFAS contaminated areas.

The SAFF unit arrived in Bentham on the 26th February. The carbon phase is currently undergoing final installation. We anticipate all other works will be completed to enable plant commissioning to start at the beginning of March, with the treatment facility being fully operational within 2-3 weeks. We are in constant dialogue with the equipment manufacturers and our consultants to ensure that the treatment plant delivers optimum performance.

We now estimate that it will take us around nine months to process all the stormwater we have collected, on top of any rainfall that adds to the already captured volumes.

We continue to work closely with the regulatory authorities to ensure they are fully aligned with the approach being taken. This has included meeting with North Yorkshire Council, who have been very supportive of the work we are doing to resolve these issues. We will keep them, in addition to the Town Council, fully updated on the progress made.

Characterisation, Corrective Action/Remediation

Our independent Environmental Consultants continue to undertake both on and offsite characterisation activities and are now working with scientific experts with specialist equipment to assist their understanding of groundwater flows on and off site.

This information will then determine what Corrective Action/Remediation will be required in agreement with the Environment Agency and North Yorkshire Council.

I am encouraged by the amount of support we have received from within the local community. Angus takes this matter extremely seriously and we remain committed to addressing the challenges in front of us.

Angus Fire Ltd

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Email: generalenquiries@angusuk.co.uk • Web: www.angusfire.co.uk

Registered office: Station Road, High Bentham, Nr Lancaster LA2 7NA UK • Registered in England No. 8441992
AF/LH/Bentham/06.13



PM 595473



EMS 576644



The company has invested significant financial resources on this issue to date, which includes our largest ever outlay on equipment for the installation of the stormwater treatment facility. There is no quick solution, but we remain committed to working closely with the appropriate regulatory authorities, the local community and the Town Council over the long-term.

Yours faithfully.

Paul Williams
Managing Director