

**COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Cookham Parish Council**  
**Held in the Community Room of the Library on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. B. Perry (Chairman), R. Kellaway, M-L. Kellaway L. Austin, C. Aisladie, M. Brar, H. Pleming and Cllr. T Cean.

**Also Present:** Mrs. Deepa Kanthi (Clerk)

Paul Strzelecki was present. No members of the Press were present.

**OPEN FORUM:**

Cllr. Regan acting as a spokesperson for Cookham Village Events requested a grant for the Village picnic scheduled to take place on 4 May 2025 between 12-6pm. She requested a grant of £1,000.00 towards the event. It was agreed to have this item on the next Council meeting.

Paul Strzelecki voiced his concerns about the shortage of time allowed to make representations at the Maidenhead Development control panel meeting relating to Cannondown Lane. He requested the Council should ask the Chairman of the meeting at RBWM for 10 minutes speaking time, as 3 minutes was insufficient, especially considering there are two applications to discuss. Cllr. M. Brar reported she had already asked the Chairman for 6 minutes.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs. J. Edwards, M. Howard, J. Moore, N. Bedwell, E. Bune and L. Tull.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Aisladie declared an interest in item 24.

**3. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

These were **approved**.

**4. To receive, for information, available minutes of committee meetings held since the last Council meeting** - Planning Committee meeting, 12th November – these were noted.

**5. Matters arising from the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda**

There were none.

**6. Finance** The following decisions were made following discussion: -

6.1 Payments/receipts to date as per the cashbook circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting were **approved**.

6.2 Cllr. R. Kellaway reported that the Finance Committee had agreed a budget and to recommend the Precept for 2025/26. Following debate, it was **agreed** that the Precept be increased to £56.79 being a £2.72 increase for each Band D property in the Parish for 2025/26

6.3 That a contribution of £100 be **approved** to support the opponents of the Marlow Film studio. As this was outside the current budget, such monies to be taken from General Funds.

6.4 The Chairman explained that final comments were still being considered regarding the Tender documentation for Grounds Maintenance. It was **agreed** that the Chairman, Cllr. Pleming and the Clerk be given delegated authority to agree the final wording if possible, by the end of this week with a view to launching the tender process as soon as possible.

6.5 The Clerk explained that in order to comply with the Internal Auditor's interim audit it was necessary to show the movement of funds over budget for the period from

6.6 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to date. A spreadsheet had been prepared and circulated detailing this movement which was **approved**.

6.7 It was **agreed** to set up a Direct Debit for payment of water charges on allotments.

6.8 It was **agreed** to vire £1,375 out of the regeneration of plots budget and into the general maintenance budget for the allotments.

6.9 Additional costs for the website in the sum of £850.00 had been incurred and these were **approved**. In addition, it was **agreed** to acquire the registration for the old domain name until Sept 2034 and to ratify the cost of £129.49.

**7. To approve/ratify the Clerk in her role as Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer in place of Christine Hunter and Cllr. R. Kellaway respectively**

This was unanimously **approved**.

**8. To consider a response to the consultation on remote meetings and proxy voting-**

It was **agreed** to engage in consultation with HALC (Hampshire Association of Local Councils) to formulate an informed response based on the comments of those Councillors who spoke during the discussion. The draft would be circulated for comments before submission.  
**Action: Chairman and Clerk**

**9. To consider whether to continue with the alternative red logo for the Council and if so whether to arrange for it to be improved by a graphic artist at a cost of £65.00 out of General Funds-**

This was unanimously **approved**.

**10. To consider and approve purchasing a defibrillator and cabinet under the Government Community Match Funded Defibrillator Scheme**

It was noted all councillors were in favour of having the defibrillator on the terms set out in the briefing note circulated prior to the meeting. The briefing note provided that the cost would be £750.00 which will be matched. The Chairman suggested placing the defibrillator on the entrance porch outside the library. This is a central location with library and Parish Council office with school next door and Alfred Major Recreation Grounds nearby. This was unanimously **approved**. The Clerk would approach RBWM who own the building. It was also **agreed** that Council staff should be trained to use the defibrillator.

**Action: - Clerk**

**11. To ratify the costs of planning advisers' support in preparing the case in respect of 23/02019/OUT & 23/02022/OUT for the hearing**

The costs in the sum of £318.00 were proposed by the Chairman for ratification such sum to be paid out of General Funds.

This was unanimously **approved**.

**12. To authorise the Chairman to discuss with the Odney Club its proposal to install a new path to the side gate of the Heritage Centre with a view to approval under the Byelaws**

The Chairman was duly **authorised**.

**13. To receive any update on the intention by the Church Commission to build houses on Cemetery field**

It was reported by Cllr. Brar that she had spoken to the planning officer and there was nothing in the pipeline.

**14. To receive any update on the intention by Elegy Ltd to build a crematorium on Long Lane**

The Chairman reported that the RBWM planning portal currently showed no relevant updates or entries concerning this proposal, but he had been informed that such an application had been lodged on 25 November. The Chairman requested that this item should go on the next Council and planning meeting Agendas. **Action: -Clerk**

Cllr. Regan reported there had been many responses to the survey about the crematorium. She would circulate the report.

**Action: - Cllr. Regan**

**15. Update on the Cookham Rise School Lease**

The Chairman reported that the application for the registration of title of Alfred Major Recreation Grounds had been submitted to the Land Registry. The Land Registry had therefore now supplied a title number for insertion in the new lease. The lease in the mean-while was in the final stage of the pre-draft and should be available to the Council in the next few weeks. **Action: - Chairman**

**16. To receive an update on the Strategic Plan**

Cllr. Regan stated that she noticed the plan had been updated by the Locum Clerk and uploaded onto the new website. She confirmed she was happy with it.

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

The Chairman had reported by email dated 30 November 2024 to all Councillors. The draft plan had now been lodged with RBWM and Regulation 16 consultation will begin on 6 January 2025.

As part of that consultation, a physical copy of the Neighbourhood Plan would be available at multiple locations. Councillors made suggestions which the Chairman would explore and report to RBWM. **Action:-Chairman**

**18. To receive an update from the Traffic working party**

Cllr. Brar reported that the extension of double yellow lines at Sutton Road had significantly improved the visibility at the junction. New signs have been put up, allowing for a maximum of 3 hours parking in the Sutton Road car park and advising against parking on the pavement. These measures have naturally slowed down the traffic.

**19. Outside Bodies and Borough Cllr. reports**

No Updates except that Cllr. Perry reported that the Patient Participation Group hoped now to proceed with the survey in the spring 2025.

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

**20.1** Cllr. H. Fleming proposed adding a hedge to Alleyns Lane allotment grazing field. This would increase wildlife and biodiversity. Two options were proposed by Wild Cookham - both would get a grant from the Woodland Trust. The first proposal was less expensive but failing to maintain the hedge according to the terms & conditions would mean the Council would need to repay the grant. The second option would be more expensive but with fewer onerous terms & conditions attached.

**It was agreed**, Cllr R. Kellaway dissenting, to proceed with the second option, at cost of £957. The Chairman asked for the matter to be put on the next Council agenda for ratification as the monies should come from General Funds.

**20.2** A vote of thanks to Cllr. Moore, Cllr. Brar, Cllr. Aisladie and all the Councillors who were present at the recent Christmas Fayre was **agreed**. It was noted the plans for this year's Fayre were made at the last minute. Cllr. Aisladie was asked to set up and lead a working party for next year. It was suggested that next year, the Fayre should be included on the Council's meeting agenda for September 2025.

**Action: - Cllr. Aisladie**

**21. To consider next steps relating to the new laws on the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace given that new EHRC templates have been published**

The item has been added to the risk assessment document and will be reviewed under risk assessment.

**22. To consider and approve the revised Risk Assessment document for the Council**

Cllr. R. Kellaway reported this has been approved by the Finance committee and has been circulated to Councillors. He recommended it to the Council. The revised Risk Assessment document was **approved**.

**23. 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**.

**24. Update on employment/ retainer of a new Chief Commons Officer**

The Chairman reported that the matter had been put on hold due to the Employments Right Bill. The individual concerned had agreed to be self-employed, allowing us now to proceed. This was **agreed**, with Cllr. R. Kellaway dissenting.

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

Cllr. Aisladie reported that everything had now been concluded and accordingly this matter is now closed.

**26. To approve an increase of half an hour a week to the Assistant Clerk's contracted hours to cover attendance at Planning meetings**

This was unanimously **approved**.

**The meeting closed at 9.30pm**

Next meeting Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Community Room at Cookham Library.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

.....Chairman

Dated.....