

COOKHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting of Cookham Parish Council
Held in the Community Room of the Library on Tuesday 3rd March 2026

PRESENT: Cllr. B. Perry (Chairman), Cllrs. C. Aisladie, L. Austin, C. Blackall, T Caen, J. Edwards, C. Franke, and R. Kellaway

Also Present: Mr. J Holder (taking minutes), approx. 40 members of Parish

Open Forum

Approximately 40 members of the Parish attended in respect of item 21, the planning application for Grange Farm, 26/00354/FULL. Although the normal time slot for Open Forum is 15 minutes, the Chairman exercised his discretion considerably to extend this. Cllr Edwards and he engaged with and responded to the issues raised. The Chairman noted that whilst the Parish Council can make representations, it is RBWM which is the authority which makes planning decisions. Many planning applications are decided by RBWM planning officers under delegated powers but an RBWM councillor can 'call in' for consideration by councillors an application in the relevant ward. Major applications are decided by councillors anyway. This application is 'major' but was also called in. He was not a planning expert and could not advise what constituted "very special circumstances". He noted the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of December 2024/5. This had created the new concept of 'grey belt' so that 'green belt' was not as secure as previously. The NPPF would prevail over any Local or Neighbourhood Plan.

One person was obtaining his own legal advice to make representations. The Chairman noted that he might not wish to share that advice, so as not to lose legal privilege but it would be helpful if any subsequent representation then made to RBWM could be shared. Individual representations were likely to have greater weight than a single representation with many signatures. If there were a Stanley Spencer painting with a view of this area, that would be helpful to note. Water drainage could be an issue but this would be for Thames Water, rather than RBWM, to confirm this could be managed.

(Cllr Franke joined the meeting at 8.00pm)

The Parish Council would decide in its debate later whether and if so what issues to raise, such as traffic. Whilst there might be concerns as to what might happen in the future, the planning authority would only look at the present application. There was a likelihood that RBWM Planning would regard this land as Grey belt, although the Parish Council had challenged what the applicant had reported as RBWM's advice on this.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Cllrs. N Bedwell, M. Brar, M. Howard, M-L. Kellaway, A. Regan and L. Tull
 Cllr Franke had apologised for lateness.

The Clerk sent her apologies as her plane return had been cancelled due to the Middle East conflict.

2. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Austin declared an interest in item 10.

3. To approve minutes from Council Meeting on 3rd February 2026.

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman.

It was **agreed** that item 21 be brought forward.

21. To consider and comment on the planning application for Grange Farm, 26/00354/FULL.

Cllr Edwards proposed that the Council should object to the application so that councillors' concerns about aspects of it could be addressed. Concerns included the claimed Grey Belt designation for part of the site, traffic increase with risk of danger by the Post Office at the

Grange Road/Lower Road junction; whether a café and shop open to offsite customers was appropriate given the traffic concerns and whether there was a potential surface water flooding risk. It was unanimously **agreed to** seek to instruct consultants, preferably Troy Planning & Design to respond specifically on Traffic concerns and also generally, but if Troy were unable to advise on traffic, to seek to use another expert for that. A budget of up to £2,000 (+VAT), with spend made from the Strategic Reserves, was agreed on a vote; Cllr Edwards to arrange and agree the consultant(s) and instructions. In addition, if it was not possible, due to time constraints, to obtain output from consultants, then Cllr Edwards to draft an objection capturing outstanding concerns. **Action: Cllr Edwards/ Clerk**

(All but one parishioner left the meeting)

4. **COMMITTEE REPORTS – To note the minutes of the following meetings:**
 - a. **Planning Committee – 10th February 2026.** These were **noted**.
 - b. **General Purposes Committee - 17th February 2026.** These were **noted**.

5. **FINANCE:**
 - i. **To approve payments/receipts in February 2026.** These were **approved**.
 - ii. **To ratify the cost of inspections - HAGS £65.00 and £150.00. Ratified .**It was noted that the quotation showed 3 x I & M Operational Inspection at an individual cost of £65, total cost of £195. Only one of these at £65 had been approved; if the other 2 such inspections were required, they would need subsequent approval. **Action: Clerk**
 - iii. **To consider the quotation received from HAGS and decide whether to complete the orange rated jobs on the HAGS annual inspection.** Ratified. It was **agreed** that orange risks jobs should be done. **Action: Clerk**

6. **To consider and decide upon any appropriate action regarding the re-opening of Odney Weir in the light of the most recent communication from the Environment Agency**
The Chairman said that Dick Scarff was chasing a follow-up to the EA's email of early February on behalf of all Cookham participants. The Chairman will circulate by email if/when a response is received. **Action: Chairman**

7. **To receive a report from the Chairman on progress relating to the potential contract with 4front to enforce the Byelaws and AMRG rules**
The Chairman reported that a draft would be considered in Part II of the meeting.

8. **To receive updates from the Chairs about their Annual Reports for presentation to the Parish Meeting.**
The Chairman had done his reports but asked for those still outstanding. The Clerk was requested to issue weekly reminders on 9th and 16th March, with final date for receipt by 23 March. **Action: a) Clerk and b) Cllrs. Aisladie, Edwards and R. Kellaway**

9. **To consider whether to have a stall at the Cookham Scout Village Summer Fair on Saturday 20th June.**
After consideration, this spend up to £40 was **approved** but Clerk should request for £20, it being noted cost was £20 for charity and £40 for commercial concern. The Chairman noted the need for a manning rota on the day. **Action: Clerk**

10. **To consider whether to allow a plot owner to pay a reduced fee for the permit for her proposed memorial to her late father, £120.00 resident tablet rate instead of £235.00 for the current headstone design.**
The Chairman noted that a resident had bought a plot for her father's ashes who was a non-resident. A non-resident fee had been paid for that. Resident being now the owner of the plot wishes to pay the resident fee for the headstone, notwithstanding that the ashes buried were of a

non-resident. Following discussion a vote was taken with one in favour of the reduced rate, 4 against and the remainder abstaining, so it was **agreed** that the non-resident rate should apply. The Clerk to consider if the terms needed any revision. **Action: Clerk**

11. To consider a donation of £100 to Cookham Library to support the Summer Reading Challenge.

After consideration, this was **approved conditional** on some credit or acknowledgement, as given to other funders, for this. **Action: Clerk**

12. To consider and decide upon a request from WildCookham to approve removal of certain overhanging tree branches at Harris/Woodbridge nature Reserve.

It was **agreed** to defer this item to the next meeting, Cllr Aisladie to get proper quotation(s) which should also identify which branches it is that pose a safety hazard and need removal.

Action: Cllr Aisladie / Clerk

13. To receive an update on discussions with RBWM about notifications and payments of CIL amounts to the Council and to decide how to progress the matter.

The Chairman said that RBWM had now conceded that CIL was due not at £100 per dwelling but at £100 per dwelling in the Parish. This means that about £6,000 is due on the new house at Rosemary, School Lane. It also means that there are grounds to suspect under-reporting to us of CIL in prior years. The Chairman was now looking into what CIL moneys might be due from RBWM for the last 9 years. he had drafted questions which Cllr Howard had asked of RBWM. If the answers were not satisfactory, the next step would be to press for a meeting with RBWM councillors as well as officers.

14. To receive a report and proposals in connection with the Project concerning the cemetery and chapel for the Cookham Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Having originally contacted five potential contractors, of which in the end only two had produced first proposals, which had been circulated, the Chairman proposed to get more formal and standardised proposals from JPP and CDS so that a contractor could be chosen, ideally at the April meeting. This was a specialist area and the Financial Regulations did not require three formal quotations. This was **agreed**. **Action: Chairman**

15. To discuss the progress of the proposed tree planting project in the cemetery and make any appropriate decisions.

Cllr Edwards said that. making allowances for the fact that the Council did not know at present how the cemetery was to be further developed, she proposed that five trees be planted in the 1995 extension relatively near the path, with a few more by the edge of the cemetery, the trees to be cherry and possibly rowan, which she would select with Cllr Aisladie. The Council would not be paying for these trees. This was **agreed**. **Action: Cllrs Edwards & Aisladie**

(Cllr Caen left the meeting)

16. To receive an update on the Verges Contract.

The Chairman said that although there had been a meeting with a RBWM officer, there was still no specification or heads of terms and the Council were no further forward. Cllr Howard had now made an official complaint to RBWM.

- 17. To consider the proposed use by Wraparound4U Ltd (“W”) of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground (in particular the 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/under the covenants and rules governing AMRG in the light of the decision by General Purposes Committee on 17 February and subsequent communication with Wraparound.**

The Chairman had received emails from Wraparound4U Ltd which he had circulated. Bearing in mind what they had said, and subject always to the Council’s right to terminate at any time, it was **agreed** to allow them to proceed and the Chairman would so advise Wraparound4U Ltd.

Action: Chairman

- 18. Outside Bodies and Borough Councillor’s reports.**

Cllr Kellaway advised that he would book the Community Room for use on Saturday 24th October for a reception for the representatives of St Benoit for twinning in 2026.

The Chairman said that he had revised the draft constitution for the Patient Participation Group and the Group awaited the Medical Centre’s response.

Cllr Aisladie said that Keep Cookham Tidy was organising a litter pick, to support National Week for Litter Pick, at 10.30am on Saturday 21 March, meeting at the Broomhill entrance of the Alfred Major.

- 19. To review the Full Council action list.**

This had not been circulated.

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

The Chairman said the Council awaits its solicitors’ communication on its application for the Amended Title to Stonehouse Common re Accretion and Diluvion, the land currently being larger than that shown in the Title.

- 21.** Dealt with above.

- 22. Under section 1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act 1960) and under Standing order 3d it was agreed 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**

- 23. To consider and decide upon awarding a contract to 4Front security to enforce the Byelaws and AMRG rules.**

The Chairman had circulated the draft contract with his proposed revisions tracked on it. The Moor would not for the present be included and the costs would thereby be reduced; subject to further discussions. The Council would like the contract to start in time for Easter. The Chairman would circulate any proposed changes. It was **agreed to approve** the award of this contract to 4Front security as amended by the Chairman (with appropriate price reduction if appropriate) and/or as agreed by Councillors by email; appropriate power was delegated to the Chairman.

Action: Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Next meeting Tuesday 7th April 2026 at 7.30pm in the Community Room at Cookham Library.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Dated.....