

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 17th February 2026 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr. B. Perry (Chairman), Cllrs. C. Aisladie, L. Austin, M. Brar J. Edwards, M. Howard.

Also Present: Mrs. D. Kanthi (Clerk), Joy Blake, Mike Copland, Neil King and Henry Boulding accompanied by his father.

Open Forum

Joy Blake raised concerns about the parking problems at the junction of High Road and New Road. She reported damage to plants, wildflowers, and posts she had installed, and highlighted safety risks for pedestrians, particularly children walking to school. She asked for advice and assistance and invited councillors to visit the site. Cllr Edwards said that, living in Graham Road, she is aware of the parking situation. She added that it also poses risks for emergency vehicle access. Cllrs Brar and Howard agreed to visit the location and refer the matter to Parking/Highways at RBWM.

Mr Boulding reported that 36 Scouts from Berkshire, including himself and Max Milner from Cookham, had been selected to attend the 2027 World Scout Jamboree in Poland and training events over the coming year. Participants must raise £3,650 to cover their costs. He has so far raised £1,500 from charities and car-washing activities. He requested a donation from the Council. Councillors suggested charities and fundraising activities. Cllr Aisladie congratulated both the scouts on their selection and progress. The Chairman noted that the donations budget for the current year has been fully allocated so he will add this to the agenda for the April Council meeting if Mr Boulding will complete the small grants application form.

1. Apologies.

Cllrs. C Blackall, M-L Kellaway, A-L Regan and L Tull.

2. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr. Edwards declared interest in item 5 as a Trustee of WildCookham.

Cllr. Howard declared a personal interest in item 5 as an immediate neighbour.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 21st October 2025.

These were **approved**.

It was **agreed** that item **5** be brought forward.

5. To receive an update on proposed installation of a Pond at Alleyns lane Allotments.

The Chairman invited Mr Copland to speak. Mr Copland noted that the email with the proposal and supporting documentation had been sent to the Council in advance of the meeting, and he hoped that approval would be granted for the project to proceed. He added that the timeline of the activities would need to be coordinated with Ms Linegar.

The Chairman confirmed receipt of the email as had an email from Ms Linegar agreeing the proposal. He also reported that a quotation of £852.00 for installing the fence had been provided by Steve Taylor.

Following discussion, it was **agreed** that WildCookham may progress arrangements on the basis that volunteers would require adequate notice and that the work should start after appropriate arrangements are made with the Council and Ms Linegar. It was further **agreed** that alternative quotations for the fence, based on a slightly different specification, should be sought.

The Committee thanked Wild Cookham and their representatives for their work.

Action: Clerk

- 13. To consider and decide upon a request from WildCookham to approve and pay for the removal of certain overhanging tree branches at the Harris/Woodbridge nature Reserve.**

This item was **deferred** to the next Council meeting.

- 4. To receive an update on the work carried out at the Cemetery lodge.**

The Clerk reported that all works at the Cemetery Lodge have been completed in accordance with the EICR requirements and as agreed at the January Council meeting. A new certificate had been issued accordingly. It was **agreed** that the expenditure should be allocated from Strategic Reserves under line item 117 of the budget monitor (Cemetery Lodge – Repairs and Maintenance). Any councillors who would like to visit Cemetery Lodge should arrange it through the Clerk and the Management Company.

Action: Clerk

- 6. To receive an update on the request for payment of CIL money and the payment of CIL money generally and to decide upon any appropriate action.**

The Chairman reported that he had circulated his annotated version of the 'RBWM Guidance for Parish Councils on CIL Reporting'. He noted that, in accordance with the guidance, the Council has a period of five years from the date of receipt in which to expend Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. The Chairman proposed and after discussion it was **agreed** that the Council formally request from RBWM details of developments over the last few years on which CIL was payable and amounts paid to this Council.

Action: Chairman and Clerk

Cllr Howard recommended and it was **agreed** that a meeting be convened with the relevant RBWM officers to obtain clarification on these matters.

Action: Cllr Howard

- 7. To receive a report from Cllr Edwards regarding levelling of tracks at Sutton Road Allotments and to level the ground near the front gates.**

Cllr Edwards reported that at the Allotment Holders' Meeting in October it had been recorded that the tracks would not be repaired, though the area at the front gate was to be filled in and maintained. The Clerk confirmed that this work had been carried out.

- 8. To consider survey of trees that are under the responsibility of the Parish Council and to decide upon appropriate action.**

The Clerk reported that a quotation had been obtained from R. Watts for a survey of all the Council-owned trees in the Parish, at a rate of £50 per hour for an estimated 12 hours of work. It was **agreed** to proceed with the survey accordingly. It was **agreed** that the expenditure for up to £600 should be allocated from line item 95 of the budget monitor (Action from Tree Survey).

Action: Clerk

- 9. To consider and approve the quote of £182 plus VAT provided by Holdford for chopping and chainsaw a dead tree and stacking in a gap in the fence on far-right hand side fence by the wall at Sutton Road allotment.**

This was approved.

- 10. To consider and approve the quote of £232 plus VAT provided by Holdford to cut back inside of Hedge and vegetation where wire has collapsed and repair the wire that has collapsed.**

This was approved.

- 11. To approve planting of new trees in the new section of the cemetery and to receive an oral report on the chapel and cemetery project.**

The Clerk had circulated a quotation from Holdford and an offer from ACI Group, who proposed to supply the trees and provide volunteer support for planting. Cllr Edwards suggested alternative tree species and potential locations. Following a discussion on the suitability of the proposed trees and planting sites, it was **agreed** to delegate the matter to Cllr Edwards to work with the Clerk to progress the project.

Action: Cllr Edwards and Clerk

The Chairman reported he had approached three cemetery design specialists seeking proposals for the Project ready for the March Council meeting. He reported that part of the land lies within water Source Protection Zone 1, which probably posed design problems. Skilled and experienced designers would be needed.

- 12. To receive an update on the design and location of welcome boards at (AMRG).**

The Clerk reported that she had received a quotation of £3,279.20 plus VAT for the creation of the welcome boards, including installation and the production of artwork. The quotation was **agreed** in principle, subject to final approval of the wording and artwork.

- 14. To consider reports that Wraparound4U Ltd is using the Alfred Major Recreation Ground play area for organised fee-paying “learning and development ... and play based peer group fun [and ...] childcare” before and/or after school and to decide appropriate action in connection with the rules governing AMRG.***

The Chairman reported that he had circulated correspondence from Sam Kelly, Director of WrapAroundCare4U Ltd regarding their potential use of the AMRG. Councillors noted key considerations, including that safeguarding and security of the children should not fall within the Council’s responsibility, that Council insurance would not cover incidents occurring on the AMRG while the children are in their care, the potential impact on other park users, and the need to ensure the play area remains accessible to all. Following discussion, it was agreed that a draft response would be prepared and reviewed by the Committee before being issued.

Action: Chairman and Clerk

- 15. Any other business (on which) no decisions may be made at this meeting.**

Cllr Brar reported another adverse incident at Winter Hill happened on Friday 13th February, involving major fireworks, with debris left both on the site and on the road, as well as damage to property. There were also reports of car racing occurring on the same night. The Chairman will take up the matter with the National Trust.

Meeting Ended at 9.20 pm