

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 20th August 2024 from 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr. H. Pleming (Chairman)
 Cllrs. C. Aisladie, L. Austin, M. Brar, J. Edwards, M-L. Kellaway, Cllr. B. Perry
 and Cllr. E. Bune.

Also Present: Mrs. C. Hunter (Asst. Clerk)

Public: Sue Gallagher. No members of the Press were present.

OPEN FORUM:

Sue Gallagher came to talk about the basketball court surface. She explained that last July, 2023, she had landed badly when jumping for a ball and grazed her knee very badly although she was wearing leggings. Apparently other parents and children have sustained cuts while using the basketball court but none of these have been reported to the Council to date. Sue explained that she was at the meeting to voice all the concerns she had been notified about.

Cllr. Pleming explained that the basketball court was inspected regularly by RoSPA and HAGS so that it met safety standards. However the surface was not specifically checked for 'bounciness'.

Cllr. Perry and Cllr. M-L Kellaway requested that RoSPA should also look at the surface which was supported by those present and the Clerk would be requested to liaise with RoSPA and respond to Ms. Gallagher in due course.

8pm Cllr. Brar joined the meeting.

1. Apologies

Cllr. L. Tull, Cllr. T. Caen and Cllr. A-L. Regan.

2. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 18th June 2024

These were agreed and approved by all at the meeting.

4. To approve the quote from Hags to repair the 4 Seat Rocker, Cableway, Multi Play Toddler, Seat Swing and Horizontal Ladder at the play area

This item was deferred for discussion with item 9.

5. To consider remedial action on the basketball court surface following a complaint

This item was discussed in open forum.

6. To further review medium to low risk items identified on the most recent HAGS play area inspection report

This was deferred for discussion with item 9.

7. To consider new signage for the Alfred Major Recreation Ground

7.1 It was agreed to have new signage as recommended by RoSPA for the basketball courts. Also notices at the entrance of the Alfred Major to say 'Use Equipment at your own risk'. Remove the existing faded signs. Cllr. J. Edwards would be contacted for past work done on this.

Action: Clerk to contact Cllr. Edwards

7.2 Signs to remind dog owners to clear up after their dogs would be installed through the RBWM Community Safety scheme. Patrols would also be requested between 7 – 9am and 7-9pm to enforce the clean up after your dog message.

Action: Clerk to organise this

8. To approve the cut back of a tree at Alleyns Lane allotments

A white poplar is spreading making Plot 16D unsuitable for any cultivation. The tenants in the allotments in front of this, Plots 16ABC, have said if this area is cleared they will work to keep it clear. It was agreed that Steve Taylor would clear the site but would not use any weedkiller.

Action: Asst. clerk to communicate this decision to Mr. Taylor

9. To review a quote for the replacement of the surface matting on the play area.

This item was discussed with items 4 and 6. Re item 4 a quote had been received for £615 from HAGS. This was not approved.

After discussion it was agreed that Cllrs. Fleming and Brar would visit the play area and check on all the equipment referred to in item 4 and identified as medium risk in HAGS' report. Councillors would be advised of wants of repair that needed urgent attention and if agreed these would be actioned promptly.

Regarding the surface matting, HAGS had quoted £10,287.00, to replace the existing surface with mulch round the Picnic Table - 4sqm Four Way Springer - 4sqm Activity Trail - 30sqm Basket Swing - 20sqm Pedal Bike - 4sqm Skier - 4sqm Overhead Glider 12sqm. It was felt that this was a lot of money.

It was decided to ask HAGS to quote for reinstating the black squared matting around these items.

Action: Clerk to contact HAGS

10. To approve quote/s regarding installing a chestnut paling fence on Sutton Road allotment

It was agreed that the Council would buy and supply the chestnut paling. Steve Taylor to install them.

Action: Cllr. Fleming to buy the materials

Asst. Clerk to communicate the decision to Mr. Taylor

11. Update on the plan for the Sutton Road Allotment Orchard project and approve quotations for buying trees

This was deferred to the next Council meeting so Cllr. Edwards could explain the proposal.

12. To approve a quotation for the mowing of the field at the back of Sutton Rd Allotments at a cost of £325

Various options were discussed for managing this area, whether to reinstate the shorter grass as in previous years, leave the taller grass as it was or to flail cut for £325. It was agreed to flail cut the grass.

Asst. Clerk to communicate the decision to Mr. Taylor

13. Update on hedging around the allotments being left to grow

Cllr. Fleming reported that the Alfred Major and Sutton Road hedges have been left to grow higher. Only where visibility was limited would the Sutton Road hedges be cut. Only half of new growth would be cut next year. At Alfred Major, the hedges would be kept at 8ft and cut in September.

Asst Clerk to communicate the decision to Mr. Taylor

14. **To approve new procedure to cover unused allotment plots with weed suppressant covers**

The Assistant Clerk explained that vacant plots with no new tenants would be cleared to ground level by Steve Taylor and then covered with weed suppressant. This was approved.
Asst Clerk to communicate the decision to Mr. Taylor

15. **To review progress on how to manage the Alleyn's Lane allotment field**

Following discussion, it was suggested that only two ponies should be kept in the field. The electric fence to remain where it currently is. Cllr. Fleming with either Cllr. Perry or Cllr. Howard will meet the licensee to discuss the new tenancy licensing agreement. The outcome to be discussed at the next Council meeting.

16. **Update on the last War Memorial cleaning at Cookham Village and the Tarrystone Seat and agree who should assess them in September 2024 for cleaning needs**

The meeting noted that the War Memorial and Tarrystone Seat looked very clean. Cllr. Perry explained if any damage was found, then the contracted company, Bespoke Stonemasonry Services would be liable, not the subcontractors, Blast Off, as the contract was with Bespoke Stonemasonry Services.

17. **Update on proposals relating to grass cutting and hedge maintenance at the Cookham Cemetery extension field**

To be carried over to 18th February 2025 meeting.

18. **To consider the need for and location of the noticeboard in Cookham Dean**

An alternative location for the noticeboard at the village hall was discussed. As it wouldn't be outside and easily visible, it was decided to leave it where it currently is and repair the broken name on the top.

19. **Update on noticeboards on Odney Common**

A noticeboard would be installed to show the byelaws and the nearest public toilets.

20. **Any other business for which no decisions may be made at this meeting**

20.1 A resident of Worcester Road had complained that the Sycamore Tree on Alfred Major is blocking her sky signal. It was suggested that the resident gets a quote for the tree to be topped, submits it to the office for discussion, and pays for the work. This will be discussed and decided at the next Council meeting.

Action: Clerk to contact the resident

20.2 Allotments -A rent increase of £1 per pole, from £8 to £9 was suggested. To be ratified at the next Council meeting.

20.3 No Mow May - It was suggested to keep the grass at 2 foot.

20.4 Litter Picking - Litter picking in Cookham to be discussed at the next meeting.

20.5 Overgrown Vegetation – the Assistant Clerk will report the overgrown vegetation at the entrance to Lightlands Lane, opposite Lightlands Cottage.

20.6 Noticeboards – Cllr. Aisladie will clean the noticeboard outside Pinder Hall. A new sign on top of the noticeboard is also required.

20.7 Cemetery Field Reflection Area - It was felt that an area in Section C would be most suitable. This would be discussed again in the Spring.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.