

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Cookham Parish Council Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 3rd September 2024, at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr. M. Howard (In the chair), Cllrs. C. Aisladie, L. Austin, N. Bedwell, M. Brar, E. Bune, J. Edwards, M-L. Kellaway, R. Kellaway and H. Fleming,

Also Present: Jonathan Holder (Locum)
Four members of the public, but no Press, were present.

OPEN FORUM:

Mrs Linegar highlighted comments she had made in her email responses to the revised terms for the grazing licence (see item 10). In respect of Council concerns over poaching, she noted that it had been a very wet winter and with her paddock under water in January, she had to move her ponies to the field where they stayed until May. She also expressed concern over the proposal that she should use the field for only a three month period over the winter and spring as she could not foresee the weather which would determine use.

In respect of re-routing the footpath at Terry's Lane (item 7 of August meeting), Mr. Karavias noted the fence had fallen down in June and he had reported the petty vandalism to the police. He had also made contact with the Borough Public Rights of Way official; he handed his police report to the Locum.

A resident also complained of increased moorings by longboats.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs. T. Caen, J. Moore, B. Perry, A-L. Regan and L. Tull.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Howard declared that his house neighboured the grazing field (see item 10).

Cllr. Aisladie declared she was the wife of the applicant for the Chief Commons Officer post (see item 24).

3. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 6th August 2024

These were approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda

4.1 ***Re-routing Terry's Lane Footpath (item 7 of 6/8/24 meeting)*** - Mr. Karavias's comments were noted. Whilst members were sympathetic with the proposal to re-route the footpath, Cllr. Brar noted this would require not only RBWM but Secretary of State approval.

4.2 ***Odney Lane Parking (item 9 of 6/8/24 meeting)*** - Cllr. Howard noted that that he had written to RBWM to seek a two hour parking limit and now sought the Council's support for the new parking restriction proposal.

4.3 ***Quotations for a new Website (item 12 of 6/8/24 meeting)*** - Three quotations had been received and circulated to the Council, one of which was considerably less than the two others. There would be an agenda item at the next Council meeting to determine the choice of website provider.

Action: Locum Clerk

Prior to the October Council meeting, members should review all quotations and insofar as suppliers were acting for another council, consider the standard provided.

Action: ALL

If any members had suggestions as to proposed website, including content, they should advise the Locum Clerk, as new website agreement due to start in November.

Action: ALL

4.4 **Potential land acquisition by Sutton Road Allotments** (item 14 of 6/8/24 meeting) - In Cllr. Perry's absence, this matter be deferred to the next meeting. **Action: Cllr Perry/Locum Clerk**

5. **To agree to instruct new solicitors to approve the creation and execution of a new lease of part of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground to Cookham Rise school**

Cllr. Howard said that although the terms for this had been previously agreed, it still remained that this be provided for in a lease. It was **agreed** that external solicitors be instructed to create and execute a new lease of part of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground to Cookham Rise school.

Action: Cllr Perry/Locum Clerk

6. **Finance –**

6.1 to approve payments/receipts to date as per the cashbook circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting

These were **approved**.

6.2 to ratify the decision to remove the previous Clerk's access to online accounts and approve the resolutions to that effect required by the bank

Cllr. Howard advised that the decision to remove the previous Clerk on termination of her employment was approved on the basis of the circulated resolutions required by the Bank. It was **agreed** that these were ratified.

6.3 to agree an increase in the rental of allotment poles for the year commencing October 2025

It was noted that even with the proposed increase, allotment costs were still almost twice the amount of rental income. Further to discussion, it was **agreed** by 9:1 majority (Cllr Bedwell against) to increase the rental from £8 to £9 per pole for the year commencing October 2025. In writing to the licensees, reference should be made to the Council costs.

Action: Locum Clerk

In the course of the next year, the General Purposes Committee were also requested to review direct allotment costs.

Action: Cllr Fleming/Locum Clerk

7. **To agree the setting up of and terms of reference for a working party to advance the Council and Community's objectives in connection with possible development on the Cemetery field**

Cllr. Howard said that the Church Commissioners would not for now put forward any development proposals for the Cemetery field to RBWM Planning. Cllr. Edwards said that following discussion with Cllr. Perry and others, it had been decided not to set up a working party. It was **agreed** that going forward, this matter should be a permanent item on the Planning Committee agenda until such time as resolved.

Action: Cllr Edwards/Locum Clerk

8. **To consider offering a renewal of the current tenancy on Cemetery Lodge or seeking new tenants and on what terms**

The letting agent had noted that the new flooring had been laid and that a current market valuation would indicate an increased rental of 22% which would be higher than that allowed in the current lease, which ends on 12 December. In order to determine what might be a fair rent, it was **agreed** that :-

- a) Cllr Bedwell and the Clerk should arrange a suitable time with the tenant to view the property;
Action: Cllr Bedwell/Locum Clerk
- b) A better understanding of the 22% increase, together with their view on it, be obtained from the agent;
Action: Locum Clerk
- c) To check if the Council has received the 6 or 12 month written reviews entitled to from the agent.
Action: Locum Clerk

9. **To appoint Cllr. Perry in place of Cllr. Howard as the Council's representative on the Patient Participation Group**

This was **agreed**.

10. **To agree revised terms for the grazing licence on the Alleyn's Road allotment field**

Further to the earlier comments by Mrs. Linegar, Cllr. Fleming noted her concerns on poaching and the damage this caused. As well as reducing the number of livestock, she had proposed a

reduction in the time period. The rent was low but if more was spent on the field such as for fencing, then this should result in a rent increase. Cllr. Howard queried that if the field were left fallow, say **3319**

between April – September, that might allow the grass to recover as well as allowing the fields' use in an emergency in winter time. Following discussion, it was agreed that :-

- a) To allow time for further consideration and for the terms to be confirmed at the October meeting, the current licence to be extended for a further month: **Action: Locum Clerk**
- b) Prior to the October meeting, Cllrs. Howard and Fleming with the Locum Clerk to review Mrs. Linegar's comments; **Action: Cllrs Howard & Fleming/Locum Clerk**
- c) Any report from Wild Cookham to be forwarded by Cllr. Edwards to Cllrs. Howard and Fleming and the Locum Clerk **Action: Cllr. Edwards**

11. To agree the cost of new signage being new headers for the Cookham Dean and Pinder Hall noticeboards and the basketball court.

The quotation of £807.60 for the two noticeboard headers, replacing the current broken plastic ones at Cookham Dean and Pinder Hall noticeboards together with a new warning notice sign for the basketball court, as recommended by Rospa, with wording approved by Cllr .Pleming, was **approved**. It was confirmed that there would separately be installation costs to be incurred.

Action: Locum Clerk

12. To approve the cost of the new Honours Board listing past chairmen

There was no-one in favour of incurring the costs for a new Honours Board listing past chairmen. It was noted that a virtual list could be provided on the new website.

Action: Cllr Perry / Locum Clerk

13. To approve the quotes for the purchase of trees for the Sutton Road Allotment Orchard project and to authorise expenditure on their installation such expenditures to be within the £5000 grant budget

It was **agreed to approve** the cost of £1,450.15 quoted for the purchase of 34 trees, of the types circulated, for the planned Orchard in the meadow next to Sutton Road allotments, together with such additional costs for installation, such expenditure being within the £5,000 grant budget.

Action: Cllr Cllrs Edwards & Fleming /Locum Clerk

14. To consider permitting the pruning of a tree in Alfred Major Recreation ground to assist a resident in Worster Road

The resident had advised that this action was no longer required.

15. To receive an update on the Corporate Plan

It was noted that Cllr. Regan was to meet with Cllr. Edwards and would report back at the next meeting.

Action: Cllr Cllrs Edwards & Regan

16. To receive an update from the Communications working party

In Cllr. Regan's absence, this matter to be deferred to the next meeting. **Action: Locum Clerk**

17. To receive a report from the Chairman regarding the Neighbourhood Plan

There was nothing to update.

18. To receive an update from the Traffic working party

There would be a meeting later in the month of Cllrs. Howard, Brar and Regan.

19. Outside Bodies and Borough Cllr. reports

Cllr. Brar had nothing to report from Borough.

Cllr. Edwards said that it was hoped to invite Borough Planning officers to Cookham.

Cllr. R Kellaway said that there would be a party for twinning attendees on Saturday 26 October, for which there was a £600 budget.

20. Any other business (by permission of the Chairman and upon which no decisions may be made)

Cllr. R. Kellaway said that he had to call in the IT support for the office, Stuart Sharp, to fix his email. Stuart had offered to do a presentation on this for councillors if others had similar issues.

The WingDay event should be reviewed at the next Council meeting.

Action: Locum Clerk

3320

- 21. **Under section 1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) and under Standing order 3d to agree that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted below that the public be temporarily excluded and be instructed to withdraw**

This was agreed.

PART 2

- 22. **To receive a report regarding outstanding issues relating to the Clerk leaving her employment**

The former clerk's employment had now terminated. Cllr. Howard gave an update on outstanding issues.

- 23. **To receive a report relating to the recruitment and selection of a new Clerk**

The Locum reported that the job advertisement had gone out in several publications and websites. The closing date for applications was 20th September.

- 24. **To approve the creation of the position and terms of employment of a new Chief Commons Officer**

Cllr. Aisladie took no part in this item. The paper by Cllr. Perry on this role had been previously circulated and it was confirmed that there was no objection in principle to it, within the budget therein set out. Bearing in mind the officer would operate on Odney Common and the Moor, which would respectively benefit the Odney Estate/ John Lewis Partnership and the National Trust, these bodies should contribute towards the costs. If possible, there should be a clearer understanding of call out/duty hours, which might require further discussion with the Odney Estate. The view was also expressed that this should be for a 12 month period when it could be re-assessed.

Action: Cllr Perry / Locum Clerk

Next meeting Tuesday 1st October 2024 at 7.30pm in the Community Room at Cookham Library.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting

.....Chairman

Dated.....