

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Held in the Community Room on Tuesday 21st October 2025 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllrs. C. Aisladie, L. Austin, J. Edwards, M. Howard, B. Perry, A-L. Regan and L. Tull

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

Open Forum

1. **Apologies**
 Cllrs. M Brar and M-L Kellaway

2. **To elect the Chairman for the General Purposes Committee.**
 Cllr. Perry invited nominations from members willing to assume the role of Chairman of the General Purposes Committee. As no volunteers came forward, Cllr. Perry agreed to act as Interim Chair of the committee on a temporary basis until such time as the position was filled permanently.

3. **Declarations of Interest**
 None.

4. **To approve the minutes of the meeting of 17th June 2025.**
 These were **approved**.

5. **To approve the proposed planting of spring bulbs in Cookham.**
 Prior to the meeting Cllr. Regan had circulated a comprehensive proposal outlining the proposed planting locations and the specific bulb species to be used for the beautification of Cookham. The proposed cost for the purchase of the bulbs to be £400.00. All councillors **agreed** with the proposal and buying of the bulbs. It was further **agreed** that funding would be allocated from the strategic reserves under budget item 86, titled "Wild Flower Project." The Clerk raised a concern regarding the necessity of obtaining prior authorisation from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), as the land identified for planting falls under RBWM's ownership. Cllr. Howard undertook to liaise with RBWM to try to secure the required permission. **Action: Cllr. Howard**

6. **To consider and approve further levelling of tracks at Sutton Road Allotments and to level the ground near the front gates.**
 Following the agreement reached at the General Purposes Committee (GPC) meeting held in June, the Clerk reported that contractors had carried out work on the Sutton Road track. However, the contractors advised that the work remains incomplete and an additional £282.00 plus VAT would be required for more scalplings to finish the work. After discussion, it was **agreed** to refer the matter to the allotment holders' meeting scheduled for the end of October to consider alternative options. It was further **agreed** that Cllr. Edwards would report the outcome of the discussions to the next GPC meeting. **Action: Cllr. Edwards**

7. **To consider and approve which bin to buy and install near the skate ramp at AMRG.**
 The Clerk reported that, at a previous Council meeting, approval had been granted for the installation of a Big Belly bin at this location, with an allocated budget of £1,000. However, it was subsequently determined that the actual cost associated with the buying and installation of the Big Belly bin significantly exceeded the approved budget. At the current meeting, the

Clerk presented several alternative options for consideration. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would prepare a comprehensive proposal outlining three viable options, each to include the purchase, installation, and secure placement of the bin, with specifications ensuring resistance to vandalism and graffiti. The proposal is to be submitted for review at the next General Purposes Committee or Council meeting. **Action: Clerk**

8. To approve filling in the hedge and planting new trees in the new section of the cemetery.

The Clerk circulated two quotations for consideration: one for hedge infill works amounting to £796.00 plus VAT, and another for the planting of new trees at a cost of £1,690.00 plus VAT. It was **resolved** to proceed with the hedge infill works. With respect to the tree planting proposal, following discussion, it was **agreed** that the option of planting smaller and younger trees, as opposed to semi-mature trees, should be explored for cost-effectiveness. A budget of £2000 was agreed to complete both the works. Cllr. Edwards volunteered to work with the Clerk in preparing a detailed plan specifying the species of trees to be purchased, the associated costs for procurement and installation, and the proposed planting locations. The completed proposal is to be presented at the next GPC or Council meeting for further consideration. **Action: Cllr. Edwards and Clerk**

9. To consider and approve deep clean of the chapel, upgrading the heating and possibility of having Wi-Fi at the chapel.

The Clerk reported that the Chapel is in need of a thorough deep clean. A quotation in the amount of £380.00 for the required cleaning works was presented. The Councillors **unanimously agreed** to proceed with the cleaning in advance of the forthcoming Blessing of the Graves ceremony and allocated a budget for £400.00. It was further **agreed** that the Chapel shall be subject to an annual cleaning each September henceforth.

The Clerk had circulated another quotation concerning the proposed upgrade of the heating system at the Chapel. Following discussion, Cllr. Howard suggested installation of two heavy-duty curtains, draft excluders for the entrance door, and air curtains to improve thermal efficiency. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would prepare a detailed plan present the proposal at the next GPC or Council meeting for further consideration. **Action: Cllr. Clerk**

10. To consider actions needed to address the dog fouling issue at Alfred Major recreation ground (AMRG).

The Clerk reported that Mr. Mark Bradley, representing the football club, had attended the office to raise concerns regarding persistent dog fouling on the football pitches. In response, a series of remedial actions were **agreed**. It was **agreed** that the office would request Mr Bradley to provide weekly photographic evidence and submit regular reports to assist in monitoring the issue. Cllr. Aisladie requested that her contact details be shared with Mr Bradley, as she volunteered to assist with litter picking. The Clerk reported that although Cllr. Blackall was not present at the meeting, she had previously expressed willingness to assist with weekly spraying of the affected areas. It was agreed that the office should request Cllr. Blackall to undertake this task and to report back accordingly. It was **agreed** once the information was gathered proper actions could be taken after public consultation. **Action: Clerk**

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

The Clerk provided an update on the progress of the welcome board project, reporting that she, along with Cllrs. Edwards and Blackall had collaboratively developed the design. The proposed design was in principle approved by the Councillors. The Chairman expressed a desire to review and approve the final wording to be displayed on the Welcome Board. It was therefore **agreed** that a final version, incorporating the approved design and proposed wording, would be prepared and presented at the next GPC meeting for formal consideration and approval. **Action: Clerk and Cllrs. Edwards and Blackall**

12. **To consider survey of trees that are under the responsibility of the Parish Council.**
The Clerk reported concerns regarding the absence of a formal tree management policy and the limited availability of information regarding the last tree survey. She highlighted the potential liability risks to the Council should any incidents arise. Councillors acknowledged the validity of these concerns and agreed that the Council should establish a comprehensive tree management policy. It was further **agreed** that the Clerk would obtain quotations for conducting a full survey of all trees located on Council-owned land. **Action: Clerk**
13. **Any other business (on which) no decisions may be made at this meeting.**
The Clerk reported that she is now preparing the budget for next financial year and requested the Councillors to provide their inputs. She further advised that the following Finance Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled on 18th November.
Cllr. Edwards reported that she had undertaken the watering of the Orchard during the summer period at no cost to the Council. She further noted that the Orchard was in good condition, with no losses or damage to the trees. Although no fruit had been produced this year, she expressed confidence that fruiting is likely to occur in the following year.

Meeting Ended at 9.15 pm