

**Purley on Thames Parish Council
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held on Tuesday 10th December 2024**

In the Large Hall at The Barn, Goosecroft

Commencing 6:15pm and concluding at 8:04pm

Present: Councillors G. Rolfe (Chairman), M. Abrams, P. Beddoes, M. Bishop, J. Evans, L. Grady, J. Langford, G. Nyamie (Vice-Chairman) and R. Wallace.

In attendance: Sharon Way (Clerk)

P 24/132 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs A. Grindley and V. White.

Cllr Bishop stated apologies for absence on behalf of A. Stone.

P 24/133 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Grady declared an interest in the Tennis Club.

Cllr Bishop declared an interest in the Cricket Club.

P 24/134 PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were in attendance.

P 24/135 MINUTES OF MEETING

Cllr Rolfe invited comments on the minutes of the council meeting held on Tuesday 8th October 2024. No comments were made.

Following a proposal from Cllr Abrams and seconded by Cllr Bishop it was:

RESOLVED: Approval and adoption of the minutes of the meeting, Tuesday 8th October was AGREED.

The minutes of the meeting, Tuesday 8th October were duly signed by the Chairman.

P 24/136 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 8th OCTOBER

None.

P 24/137 MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTION

P 24/137-1 Following discussion, it was agreed that the wording for fees for 'Ad Hoc Upper Goosecroft' would be changed from 'Minimum 3 Hrs...' to 'First 3 hours...'.

Following a proposal from Cllr Bishop and seconded by Cllr Wallace it was:

RESOLVED: That the rent for Purley on Thames Cricket and Tennis Clubs, as well as the recreation facility fees, be increased by 2% (rounded up to the nearest 50p), effective from 1st April 2025, as described in motion paper P24/137-1 and recommended by the Finance and Governance Committee (resolution F&G24/90-1) was AGREED.

P 24/137-2 Following discussion it was agreed that the risk assessment should be amended to include a requirement that clubs using the front room of the parish office do not introduce trip hazards.

Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Bishop it was:

RESOLVED: To adopt the Usage Agreement and Risk Assessment as outlined in motion papers P24/137-2a and P24/137-2b respectively, as amended above, for managing the use of the Parish Office front room by external clubs was AGREED.

P 24/137-3 Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Abrams it was:
RESOLVED: To conduct an appraisal of the Clerk in January 2025, as required under Section 19(c) of the Parish Council's Standing Orders was AGREED.

P 24/137-4 Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Evans it was:
RESOLVED: That an invitation to tender for stage 1 of the water main works be raised on Contracts Finder was AGREED.

P 24/137-5 During discussion of the motion it was indicated that A. Stone wished to resign from the council. It was agreed that no vote would be taken.

Cllr Langford made a statement, and members responded with their views on this statement. Potential actions to reduce the risk of a similar issue arising in the future were discussed.

P 24/138 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (INTERIM)**
Members noted the findings of the Interim Internal Audit Report.

P 24/139 **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**
Cllr Langford referred members to the report circulated with the agenda and asked if members had any questions. No questions were raised. Members discussed the circulated WBC document detailing revisions to the West Berkshire Plan.

No report was received from District Councillor Lewis or District Councillor Kander.

P 24/140 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**
Cllr Rolfe stated that preparatory work by ASAP to move the website was proceeding well.

Cllr Rolfe summarised the issues being dealt with by the Clerk regarding the parish office telephone service and telephone bill.

P 24/141 **CLERK'S REPORT**
The Clerk summarised the content of the report circulated to members.

The Clerk stated that the interim report had been received from the Internal Auditor, with no issues raised.

The Clerk noted that the accounts are reconciled to 31st October, and that the parish debit card has been received.

The Clerk noted that the small business rates relief form had been completed and returned to WBC for the Barn, with clarification requested regarding the rating status of the parish office.

The Clerk stated that the drains at Goosecroft had been cleared and CCTV survey carried out.

The Clerk stated that a letter had been sent to the owner of Springs Farm regarding the hedge along the boundary of the allotment and the path running parallel to the railway.

The Clerk noted the period of closure of the office over the Christmas period.

The Clerk stated that quotes are being sought for an improved CCTV system, to form part of the District Councillor's Members Bid. Cllr Bishop asked whether the new CCTV system would also be able to provide coverage of the sport grounds and the Clerk agreed to look into this.

The Clerk stated that the next NAG meeting will be held on 22 January.

Cllr Bishop discussed the heating provision in the parish office and stated that the current provision is inadequate. It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Bishop would investigate possible actions to address this and bring a proposal to council.

P 24/142

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Barn and Burial

Cllr Langford noted that the burial ground bins have been placed behind a screen. A review of signs and notices in the barn has been carried out with a view to tidying up the appearance of the barn. Cllr Langford discussed the items placed on the Wall of Honour. Cllr Evans stated that the hirers should be made aware of the location of the cleaning materials. The Clerk stated that it was planned to send an email to hirers. The Clerk stated that the curtain bar was being replaced and the cleaner would be requested to close the curtains after returning the equipment.

B. Finance and Governance

Cllr Wallace noted that the report had been circulated. Cllr Wallace stated that industry expects building and repairs costs to rise by 6% in 2028/29, and that future budget increases may therefore need to be higher than 2%.

C. Goosecroft Development

Cllr Bishop noted that progress with fundraising is dependent on agreeing the lease. The Clerk is following this up with Sulham Estate.

D. Allotments and Village Amenities

Cllr Abrams read out an email received from Mr Metcalf regarding the fence-line to the south side of the allotment. Members discussed the background to the location of the fence-line. The Clerk agreed to try to locate the original plans showing the boundary of the land purchased from Mapledurham.

E. Planning

Cllr Nyamie noted that Reading Council has published an updated local plan. This includes plans for a park and ride service which could potentially affect Purley on Thames.

F. Recreation

Cllr Bishop stated that in addition to the budget for 2025/26, the last committee meeting had started to consider potential projects for future years.

P 24/143

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

A. Climate change

None.

B. Emergency planning

Cllr Wallace referred members to the circulated report.

C. Grants

The Clerk stated that the deadline for applications had expired on 30th November and that 6-7 applications had been received.

D. Human Resources

None.

E. IT

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

F. Purley Outreach Post Office and Shop

Cllr Wallace noted that no progress had been made.

G. Tennis

None.

H. Replacement for Villager of the Year Awards

None.

I. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Grady stated that a meeting had been held of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. Cllr Grady noted that the plan would need to be voted on by the local community and it was therefore sensible to work back from the 2027 parish council elections. The working group are now scoping support for the neighbourhood plan and establishing members of the community that would like to be involved. Cllr Grady stated that the intention was to bring a basic project plan to the January council meeting.

P 24/144 COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

A. AWE Liaison

None.

B. BALC / NALC

The Clerk noted that the council officer pay increases had been agreed by BALC.

C. Friends of Purley Barn

Cllr Langford stated that the Christmas Market had been held despite the very poor weather conditions. Due to the weather, footfall was lower than previous years, but a small profit is expected to be made, and the Friends of Purley Barn are sincerely thanked for their hard work.

D. Memorial Hall

Cllr Beddoes stated that the numbers attending coffee mornings steadily increasing and a Christmas coffee morning will be held on 17th December.

E. Neighbourhood Action Group

Referred to in the Clerk's report.

F. Pangbourne Volunteer Group

Cllr Beddoes stated that two meetings had been attended since joining as the parish council representative. The group had had similar problems with their phone line as the parish office and have complained to BT. Cllr Beddoes will keep the office informed. Cllr Beddoes noted that the group is always looking for more driver volunteers.

G. Purley Park Social Club

None.

H. Purley Sports and Social Club

Cllr Bishop stated that a charity coffee morning and sponsored walk had been held in support of MacMillan Cancer Support, raising £3800 to date.

I. Purley Sustainability Group

Cllr Evans stated a successful wreath -making workshop had raised £525 for the orchard fund. Soil testing will be carried out in the New Year and the orchard working group will be meeting on January 9th. On January 4th a village litter pick event has been organised, meeting at the Barn at 11am. PSG are working with Purley Pre-School to create a garden for the school pupils.

J. Trenthan Bowling Club

None.

K. Other Ad-Hoc Councillor Reports

None.

P 24/145 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 14th January 2024.

P 24/146 MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

None.

Cllr Rolfe requested that any items for the next meeting agenda are submitted to the Clerk a minimum of 14 days before the meeting.

The meeting was formally closed at 20:04 pm.

Signed:

Date: 14th January 2025