

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Cookham Parish Council held in the
Community Room, Cookham Library, Tuesday 3rd October 2023, at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr M. Howard (Chairman)
Cllrs L. Austin, N. Bedwell, M. Brar, J. Edwards, M-L. Kellaway, R. Kellaway J. Moore
and H. Pleming

Also Present: There was 1 member of the public present.
There were no members of the Press was present.

OPEN FORUM:

A member of the public spoke to thank two members of the Cookham Village community who helped a fellow resident in their time of need. He also commented on the council's objective to produce a corporate plan.

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Cllrs C. Aisladie, E. Bune, T. Caen, B Perry, A-L. Regan and L. Tull.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting (including Part II), held on 5th September 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr M. Brar, seconded by Cllr H. Pleming.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 5th September 2023, were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr L. Austin, seconded by Cllr J. Edwards. The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 12th September 2023, were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr J. Edwards, seconded by Cllr L. Austin. The minutes of the Flood and Major Incident Committee meeting held on 19th September 2023, were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr J. Edwards, seconded by Cllr M. Brar.

5. FINANCE:

- a. **To approve payments / receipts in September 2023:** The list of payments and receipts made in September 2023 were unanimously approved.
- b. **To receive the second quarters figures (YTD April to September 2023):** Acknowledged.
- c. **To review the Bank Reconciliation report as of 30th September 2023:** Reviewed.
- d. **To acknowledge the completion of the External Audit by PKF Littlejohn LLP:** Acknowledged. The Clerk reported that there were no matters arising and it is the Auditors opinion that the information supplied is in accordance with Proper Practices. The Notice of conclusion of audit, has been displayed on the noticeboard from 7th September and will be removed later this week.

6. TO REVIEW SMALL GRANT AWARDS APPLICATIONS FOR 2023/24 AND CONFIRM BUDGET AMOUNTS FOR 2024/25:

- i. **To review and approve the Grant Applications made up until September 2023:** One application had been received: Cookham Medical Centre's Patient Participation Group. Cllrs reviewed the application but deferred their decision awaiting further information. This will be moved to the November agenda.
- ii. **To confirm the provisional budget amount for Financial Year 24/25:** A Grant awards budget of £2,500 was unanimously agree for Financial Year 24/25.

iii. **To approve the maximum amount of grant award for Financial Year 24/25:**

The maximum single Grant award for Financial Year 24/25 of £1,000 was unanimously agreed.

7. **TO APPROVE THE USE OF BANCROFT CONSULTING LIMITED TO RUN A TRAFFIC SURVEY AND REVIEW TRAFFIC REPORTS SUBMITTED BY BELLWAY FOR PL/APS 23/02019 AND 23/02022 SITES A AND B, OPEN FIELD NORTH OF LOWER MOUNT FARM LONG LANE COOKHAM AT A REVISED COST OF £8,000 (EX VAT):**

At the Full Council meeting on 5th September 2023 council resolved to engage a professional Traffic Consultant at a cost of £5,000, to test the truth, fairness and accuracy of the Bellway traffic reports. Due to the importance of the matter to parish residents and the time constraints of this project, the council need to move forward quickly. The Councils Standing Orders and Financial regulations ask that 3 quotes are provided for any work over £500. However, this would have given us a significant delay meaning deadlines for both the bridge closure, w/c 16th October, and the 'community comments by' date of pl/aps 23/02019 and 23/02022 would not have been met. Looking for a prompt but practical solution, the most appropriate consultant to appoint was Bancroft Consulting Limited, a specialist highway and transportation consultant, who had been working on a Cookham traffic survey with another party and had already got background knowledge of the 2 planning applications and specific traffic issues in Cookham.

Cllrs approved the appointment of Bancroft Consulting, acknowledging that on this occasion three quotes had not been received, recognising that, due to the nature of the specialised service that this consultant delivers, it was going to be difficult to fulfil this requirement in the time frame.

A budget was initially set at £5,000 however it became clear that to obtain a more robust and comprehensive response to the Bellway traffic submission, the report the Parish Council commissioned would be in excess of that budget, at a revised cost of £8,000 (ex VAT). Acknowledging that the increase would bring a better report, Cllrs approved the cost increase from £5,000 to £8,000. Cllrs also agreed that, as this spend is out of budget it will need to be paid from the General Fund. (As of 1st April 2023, The General Fund holds £88,960.)

Cllrs were aware that the decisions made do not follow best practice or financial regulations but were done in the best interests of the community, on a contentious parish matter, under strict time constraints.

With regards to the project: the traffic count has been completed, the consultant has attended a site visit, and a draft version of the report should be delivered shortly.

Once agreed, the report will make up part of the Councils submission for pl/aps 23/02019 and 23/02022 sites A and B, Open field north of Lower Mount Farm, Long Lane, Cookham.

8. **TO APPROVE THE USE OF REGULAR PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING CONSULTANTS, TROY PLANNING AND DESIGN TO WRITE A SUBMISSION FOR PL/APS PL/APS 23/02019/OUT AND 23/02022/OUT, SITES A AND B, OPEN FIELD NORTH OF LOWER MOUNT FARM LONG LANE COOKHAM AT A COST OF £2,500 (EX VAT):**

Further to the resolution to engage Troy Planning + Design to write the submission for pl/ap 23/02019/OUT AND 23/02022/OUT, Cllr unanimously approved a cost of £2,500 (ex VAT).

9. **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM CLLR B. PERRY REGARDING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WP:**

There was no update.

10. **TO REVISIT THE DECISION MADE IN DECEMBER 2022 AND REVIEWED IN JUNE 2023, REGARDING THE SOUND ELEMENT OF THE UP AND AROUND PLAY EQUIPMENT INSTALLED IN OCTOBER 2022:**

As no further complaints had been received since February 2023, Cllrs unanimously agreed that the issue was now closed, and no further action will take place.

11. **TO REVIEW A DRAFT COPY OF THE COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL CORPORATE/ STRATEGIC PLAN AND AGREE THE NEXT STEPS TO BE TAKEN, PARTICULARLY FOR THE MISSION STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES, AND PROJECTS:**

At the Full Council meeting in June, Council agreed to start work on a corporate plan. A report format was chosen which was easy to read and clear to understand, which is important as this document will be available to the public.

The next stage is to personalise the document for Cookham Parish Council, the outcome will need agreement from Full Council as they are key areas that show the public what we are doing and why we are heading in the way we are, it is not appropriate for the Working Party to make the decision in isolation. Key areas to complete include: The councils mission statement, a vision statement (or set of objectives), and priorities for key projects, which will also need to be agreed.

The Working Group were asked to continue to collate ideas for the Mission Statement and the vision or objectives and come back in a couple of months. Projects would be dealt with separately at a later stage.

12. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE TRAFFIC WORKING PARTY:**

There was no update.

Cllr J. Moore left the meeting at 8.40pm

13. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PROPOSALS FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL TO TAKE PART IN THE BEACON LIGHTING CELEBRATION TO COMMEMORATE THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DD LANDINGS ON 6TH JUNE 2024:**

After investigation with local groups who, it was found, were not taking part in the event, Cllrs decided to take no further action on this matter.

Cllr J. Moore returned to the meeting at 8.45pm

14. **A PROPOSAL OF CLLR A-L. REGAN REGARDING COOKHAM CHRISTMAS FAYRE, SUNDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2023: ***

i. To consider if the Parish Council wish to have a stall at the fayre at a pitch cost of £65.00 and what activities it may run on the day:

Cllrs agreed to have a stall. The format will be decided at the November meeting.

ii. To consider if the Parish Council wish to make additional spend on marketing material (no cost available) and equipment at an approx. cost of £200:

Cllrs agree a budget of £250 for marketing material, but for the time being, decided not to purchase other equipment such as a marquee and tables as these can be borrowed.

15. **TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE LETTER FROM NATIONAL GRID PROPERTY REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF GASHOLDER WASTEWATER FROM THEIR SITE IN DENHAM TO COOKHAM AND SUBSEQUENT CONSENT FROM THAMES WATER:**

Acknowledged.

16. **OUTSIDE BODIES, BOROUGH CLLR AND CLERK'S REPORTS:**

Cllr M. Howard Borough Cllr Report: Provided by email. Subjects included: RBWM Financial issues, update on traffic calming matter, Heathrow noise and airspace group, Rock the Moor Licencing and planning matters for AL37 and AL38.

Cllr M. Howard National Trust Liaison Group: 26th September 2023, notes, report and NT Maps supplied by email.

Cllr M-L Kellaway Twinning: Cllrs Kellaway will be visiting St Benoir as part of this years Twinning trip.

17. **CHAIRMAN'S SUBMISSIONS:**

None.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm