

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the Cookham Parish Council held in the
Community Room, Cookham Library, Tuesday 6th February 2024, at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr J. Edwards (Acting Chairman)
Cllrs C. Aisladie, M. Brar, T. Caen, M-L. Kellaway, R. Kellaway, B. Perry, H. Pleming
and L. Tull.

Also Present: No members of the public were present.
No members of the press were present.

In the absence of Cllr Howard and in her capacity as Vice Chairman, Cllr Edwards chaired the meeting.

OPEN FORUM:

There were no representations.

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Cllrs L. Austin, N. Bedwell, E. Bune, M. Howard, J. Moore and A-L. Regan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the Full Council meeting, held on 2nd January 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr C. Aisladie, seconded by Cllr M. Brar.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 9th January 2024, were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr B. Perry, seconded by Cllr C. Aisladie.

The minutes of the Flood and Major Incident Committee meeting held on 16th January 2024, were approved as a true record of the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr J. Edwards, seconded by Cllr L. Tull.

5. FINANCE:

a. **To approve payments / receipts in January 2023:** The list of payments and receipts made in January 2024 were approved on the proposal of Cllr R. Kellaway.

b. **To receive and acknowledge the Bank reconciliation report for December 31st 2023:**
The Bank Reconciliation statement as of 31st December 2023 was acknowledged.

6. TO APPROVE THE COOKHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN, REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION VERSION AND THE REPORT FROM COOKHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (“PLAN”) WORKING PARTY (“WP”) TO COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 6.2.24, AND TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

Cllrs had been supplied with an individual copy of the Regulation 14 Consultation version of the Neighbourhood Plan with their agenda papers. They had also been reminded of their responsibility to come prepared for a meeting and there is an expectation that the documents have been read.

In future, updates on the Plan will be made when necessary, whether for information or decision, rather than monthly as has been the case since 2020.

Since the last Council meeting, developments needing reporting and/or approval are as follows:

1. The Working Party met on 10.1.24. It discussed aspects of the latest amended version of the March 2023 draft which it was thought did not match what the WP had decided to include. In particular, Troy Planning + Design had not included, for reasons it felt good, certain decisions the WP had made at its previous meeting.
2. The WP examined every point it was requested to consider. In most cases it requested that the changes it had made be implemented, though it accepted compromises in cases where Troy P+D advised that they were simply not permissible. In turn Troy P+D agreed to insert them, but advised against this because they felt that probably RBWM would oppose them or the Examiner strike them out. A member of the WP is prepared to accompany Troy P+D to any discussions if there are problems and thus the amendments have been made.
3. In a few cases, it was left to Troy to redraft very small pieces of wording along lines agreed by the WP. This has been done.
4. Troy talked to RBWM on Friday 12.1.24. The conversation (before the latest amendments) was helpful. This meeting also dealt with the maps needed to standardise the maps in the Plan (which RBWM has agreed to supply). At the time of writing we still don't have these but they are promised.
5. Cllr Perry then proposed from the Chair, seconded by Cllr Howard, subject to item 2 – 4 (2 and 3 since resolved), approval of the draft Cookham Neighbourhood Plan (as to be so amended) for submission to Parish Council for approval and submission for Regulation 14 consultation. The motion was carried nem. con. (To be precise, Cllrs Perry and Howard, Dr Courtenay-Smith and Messrs Ahlgren and Campin voted in favour; Mr Scarff abstained. Cllrs Moore and Regan had had to leave before the vote.)
6. Accordingly, after more than 3 years, despite Covid-19, elections and other distractions, the Working Party now submits the accompanying draft Cookham Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the standardised maps to follow wherever possible, to Council for approval for Regulation 14 consultation, submission to RBWM for comment and Regulation 16 consultation, and in principle for Examination (subject to reconsideration after consultations).

Cllr Perry took the opportunity of thanking all those involved. The current Council Working Party (Cllrs. M. Howard, A-L. Regan, J. Moore, L. Tull and B. Perry) have worked very hard and been great supports, as have and were the former group (at various times Cllrs. C. Doyle, I. Wernham, J. Edwards, J. Perry, L. Tull, M. Howard, M. Coker, and B. Perry). The representatives from local groups (at various times D Scarff, L Ahlgren, M Copland, N Dawkes, P Strzelecki, R Campin and T Veale) and Dr S. Courtenay-Smith, the Chairman of the former Village Design Statement Working Group. We owe Dr S. Courtenay-Smith special thanks for Appendix 5, the Spencer Appendix, including copyright permission which, including the limits of which, everyone should please note. There was also great buy-in from the other individuals and groups that were contacted.

N. Milner the WP Administrator has been a tower of strength and dedication. Mr J. Herbert has been responsive and helpful (if not always telling us what we wanted to hear). The Clerk has of course always been there keeping us on the rails and has done all she could to help and get the best possible result.

As stated above, the draft Neighbourhood Plan is now ready for Regulation 14 consultation and, in principle and dependent upon the results, to move on with Regulation 16 consultation, Examination and referendum.

At the meeting Cllr Perry noted that this was the culmination of three years of work. There has been extensive consultation with the residents of Cookham, who's feedback has been key to the structure of the plan. The various members of the working party have all worked towards this goal and to get the best possible outcome for Cookham, this has sometimes meant compromise, but it has always been achieved with good will.

Therefore, on the Proposal of Cllr B. Perry and seconded by Cllr T. Caen, the motions set out in points (i), (ii) and (iii) below, were unanimously approved:

- (i) **Approves the draft Cookham Neighbourhood Plan accompanying this report (on the basis that standardised maps will be provided by RBWM and inserted in place of non-standard ones wherever possible) for, and proceeds with, Regulation 14 consultation, subject thereto for submission to RBWM for comment and Regulation 16 consultation, and unless otherwise subsequently decided by Council or the Working Party, for Examination;**
- (ii) **Authorises the necessary expenditure on Regulation 14 consultation including but not limited to printing leaflets, paying for their distribution throughout the Parish, holding of meetings and other appropriate consultation to be decided by Cllrs Howard and Perry, with the Clerk;**
- (iii) **Empowers Cllrs Perry and Howard, with the Clerk, to undertake and commission whatever other work and liaison is required for these purposes, including but not limited to instruction of Troy Planning + Design and the NP Administrator as appropriate.**

The Council wished to formally thank Cllr B. Perry for his personal contribution to the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan from the initial stages through to the draft, ready for the Regulation 14 consultation.

7. TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RBWM GUIDANCE FOR PARISH COUNCIL ON CIL REPORTING:

The guidance was acknowledged. The Clerk was to clarify the statement 'The 15% is subject to a 'cap' at £100 per council tax dwelling...' with the CIL team.

8. TO ADOPT A BIODIVERSITY POLICY FOR COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL, BASED ON THE NALC MODEL TEMPLATE, AND CONSIDER NEXT STEPS:

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

Government guidance requires all public authorities to complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024. They must agree their policies and objectives as soon as possible after this and must reconsider the selected actions within five years of completing their previous consideration, or more frequently if they choose. To comply with the guidance, town and parish councils could as a minimum:

- have biodiversity as an agenda item for a meeting before the end of 2023.
- note what action they are already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree what further steps they should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

On the proposal of Cllr B Perry, seconded by Cllr M. Brar and unanimously approved, the council adopted the Biodiversity Policy based on the SLCC/NALC model policy. Subject to a few minor amendments Council also unanimously adopted the draft model action plan.

9. TO DISCUSS THE PROGRESS OF THE ANNUAL REPORT 23/24:

As discussed at the January meeting and confirmed in the email sent by the Clerk on 3rd January, as the council aims to publish the report by the end of March, all entries need to be with the office by 8th March. This will allow time for the office to format and edit the report. Only one report has been received so far.

The report will contain a foreword from the Chairman of the Council plus reports from all the Committee Chairmen but in addition other pieces, including photos, are welcome that promotes the work of the council over the last year. There was a discussion regarding the picture for the front cover, Cllrs will submit suitable options.

10. TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL REGULATION 13 CONSULTATION: RIVER THAMES SCHEME. CONSULTATION RUNS 22ND JAN TO 4TH MARCH 2024.

The council were generally supportive of the scheme and endorse any attempts to increase the flow of water downstream and away from Cookham and other areas at risk of flooding. Cllr Edwards will draft a short statement to this effect for the Clerk to send.

11. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE TRAFFIC WORKING PARTY:

The working party have not met since before Christmas, a meeting is planned soon. As a member of the working party, Cllr Brar asked if she could be notified of the WP meetings.

12. OUTSIDE BODIES, BOROUGH CLLR AND CLERK'S REPORTS – REPORTS MUST BE SUBMITTED PLEASE NO LESS THAN 24 HOURS BEFORE MTG:

Cllr Brar/Cllr Howard **Borough Cllr Report:** Provided by email. Subjects included: Cookham Village pavement works, Cookham bridge, Access to Odney lock, Flooding, Sutton Rd school crossing signs, Strande Park update, Rural Forum.

Cllr B Perry **RBWM Cookham Bridge update:** Works are still on schedule.

Clerks report: In order to be able to action the work of the council, The Clerk repeated the need for Cllrs to respond to emails from the office and to do so within the requested time frame.

Cannondown Rd pl/aps 23/02019 and 23/02022: The developer has notified the council that new plans for the site have been submitted. Once notification has been received from the Planning Authority the Clerk will notify Cllrs. It is likely that these applications will be reviewed again by Full Council.

13. TO REVIEW THE FULL COUNCIL ACTION LIST:

The list was reviewed, and brief updates were made.

14. CHAIRMAN'S SUBMISSIONS:

None.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.