

**COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
**Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023, commencing at 7.30pm**

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**PRESENT:** Cllr H. Pleming (Chairman)  
 Cllrs C. Aisladie, L Austin, M. Brar, E. Bune, T. Caen, J. Edwards, M. Howard and A-L Regan.

**Also Present:** 2 members of public were present.  
 There were no members of the press present.

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**OPEN FORUM:**

On behalf of WildCookham, Mr M. Day gave an overview of the work they had been doing over the last year at the Harris Woodbridge Wildlife Reserve. WildCookham have been managing the reserve for the last five years. The volunteers have continued to keep the site well maintained but respect its wild nature. The year started with a good display of daffodils, snowdrops and bluebells followed by a lot of wildflowers and after a rainy May many of the plants flourished. The Team have held a number of MeetUp's to organise the work. Mr Day is stepping back from the lead role on the HWWR team.

Mr L. Ahlgren from WildCookham, discussed his plan for an environmentally friendly Cookham, and asked if representatives of the Council could meet with him to share ideas.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Apologies received from Cllrs. M-L Kellaway and L. Tull

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Cllr J. Edwards	Member of WildCookham
Cllr M. Howard	item 3 Pecuniary

**3. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM WILDCOOKHAM ON THE ONGOING MAINTENANCE OF THE HARRIS WOODBRIDGE WILDLIFE RESERVE AND PROPOSE A DONATION OF £225 BE GIVEN TO SUPPORT THEIR WORK:**

Following on from the presentation by WildCookham, Cllrs unanimously approved a donation of £225 to WildCookham to support their work. Cllrs thanked WildCookham for their continued help with the Harris Woodbridge wildlife reserve.

Following the request from WildCookham to discuss future environmental plans for the area, and on the agreement of the Cmte, Cllrs J Edwards and M Brar volunteered to meet with WildCookham.

**4. TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON THE NUMBER OF VACANT PLOTS FOLLOWING ACCESS TO THE RBWM ALLOTMENT WAITING LIST:**

The access to the RBWM waiting list has been hugely beneficial, especially for the Sutton Road site.

**Alfred Major**

Total area 100 poles available  
 8 x 2.5 pole plots + 16 x 5 pole plots in use by 17 Tenants  
 No plots currently vacant – 6 names on waiting list.

**Sutton Road**

Total area 445 poles available + mowing field  
 89 x 5 pole plots in use by 46 Tenants  
 6 vacant at time of visits in the summer.  
 Current position: 1 vacant plot needing extensive clearance, CPC to action.  
 Since August: 8 new tenants via RBWM allotment waiting list, all have made significant progress.  
 Waiting list: 3 current plot holders with specific requests.  
 Existing tenants report a very positive atmosphere at the site currently.

**Alleyns Lane**

Total area 350 poles available + grazing field of 0.72H  
 70 x 5 pole plots in use by 41 Tenants  
 4 plots vacant at time of visits in the summer.  
 Current position: 8 vacant plots, 2 x 10 poles 6 x 5 poles  
 Since August: 4 new tenants, 2 from RBWM allotment waiting list.  
 Waiting list: 3 but with specific requests. No new prospective tenants.

The Clerk reported that now the majority of the renewals were dealt with, the office will continue to contact those that made an initial request but didn't follow up and also ask RBWM to resubmit our details to their waiting lists, highlighting the vacancies at the Alleyns Lane site.

**5. TO REVIEW THE RESULTS OF THE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION SURVEY AND CONSIDER NEXT STEPS FOR THE GROUP:**

Approximately 90 letters were sent with 33 responses. The majority were in support of having an allotment association, with most in favour of 1 or 2 meetings a year, however there was a reluctance from tenants to run these meetings. Cllrs agreed to restart the meetings. Cllrs J. Edwards and H. Fleming will get the meetings up and running.

**6. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR MAINTENANCE WORK TO THE TREES ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE ALFRED MAJOR RECREATION GROUND:**

On the proposal of Cllr M. Howard, and unanimously approved, the Clerk was asked to get a quote for the work from R Watts and Sons Arboricultural Services, for advice regarding tidying up and thinning out trees for safety and size. This will be reviewed at a future meeting.

**7. TO REVIEW FIRST HALF FIGURES FOR 23/24 AND FORECAST FOR 24/25 AND CONFIRM BUDGET REQUESTS FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR (2024/25) INCLUDING ANY PROJECT NEEDS:**

There was no comment on the current budgets.

Cllrs discussed projects from a list compiled of current action list requests and possible projects and suggested the following amounts in addition to the current budget:

Replacement signage (AMRG)	£1,000
Replacement noticeboards x 3	£2,000
Cemetery Memorial checks	£1,500
Hillcrest Ave Entrance repairs	£5,000
Additional Trees	£1,000

This will be added to the budget figures for review by the Finance cmte at the end of October.

**8. TO REVIEW AND PROVIDE UPDATES FOR THE GENERAL PURPOSES ACTIONS LIST:**

Clerk to follow up on the telephone box. Cllr Regan asked if Cllrs Bedwell and Moore could help with the quotes for the Hillcrest Ave entrance to the Alfred Major rec, she was asked to refer information to the Clerk.

**9. CHAIRMAN'S SUBMISSIONS:**

Cllr H. Fleming discussed a project to add more trees to the Alfred Major. This will be added to the next General Purposes Cmte meeting in December for a fuller discussion.

**The Meeting closed at 8.55pm**