

**Purley on Thames Parish Council  
Minutes of the Council Meeting  
Held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**In the Small Hall at The Barn, Goosecroft**

Commencing 6:00pm and concluding at 7:06pm

**Present:** Councillors G. Rolfe (Chairman), M. Abrams, P. Beddoes, A. Benedict, M. Bishop, J. Evans, J. Langford, G. Nyamie (Vice-Chairman), V. White.

**In attendance:** Sharon Way (Clerk), two members of the public.

**P 25/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs L. Grady, A. Grindley and R. Wallace.

**P 25/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Rolfe stated that due to an interest in the Purley Memorial Hall he would not be voting on the Memorial Hall grant.

Cllr Bishop declared an interest in the Cricket Club.

**P 25/03 PUBLIC FORUM**

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

**RESOLVED: Suspension of standing orders was AGREED.**

The member of the public stated that a known drug dealer who operates within the parish had been arrested. To be noted for the next NAG meeting.

The member of the public had received complaints about the condition of the Thames Path in the vicinity of Blount's Meadow. Approximately 30 horses are being stabled at Blount's Meadow and have broken out into neighbouring fields causing damage and making it impossible for the public to walk the National Trail through this area. The member of the public had written to Mapledurham Estate and requested that the parish council also write to them regarding the provision of fencing and restrictions to the number of horses grazing in Blount's Meadow.

The member of the public stated that a poor job had been done on the recent pothole repairs and encouraged the parish council to write to the relevant authority to request that proper repairs are carried out.

A member stated that she had been in touch with Mapledurham Estate two weeks prior to this meeting, regarding the fencing and access to the Thames Path. Mapledurham Estate had advised that the tenant was being given time to address the issue of the fences and that this matter was being monitored.

A member noted the poor condition of this area and that the public are reporting that they are unable to walk their dogs due to the muddy and uneven ground conditions.

A member stated that the large number of vehicles parked adjacent to Blount's Meadow could block access to emergency vehicles should an incident occur at Mapledurham Lock.

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

**RESOLVED: Reinstatement of standing orders was AGREED.**

**P 25/04 MINUTES OF MEETING**

Cllr Rolfe invited comments on the minutes of the council meeting held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024. No comments were made.

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

**RESOLVED: Approval and adoption of the minutes of the meeting, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 was AGREED with two abstentions.**

The minutes of the meeting, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024 were duly signed by the Chairman.

**P 25/05 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 10<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2024**

None.

**P 25/06 MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTION**

**P 25/06-1** Cllr Rolfe referred members to the circulated budget sheet and discussed the projected outcome for 2024/25 and the budget proposals for 2025/26. Cllr Rolfe stated that the proposed precept for 2025/26 is £190,000, which is an increase of £4.78 per year or 5.45% for a Band D property.

Cllr Benedict asked why the precept needed to be increased given the increase in the number of properties paying council tax. Cllr Rolfe stated that the proposed precept still resulted in a requirement to reduce reserves by £22,000 and a lower precept than that proposed would require reserves to be further depleted.

Following a proposal from Cllr Nyamie and seconded by Cllr Beddoes it was:

**RESOLVED: To adopt the budget for 2025/06 and request a precept payment of £190,000 from West Berkshire Council for the financial year 2025/26, as recommended by the Chairman's Budget Working Group was AGREED, with one vote against.**

**P 25/06-2** Cllr Rolfe stated that each organisation's grant request would be voted on separately due to the potential for individual members' conflicts of interest in relation to certain organisations. The decisions are recorded below.

Organisation	Amount requested	Amount Proposed	Council Decision
Berks MS Therapy Centre	£500	£500	Agreed, with one abstention
Berkshire Vision	£750	£750	Agreed, with one abstention
Purley Jubilee FC	£520	£520	Agreed, with one abstention
Purley Memorial Hall	£250	£250	Agreed, with two abstentions
St Mary the Virgin (CofE)	£950	£0	Agreed, with one abstention
Sue Ryder	£500	£500	Agreed, with two abstentions
Trentham Bowling Club	£1000	£1000	Agreed, with one abstention

West Berks Heritage Forum	£50	£50	Agreed, with one abstention
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Cllr Rolfe stated that £1,430 remained in the grant budget and that the motion proposed reopening the grant application process for a short period ending on 5th February. A discussion followed on whether the application process should be reopened as proposed in the motion paper, with the alternative option being that the remaining grant budget is held in reserve for potential urgent applications.

Following a proposal from Cllr Beddoes and seconded by Cllr Abrams it was:  
**RESOLVED: To amend the wording of resolution 25/6-02 to the following: *To approve the recommendations of the Grants Working Group but NOT to reopen the grant application process* was AGREED with five votes for, two votes against, and two abstentions.**

Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Abrams it was:  
**RESOLVED: To approve the recommendations of the Grants Working Group but NOT to reopen the grant application process was AGREED with five votes for, two votes against, and two abstentions.**

**P 25/06-3** Cllr Rolfe summarised the need to upgrade the CCTV system and mentioned that two District Councillors have expressed support for this upgrade through their Members' Bid.

Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Beddoes it was:  
**RESOLVED: To proceed with District members Bid to upgrade the CCTV system and to allocate £6000 from reserves as match funding for the project, contingent on the bid's success was AGREED.**

**P 25/06-4** The Clerk stated that there were very few changes to the Purley on Thames Cricket Agreement compared to the previous agreement.

Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Langford it was:  
**RESOLVED: To adopt and sign the updated Purley on Thames Cricket Agreement. The updated agreement, reviewed by the Recreation Committee, will replace the current agreement, which expires on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025. The new agreement will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 was AGREED with one abstention.**

Following a proposal from Cllr Langford and seconded by Cllr Rolfe it was:  
**RESOLVED: That the signatories on behalf of the parish council would be the Clerk and the Chairman of the Recreation Committee was AGREED.**

**P 25/07** **DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**  
None.

**P 25/08** **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**  
Cllr Rolfe stated that members, in particular committee chairmen, should start to consider content for the Annual Parish Report, as this needed to be completed, printed and distributed before the Parish Assembly.

Cllr Rolfe requested proposals for a speaker for the Parish Assembly.

Cllr Rolfe stated that he will be stepping back from Chairman's responsibilities for a short while and that Cllr Nyamie will be deputising for him over this period.

**P 25/09 CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk summarised the content of the report circulated to members.

The Clerk stated that the accounts are reconciled up to 30<sup>th</sup> November, that the VAT claim has been received for Q2, and the Q3 return is under preparation.

The Clerk stated that the Lloyds 95-day savings account has been opened.

The Clerk stated that work to resolve the BT billing issues is being undertaken by the Clerk and Chairman.

The Clerk stated that an electrician will be visiting the parish office to review the heating provision.

The Clerk updated members on the current position of the Goosecroft Development lease.

The Clerk stated that a Certificate of Lawfulness has been received for the erection of the compound behind the barn.

The Clerk stated that the website transfer to ASAP is nearly complete.

The Clerk stated that the next NAG meeting will be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**P 25/10 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Barn and Burial**

Cllr Langford noted the receipt of the certificate of lawfulness for the barn compound and that this will reduce the risk of issues such as chairs being left exposed outside. Cllr Langford stated that a full report will be prepared for the April meeting.

Cllr Evans stated that some hirers may not be aware that brooms are now stored in the cupboard. Cllr Langford stated that hirers were being informed, and that signage was being discussed with the Amenities Officer.

**B. Finance and Governance**

None.

**C. Goosecroft Development**

Cllr Bishop noted that lack of response from the Sulham Estate solicitor on the Goosecroft Extension lease. The Clerk stated that there had been correspondence with Henry Scutt, and that he was aware that the proposed lease was with his solicitor. Members discussed the impact of the lack of progress on the lease in terms of cost and project viability.

Cllr Bishop stated that two productive site meetings had been held with potential water contractors. The Clerk stated that the documents were being prepared for issue on contracts finder.

**D. Allotments and Village Amenities**

Cllr Abrams stated that the Amenities Officer has organised a meeting of allotment holders for 3<sup>rd</sup> February in the Barn, and a questionnaire is currently being written with 5-6 questions for the allotment holders.

**E. Planning**

None.

**F. Recreation**

Cllr Bishop stated that Purley Jubilee FC have been invoiced for the period to end December.

**P 25/11 WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

**A. Climate change**

None.

**B. Emergency planning**

None.

**C. Grants**

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

**D. Human Resources**

Cllr Abrams stated that a meeting of the HR working group will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> January. Cllr Rolfe provided apologies for absence.

**E. Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Rolfe stated that it was proving difficult to obtain engagement from villagers.

**F. IT**

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

**G. Purley Outreach Post Office and Shop**

Cllr White provided an update on discussions with Henry Scutt.

**H. Tennis**

None.

**I. Villager of the Year (Award Replacement Group)**

None.

**P 25/12 COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

**A. AWE Liaison**

None.

**B. BALC / NALC**

None.

**C. Friends of Purley Barn**

Cllr Langford noted the successful Christmas market and that the next market was currently being planned.

**D. Memorial Hall**

Cllr Beddoes stated that the Warm Hub continues in 2025 with an attendance of circa 20 people every week. On Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January between 3-4 pm the Memorial Hall has been hired by Olivia Bailey (new MP for Reading West and West Berkshire) to meet the people of Purley on Thames.

**E. Neighbourhood Action Group**

Referred to in the Clerk's report.

**F. Pangbourne Volunteer Group**

Cllr Beddoes stated that a party for the volunteer drivers will be held at the end of January. New volunteers are always welcome.

**G. Purley Park Social Club**

None.

**H. Purley Sports and Social Club**

Cllr Bishop stated that the club seemed to be doing well and that a darts competition is planned for the end of January in support of prostate cancer charities.

**I. Purley Sustainability Group**

Cllr Evans stated that a litter pick was held on 4<sup>th</sup> January which collected 20 large bags of litter from across the village. Cllr Evans stated that the orchard group met, and a survey will be carried out on the area planned for the orchard, both in terms of the soil and the overall sustainability of the area.

**J. Trentham Bowling Club**

Cllr Bishop noted that the club will welcome approval of their grant application.

**K. Other Ad-Hoc Councillor Reports**

None.

**P 25/13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

**P 25/14 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 7:06 pm.**

Signed: .....

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025