

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 17th June 2025 at 7.30pm

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

Also Present: Mrs. D Kanthi (Clerk)
No members of the public or press were present.

Open Forum

1. **Apologies**
M-L Kellaway, B. Perry and L Tull.
2. **To elect the Chairman for the General Purposes Committee.**
Cllr. Pleming informed the Committee of her intention to take a temporary step back from Council duties for a period of six months, during which her involvement would be intermittent. Cllr Brar stated that, in instances where the Chairman is unable to attend, she would assume the role of Chair for the meetings. Following discussions, Cllr. Brar proposed, Cllr. Pleming for the position of Chairman for this year. The proposal was **unanimously agreed**.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
None.
4. **To approve the minutes of the meeting of 15th April 2025.**
These were **approved**.
5. **To consider the installation of a new hedge alongside the new chestnut palings at Sutton Road allotments.**
The Chairman reported that a quotation amounting to £512.00 had been circulated prior to the meeting. She informed the Committee that a hedge had previously existed on the outside of the railing; however, as it was obstructing the view of road users, it was **agreed** that the hedge should be installed inside the railing. The Committee resolved to proceed with the installation using a mix of hawthorn and blackthorn. It was further **agreed** that a letter would be sent to allotment holders requesting volunteers to assist with the installation, as well as to commit to watering and maintaining the hedge. The Committee determined that the task would be undertaken in November.
6. **To consider use of scalping to level the track at Sutton Road Allotments.**
Items 6 and 7 were discussed together.
The Chairman reported that an initial quotation of £600.00 per track had been obtained from Steve Taylor, which was thought to be too costly in the previous meeting. She also informed the Committee that a further quotation had been obtained from Holdford, amounting to £390.00 plus VAT for the Alleyns Lane allotment track and £282.00 plus VAT for Sutton Road allotment track. These revised quotes were considered to be significantly more competitive. Following discussions, the Committee **unanimously agreed** to proceed with the works on Sutton Road allotments at this time and reconsider works on Alleyns' lane next year.

Action: Clerk

7. **To consider use of scalping to level the track at Alleyns lane.**

Discussed with item 6.

8. **To consider which bins to replace at AMRG and Causeway.**

Following an extended discussion, a few actions were agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk will contact the National Trust to enquire whether both the bins on Causeway could be replaced with 66 litre bins and the bin currently located adjacent to the bench on the Causeway may be repositioned at a greater distance from the seating area, due to issues with odour. The two removed 45-litre bins from Causeway are to be repurposed to replace any rusted bins at AMRG, specifically in the playground. In addition, the bin located on entrance near Broom Hill will be replaced with a 66-litre red bin.

The Clerk reported that a 66 litre bin would cost a maximum of £300.00 plus installation. It was agreed the bin on the Broom Hill should be replaced immediately. If agreed by the National Trust the replacement of bins at the Causeway to go ahead.

It was discussed having a Big Belly bin near the skateboard facility. It was decided that this matter required full Council consideration owing to the necessity of budgetary approval. This matter will be taken to the next Council meeting.

Lastly, it was agreed Cllr Brar would approach the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) to request the replacement of the existing bin with a new Big Belly bin.

Action: Chairman, Cllr Brar and Clerk

Cllr. Howard came in at 8.15pm

9. **To review and approve maintenance of Stonehouse common.**

The Clerk informed the Committee that three quotations had been obtained from Holdford for varying levels of work:

(i) £75.00 plus VAT for strimming a one-meter-wide path from outside the gate to the bench and around the bench.

(ii) £180.00 plus VAT for strimming all grass outside the gate and inside Stonehouse Common, as well as emptying the bin; and

(iii) £540.00 plus VAT for strimming all grass outside the gate and inside Stonehouse Common, emptying the bin, and cutting back hedges and overhanging tree branches.

It was noted that full works must be undertaken after the autumn.

The Committee **agreed** to proceed with the strimming of the one-meter-wide path from outside the gate to the bench and around the bench at a cost of £75.00. It was further **agreed** that this work would be carried out every two months. **Action: Clerk**

10. **To consider future projects for AMRG including entrance at Hill Crest Avenue.**

The Chairman informed the committee members that a quotation from Green-tech, of £4,171.68 inclusive of VAT, had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. Following a discussion, it was resolved that a further quotation be sought from Mr. Steve Taylor for the purposes of cost and material comparison. It was further agreed that this matter shall be revisited and considered at the next meeting General Purposes Committee meeting.

11. **To consider and approve buying a gazebo for Parish Council events.**

Two options had been circulated prior to the meeting for consideration. Following discussions, it was **agreed** to proceed with the purchase of the gazebo and weights.

The Committee **agreed** that an amount of £300.00 would be allocated from the Communication budget to cover the expenditure.

12. To inform Committee of Wild Cookham survey dates and discuss whether we need to warn neighbours of nighttime activity.

The Chairman reported that a letter had been prepared by Ms. Caroline Collins on behalf of Wild Cookham and Cookham Parish Council, to inform residents of the forthcoming survey. The Chairman further noted that the letter was straightforward in nature, setting out the duration and specific dates of the survey. It was **unanimously agreed** that the letter be issued to residents.

13. To consider making improvements to the Cemetery Field hedge.

The Chairman reported that Cllr. Perry had undertaken a site visit to the Cemetery and subsequently proposed a series of improvements to the grounds. The proposed works include: (i) the planting of additional trees in the newly designated section of the field; (ii) restoration of gaps in the existing hedge located between the original section of the Cemetery and Maidenhead Road; and (iii) allowing the hedge surrounding the new section of the Cemetery to grow to a height consistent with that of the hedge separating the two sections.

It was agreed that professional advice and a quotation for the proposed works would be sought from Holdford. A detailed plan outlining the scope and costs of the improvements shall be brought forward for consideration at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

Action: Clerk

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

Cllr. Regan proposed the initiation of a new community project involving the planting of bulbs at various locations throughout Cookham. The objective of the project is to enhance the visual appeal of Cookham. The proposal was agreed in principle by the committee, subject to the submission of a detailed plan. It was further agreed that Cllr. Regan shall prepare and present a comprehensive project proposal, including proposed locations, bulb types, timelines, and associated costs, at the next GP meeting.

Cllr Brar volunteered to liaise with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) to inquire into the availability of complimentary bulbs for use in the project.

The Chairman reported that the agreed maintenance work on the trees at AMRG has been completed. As part of the works, surplus woodchips were distributed to the allotment holders, which was received positively.

The Chairman further reported that the willow tree located at Alleyn's Lane has now cut, in accordance with previous discussions.

Additionally, the Chairman advised that the extension of the "No Mow May" initiative through to the end of June has proven beneficial, with several patches of wildflowers now in bloom, contributing positively to the visual and ecological value of the area.

Meeting Ended at 8.50 pm