

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 18th June 2024, commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr H. Fleming (Chairman)
 Cllrs C. Aisladie, L. Austin, M. Brar, J. Edwards and M-L Kellaway

Also Present: J. Holder (Locum)
 There were no members of the public or press present.

OPEN FORUM:

There was none.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies received from Cllrs E. Bune, T. Caen, M. Howard, A-L Regan and L. Tull

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman said that she would draft the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 April from the hand written notes of the Clerk which she had, the Clerk having not completed this exercise prior to her resignation. **Action: Cllr Fleming**

The Locum noted that going forward, draft minutes would be circulated to members following a meeting, with approval being given at the next committee meeting.

4. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TREE PLANTING ON THE ALFRED MAJOR RECREATION GROUND (WOODLAND TRUST)

It was noted that the trees were growing well with 27 still alive.

5. TO REVIEW 'NO MOW MAY' ON THE ALFRED MAJOR AND TO CONSIDER EXTENDING IT

Following discussion, on the proposal of Cllr Edwards, seconded by Cllr Aisladie, it was **agreed** that for next year, the section of the Alfred Major between the allotments and Shergold Way be left unmown from mid April to end of July.

The Committee should also give later consideration to develop a plan for next year to include putting a path around this area, which in turn should be publicised prior to implementation.

Action: Cllr Fleming

6. TO REVIEW THE LATEST RoSPA INSPECTION DOCUMENTS. TO DECIDE IF COUNCILLORS ONLY NEED TO REVIEW EQUIPMENT AT MEDIUM RISK

Following discussion, it was **agreed** to seek quotes from Hag for those items at Medium Risk, as set out in the RoSPA Safety Inspection reports circulated, being

- a) For the Alfred Major Recreation Field – the Rocker -4 Seat; the Cableway; the Multiplay-Toddler; and the Agility – Ladder-Horizontal (Field);
- b) For the Basketball Court and Skate Ramp – the Shelter -Youth Shelter; Litter Bin; Signage; Skate -Ramp and Basketball Court.
- c) To remove graffiti

In addition, it was **agreed** that all the bins should be reviewed. **Action: Asst. Clerk/Locum**

7. TO REVIEW A QUOTE FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SURFACE MATTING ON THE PLAY AREA

It was noted that the previous Clerk had been requested to obtain this. If this had not already been requested, the Assistant Clerk would seek a quote for this. **Action: Asst. Clerk/Locum**

8. **TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL FROM CLLR PLEMING FOR SECURITY AND WATER IMPROVEMENT ON SUTTON ROAD ALLOTMENTS**

The paper previously circulated by Cllr. Pleming was noted. Firstly, in respect of security, the proposal was for 5 x 10m chestnut paling at a height of 4 feet, at a cost of £432.50 for material, with further cost then for a contractor to install. Consideration to be given to fixing paling also to the gate or looking at a future date to a new high security gate. The second security proposal was for a new security hedge to be grown alongside this fence, which is 40m long so requires 280 saplings, with ancillary tree spirals, poles and weed matting at a material cost of £547.28.

Cllr Aisladie queried why security should just be improved for this allotment and not the two others. Cllr Edwards noted that security had been raised at the recent Allotment Association meeting in March in respect of low level theft and in this regard, noted opposition there to the Orchard concept due to concern that this could worsen security. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that :-

- a) Approval be given only for the paling and not for the gate;
- b) Quotes to be obtained from contractors for installation of chestnut paling;
Action: Asst. Clerk/Locum
- c) Approval be given for the new security hedge;
- d) In respect of the installation of the security hedge, a request should be made to the Allotment holders at their next meeting in Autumn for them to provide the voluntary labour;
Action: Cllrs Edwards & Pleming
- e) That approval of costs be given on the basis that this is provided for in the budget, Cllr Pleming to check with the Finance Committee chairman;
Action: Cllr Pleming

In respect of the third proposal to install an IBC water tank in order to provide a further tap, it was **agreed** following discussion to defer this matter to next Summer when it could be considered a) as part of an overall package including the Orchard with the Sutton Road Allotment holders and b) as part of a review for all three allotments.

9. **TO REVIEW AND DISCUSS THE PLAN FOR THE SUTTON ROAD ALLOTMENTS ORCHARD PROJECT, PLANTING AND MANAGEMENT CARE OF THE TREES**

The paper previously circulated by Cllrs Edwards and Pleming for the positioning and the choice of 30 trees (being 12 Apple, 6 Pear, 6 Cherry, 4 Plum, 1 Mulberry and 1 Quince), was noted. Cllr Edwards said that rather than getting trees in pots, it would be better to get bare root trees as they 1) establish better 2) are cheaper. They would initially need to be placed in a trench. This method not only allowed for a greater selection of trees at a cheaper price but also would push back the planting time to November. The cost for this would be about £1,500 which would come out of the £5k funding, allowing for this. It was **agreed** that:-

- a) Cllr. Edwards to give tree details to the Assistant Clerk to get 3 quotes for ordering, whereby the trees to be ordered August/September time for delivery, for planting, in November;
Action: Cllr Edwards and Asst. Clerk/Locum
- b) Cllrs Edwards and Pleming to mark out tree positions and to dig trench for heeling in fruit trees on arrival in November;
Action: Cllrs Edwards & Pleming
- c) Cllrs Edwards and Pleming hereafter to consider timetable and budget for planting the trees.
Action: Cllrs Edwards & Pleming

10. **TO REVIEW THE PLANS AND PROGRESS FOR THE MOWING FIELD AT THE BACK OF SUTTON RD ALLOTMENTS. TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE TIME SPENT FOR WINTER GRAZING THE PONIES COULD BE DIVIDED BETWEEN THE ALLEYN'S LANE AND THE SUTTON ROAD ALLOTMENT FIELDS**

It was **agreed** that the mowing of the field at the back of Sutton Road Allotments should be done in September. Assistant Clerk to advise contractor.
Action: Asst. Clerk/Locum

It was noted that currently at a cost of approximately £360 pa (exact amount to be confirmed), the tenant had an annual lease to keep 5 ponies in the field but there was not sufficient grass for 5 ponies. It was noted that the ponies could move for some of the time to the allotment field at Sutton Road. The allotment holders might be concerned that the ponies might eat their produce, but this has not happened at the Alleyn's Lane Allotment. Following discussion, it was **agreed** that at first instance, the Committee chairman, together with the Council Chairman, should have an initial meeting with the tenant to discuss. *Action: Cllrs Pleming & Perry*

11. **TO CONSIDER WHETHER HEDGING AROUND THE ALLOTMENTS COULD BE LEFT TO GROW TO INCREASE BIODIVERSITY AND SECURITY**

The Chairman noted that at the Alfred Major allotment holders had said that they would prefer the hedge to be 2 feet higher. I was **agreed** to leave hedges at Sutton Road and the Alfred Major to grow 2 feet higher. The Clerk's office to advise the contractor a) not to cut the hedge until November and b) allow it to be 2 feet higher than the existing level. **Action: Asst. Clerk/Locum**

12. **TO REVIEW PROGRESS ON A PROPOSAL FROM CLLR HOWARD RE. THE ALLEYN'S LANE ALLOTMENT FIELD AND START TO CONSIDER THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND HOW IT CAN BE BUDGETED. TO DISCUSS IF CAN BE CARRIED OUT BY A VOLUNTEER STAFF AS OPPOSED TO OFFICE STAFF**

Cllr Fleming said that she and Cllr Perry could discuss this also when they met with the tenant (see agenda item item 10 above). **Action: Cllrs Fleming & Perry**

13. **TO DISCUSS IF WILDCOOKHAM CAN BE ISSUED WITH A KEY FOR THE ALLOTMENT AT ALLEYN'S LANE AND THE ALLOTMENT FIELD KEY SO THAT THEY CAN CARRY OUT THE AGREED SURVEYS ON THEIR OWN**

It was **agreed** that a key could be issued on the following conditions - a) they should provide a named key holder; b) that they were not permitted to make any copies of the key; c) that the key should be returned after completion of the survey. The key for the allotment field also needs to be located and lent out with similar conditions. **Action: Cllr Fleming & Asst. Clerk/Locum**

14. **TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE ALFRED MAJOR KEY COULD BE LEFT IN A SECURITY BOX AT CLLR BRAR'S HOUSE FOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS**

Following discussion, it was **agreed** that allotment holders be advised that a key for the gate should be obtained from the Office. **Action: Cllr Fleming**

A key could be issued on the following conditions - a) that they were not permitted to make any copies of the key; b) that the key should be returned after permitted use period.

Action: Asst. Clerk/Locum

15. **TO REVIEW THE WAR MEMORIAL CLEANING AT COOKHAM DEAN, COOKHAM VILLAGE AND THE TARRYSTONE SEAT AND REVIEW COST. TO CONSIDER IF AN ANNUAL MAINTENANCE REVIEW/PLAN SHOULD BE PUT IN PLACE AND HOW THIS COULD BE EXECUTED**

Members had several concerns about the recent D Day cleaning work undertaken by Blast Away firm, ranging from whether their work had left the memorial porous to whether it mattered that this wasn't the company they thought was doing work and Blast Away must have been subcontracted. In future the Council wishes to use the company it contracted to ensure they are properly qualified and have the correct equipment. Cllrs Perry and Howard had been involved in this and the Chairman would seek further details from them. **Action: Cllr Fleming**

Going forward, a Committee member should review the Memorials in September each year to consider whether any cleaning required for the November Armistice Day. **Action: Cllr Fleming/ALL**

16. **TO CONSIDER CLLR. PLEMING'S PROPOSAL THAT OLDER AREAS OF THE COOKHAM CEMETERY COULD BE LEFT WITH LONGER GRASS**

Cllr Aisladie thought the effect would give the appearance of being uncared for and disrespectful. Members however expressed interest in an alternative proposal from Cllr Edwards whereby, until such time as the area might be needed for burials, an area of longer grass could be sited away from the graves in the extension field, with the area around its edge being mown together with a path through this grassy area. Further a bench could be placed there for visitors to sit for reflection. It was **agreed** that:-

- a) Cllr Aisladie to view field to identify possible location; **Action: Cllr Aisladie**
- b) Cllr Fleming to consider budget, including potential for seeking a donation for the bench. **Action: Cllr Fleming**

17. TO OBTAIN THREE QUOTATIONS TO REPAIR THE TWO NOTICE BOARDS BY A SINGLE SUPPLIER PROVIDING AND FIXING A NEW SIGN AND REPLACING THE PERSPEX;THE SIGN TO READ "COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL" AS AT PRESENT

It was agreed that a) Cllr Aisladie should check the condition of the Perspex on the notice board in Pinder Hall and Cllr Fleming should check the one at Cookham Dean and thereafter report back, b) with the intention thereafter for the Clerk's office to get quotes , if required.

Action: a) Cllrs Aisladie and Fleming b) Asst. Clerk/Locum

18. TO OBTAIN QUOTATIONS FOR TWO NOTICE BOARDS TO DISPLAY THE BY-LAWS ON ODNEY COMMON

The Assistant Clerk was requested to clarify what by-laws required for display, which in turn should indicate the size of the notice boards required and thereafter get quotes. **Action:Asst. Clerk**

19. TO DISCUSS THE REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT OF THE FLOOD ALERT SIGNS.TO DISCUSS THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW SIGN FOR FLOOD ALERT AT THE JUNCTION OF MAIDENHEAD ROAD AND LIGHTLANDS LANE.

Cllr Brar said that the responsibility for this lay with the Environment Agency and not the Council. It was agreed that a) Cllr Edwards would provide to the Clerk's office photos/further details of the disrepair of the current signs and that b) Cllr Regan would provide explanatory details to the Clerk's office as to why the new sign was required. Thereafter the Clerk's office to contact the Environment Agency.

Action: a) Cllrs Edwards and Regan b) Asst. Clerk/Locum

20. CHAIRMAN'S SUBMISSIONS:

It was noted that going forward, this would be renamed "Any Other Business (Matters for noting but not for decision).

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

.....Chairman

Dated.....