

Purley on Thames Parish Council
Minutes of the Allotments and Village Amenities Committee Meeting
Held on Tuesday 11th March 2025

In the Small Hall at The Barn, Goosecroft

Commencing 6:00pm and concluding at 6:50pm

Present: Councillors M. Abrams (Committee Chairman), P. Beddoes, J Evans, G. Rolfe and R. Wallace

In attendance: Sharon Way (Clerk), Colin Moses (Amenities Officer), 2 members of the public

A&VA 25/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
None.

A&VA 25/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Cllr Rolfe declared an interest in the allotments.

A&VA 25/03 PUBLIC FORUM
Following a proposal from Cllr Wallace and seconded by Cllr Beddoes it was:
RESOLVED: Suspension of standing orders was AGREED.

A member of the public raised the matter of the WBC consultation on new footpaths through Blount's Meadow. Cllr Rolfe confirmed that this consultation had been received, and that no comments had been submitted to WBC by the council.

The member of the public stated that a complaint should have been made by the parish council to WBC regarding the blocked and muddy condition of the national trail over the winter period.

The member of the public requested that if a council meeting date is changed it should be moved forward rather than back, in order that parishioners planning to attend have an opportunity to do so.

The member of the public discussed the south fence line of the allotments on the boundary with the farmland. The member of the public stated that the fence had been incorrectly located and that this was known at the time by the council and the landowner. It therefore needed to be registered with the council that a strip of land within the allotment is the property of the landowner. The member of the public stated that this matter needs to be resolved this year.

The Amenities Officer stated that it should be established which plots are affected by the proposed change in the fence line.

The member of the public stated that a significant amount of litter had been blown from the allotment onto the adjacent farmland and expressed concern that, being relatively light, plastic greenhouses could be blown around. They suggested that a condition be imposed requiring greenhouses to be firmly fixed to the ground.

Following a proposal from Cllr Wallace and seconded by Cllr Evans it was:
RESOLVED: Reinstatement of standing orders was AGREED.

A&VA 25/04

MINUTES OF MEETING

Cllr Abrams invited comments on the minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2024.

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

RESOLVED: Approval and adoption of the minutes of the meeting, 11th November was AGREED.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th November were duly signed by the Chairman.

A&VA 25/05

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 11th NOVEMBER

None.

A&VA 25/06

PARISH OFFICE REPORT

The Amenities Officer referred members to the Parish Office Report circulated with the agenda.

The Amenities Officer discussed the recent meeting of allotment holders and stated that of the five ideas brought to the meeting, two had received a positive endorsement from allotment holders. These proposals were, firstly, to permit greenhouses and, secondly, to improve allotment security. Both proposals were presented as motions to this committee meeting.

The Amenities Officer stated that due to the mild winter the salt bins had not been significantly depleted and would not need to be refilled until the Autumn.

The Amenities Officer stated that the bus shelter remained free of graffiti.

The Amenities Officer stated that completion of the milestone refurbishment will proceed when the weather is warmer as this work needs to be done in situ.

The Amenities Officer stated that three trees provided by Greenham Trust would replace the ash trees felled at Pikesaw. A tree survey will be carried out in April.

The Amenities Officer noted the issues with the bin at Blount's Meadow. The continuing misuse of this bin is a problem and there had been a significant rubbish build-up in the area. Cllr Abrams stated that proof of fly tipping was required and that photographs would be taken. Cllr Rolfe stated that a formal letter of complaint should be sent to WBC due to the prevention of public access to the Thames Path.

Members discussed the need for a bridge across the ditch in Blount's Meadow. Cllr Wallace referred to a bridge over a similar ditch in Pangbourne.

The Amenities Officer stated that no speeding complaints had been received since the last meeting.

Cllr Wallace stated that WBC would be publishing the list of road repair works for 2025/26 in their website before the end of March.

A&VA 25/07

MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTION

A&VA 25/07-1

Members discussed the suitability of different types of greenhouse. Reference was made to the suitability of 6ft x 4ft polycarbonate greenhouses with sliding doors, roof vents and

integral guttering, and that these should only be installed on half-plots. Members agreed that permissible greenhouses should be tightly controlled to ensure suitability and consistency across the site.

The greenhouse base construction was discussed. It was agreed that concrete should only be allowed in the corners of greenhouses in order to facilitate reinstatement of the original plot at the end of a lease.

Members agreed that there should be a form of contract between the allotment holder and the council providing detailed terms and conditions that must be agreed prior to the erection of a greenhouse. The allotment holder should submit an application with details of the proposed structure for agreement by the council prior to its erection.

Members discussed that one of the purposes of this proposal was rainwater harvesting and that each greenhouse should have a water butt.

The Clerk agreed to prepare a draft contract and circulate it to members of the committee for agreement.

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

RESOLVED: An update to the allotment rules to permit the installation of small greenhouses, subject to reasonable size restrictions and placement guidelines was AGREED.

A&VA 25/07-2 The Amenities Officer stated that to improve allotment security it was proposed to install a higher galvanised steel gate, linking into the hedges to prevent access at the sides. The proposed budget was a broad estimate, subject to a site visit and quote by the fencing contractor on 12 March. A better system for locking the gate would also be investigated.

Members discussed whether the gate should be locked when occupied. Members agreed that following installation of the new gate, the council will write to allotment holders instructing them that the gate must be kept locked at all times. It was agreed that 'lock the gate' signage should be provided.

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

RESOLVED: To approve a budget of up to £2,500 to replace the allotment entrance gate with a taller, more secure design to enhance site security was AGREED

A&VA 25/08 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The meeting is currently scheduled for 1st July 2025 at 6pm, subject to change.

A&VA 24/29 **MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

None.

The meeting was formally closed at 6:50 pm.

Signed:

Date: 1st July 2025