

**Purley on Thames Parish Council  
Minutes of the Council Meeting  
Held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

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

Commencing 6:00pm and concluding at 7:52pm

**Present:** Councillors G. Rolfe (Chairman), M. Abrams, P. Beddoes, J. Evans, A. Grindley, J. Langford, G. Nyamie, G. Sillitoe, R. Wallace and V White.  
**In attendance:** Sharon Way (Clerk), three members of the public.

**P 25/146 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
None.

**P 25/147 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
None.

**P 25/148 PUBLIC FORUM**  
The public forum was deferred to P 25/153a.

**P 25/149 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER**  
Cllr Rolfe invited comments on the minutes of the council meeting held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025. No comments were made.

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

**RESOLVED: Approval and adoption of the minutes of the meeting, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October was AGREED.**

The minutes of the meeting, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October were duly signed by the Chairman.

**P 25/150 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025**  
None.

**P 25/151 MINUTES OF EGM HELD ON 27<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**  
Cllr Rolfe invited comments on the minutes of the EGM held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025. No comments were made.

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

**RESOLVED: Approval and adoption of the minutes of the meeting, Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November was AGREED.**

The minutes of the EGM, 27<sup>th</sup> November were duly signed by the Chairman.

**P 25/152 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF EGM HELD ON 27<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2025**  
None.

**P 25/153 MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTION**

**P 25/153-1a To resolve to agree to dissolve the Goosecroft Development Committee with immediate effect and to establish a Goosecroft Project Working Group to support the next phase of the Goosecroft project, as set out in backing paper P25/153-1a.**

To permit public comment, following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Nyamie it was:

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

Cllr Rolfe stated that the Goosecroft Development Committee had proposed that the committee should be dissolved and a Working Group established, reporting to the Recreation Committee. Cllr Rolfe stated that the primary task of the proposed Working Group is to raise the circa £500,000 required to undertake the conversion of the Goosecroft Extension land into cricket and football pitches. Cllr Rolfe stated that progress had been made by securing a 25-year lease for the land, implementing an upgrade to the water supply (to be started in January), and securing planning permission for the works which is in force until March 2027. Cllr Rolfe stated that as the two main beneficiaries of the works would be the cricket and football clubs, their close involvement in the Working Group was required. Cllr Rolfe stated that the Parish Council would formally let the tender and issue letters, but the Clerk would need the support of the clubs to formulate grant applications to relevant organisations, e.g. National Lottery and sporting organisations. Cllr Rolfe also noted that the rules for use of the new facilities, for example pitch allocation during any overlap between cricket and football seasons, needed to be agreed. Cllr Rolfe stated that it is therefore proposed that the Working Group comprises parish councillors and representatives of the cricket and football clubs.

A discussion followed involving members of the public. It was agreed that members of the public representing the clubs could approach grant bodies to establish availability of funding and any criteria. The clubs would assist the Clerk in preparing any grant applications, with final approval for the submission of the applications being made by the Parish Council.

A member of the public noted that security of tenure would be a requirement for any significant grant application. It was noted that only the Parish Council had security of tenure over the extension land. It was also stated that the clubs themselves would be likely to need security of tenure to use the land, for example the cricket club currently has security of tenure until 2031. Cllr Rolfe stated that extending the period of tenure for the cricket and football clubs could be considered. Cllr Wallace noted that the use of the land for sports pitches was a condition of both the lease and the planning permission.

A member of the public stated that there was potentially a requirement to match-fund to some degree and noted that there would be difficulty in doing this. Cllr Wallace stated that each funding body will have different requirements. A member of the public stated that involving an overarching body such as the Good Exchange may help to overcome match-funding issues.

It was agreed that the task of raising £500,000 was a significant challenge.

Cllr Langford suggested that the vote should be deferred until the January meeting of full council and that an informal meeting is held between the council and the clubs prior to that meeting to clarify the detail of the revised committee / working group proposals.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that the motion could be considered with the following amendments:

With reference to the backing paper ref P25/153-1a, it was agreed that the wording of the first bullet point under 'Responsibilities of the Clubs' would be changed to – *The clubs will be responsible for identifying and assisting in securing external funding to convert the field into playing pitches, currently estimated at approx. £500,000.*

With reference to the backing paper ref P25/153-1a, it was agreed that the second bullet point under 'Responsibilities of the Clubs' will be deleted.

With reference to the backing paper ref P25/153-1a, it was agreed that the first line under the heading 'Establishment of the Goosecroft Project Working Group' would be amended to read 'A new Working Group will be formed which will work as a team (Parish Council and clubs) to deliver the required outcomes.'

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

**RESOLVED: To dissolve the Goosecroft Development Committee with immediate effect and to establish a Goosecroft Project Working Group to support the next phase of the Goosecroft project, as set out in backing paper P25/153-1a, as amended above, was AGREED.**

**P 25/153-1b** Following a proposal from Cllr Rolfe and seconded by Cllr Nyamie it was:

**RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the final meeting of the dissolved Goosecroft Development Committee held on 16 September 2025, was AGREED with one abstention.**

**P 25/153-2** **Guestival Event**

The Clerk stated that a formal request by the cricket club to approve this event was awaited under the terms of their pitch hire agreement, however due to the scale of the event it was considered important to seek council approval as early as possible.

Cllr Rolfe requested that the Clerk obtain a copy of the public liability insurance from the cricket club and the organiser to confirm that this event is adequately covered, and also to obtain a copy of the organiser's risk assessment. Cllr Rolfe noted that it was important to state to the organisers that a licence must be provided to the council prior to the event if alcoholic drink is to be sold.

Members agreed that the risk assessment must explicitly consider mitigating potential damage to the cricket ground; it should also consider toilet provision, as the pavilion toilets will not be adequate for 400 guests.

Cllr Rolfe stated that the event was a sub-let from the cricket club and it was therefore their responsibility to ensure that they carried out checks to ensure that the necessary insurances for example PLI and event insurance, were in place to protect the parish council against any claims, damages etc arising from the event in accordance with their hire contract. The Clerk stated that an email to this effect had been sent to the cricket club.

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

**RESOLVED: To approve the use of the Upper Goosecroft for the Guestival 60th Birthday Celebration on Sunday 24 May 2026, as outlined in backing paper P25/153-2, was AGREED with one abstention.**

The members of the public left the meeting.

Members discussed council representation on the Goosecroft Project Working Group. The following members expressed an interest in attending the first meeting – Cllrs Beddoes, Evans, Nyamie, Sillitoe, and Wallace.

**P 25/154** **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW**

Cllr Rolfe provided an update on the latest results of the council's survey and noted that this is available to download from the council website. Cllr Rolfe stated that 88.1% of respondents from Tilehurst expressed a preference for the Ridgeway Council proposal, which is very similar to the preference of residents of Purley on Thames of 88.7%.

The Clerk confirmed that no response to the letters sent following the last meeting had been received from Olivia Bailey or Alok Sharma.

Cllr Langford stated that she had recently attended a meeting at the House of Lords with councillors from Belfast, where a local authority reorganisation had been completed 2-3 years ago. The unanimous feedback had been that the reorganisation had been a disaster and had not saved any money. Cllr Langford would be reviewing the government bill for the reorganisation over the Christmas and would be considering the stages at which resistance could be applied.

Cllr Langford proposed that, assuming no response was received from Olivia Bailey or Alok Sharma, the next steps should be agreed at the January council meeting. The Clerk stated that the Local Government Review would be kept on the agenda.

**P 25/155 MENTIMETER SOFTWARE**

Cllr Grady was due to speak on this item but was unable to attend.

**P 25/156 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (INTERIM)**

Cllr Wallace noted several very positive comments given in the report and congratulated the Clerk. The Clerk stated that this would be conveyed to the parish office team.

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

**RESOLVED: To formally note the Internal Audit Report, was AGREED.**

**P 25/157 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Langford noted that an article on the Local Government Reorganisation, written for Newbury Today, had been circulated to members. The proposals had been discussed in the earlier agenda item and there was nothing further to add at this point.

Cllr Wallace noted that the parish councils were not informed in advance by WBC about any new policies or actions such as the recent parking restrictions. Cllr Langford agreed to look into the matter.

**P 25/158 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Cllr Rolfe stated that, at a recent allotment holder's meeting, Graham Chapman had been presented with the Chairman's Award.

**P 25/159 CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk stated that the report had been circulated to members.

**P 25/160 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Barn and Burial**

Cllr Langford circulated a log of those who had paid their deposit for keys to the barn.

**B. Finance and Governance**

Cllr Wallace noted that the report had been circulated to members. No comments were made.

**C. Goosecroft Development**

Covered earlier in the meeting.

**D. Allotments and Village Amenities**

None.

**E. Planning**

None.

**F. Recreation**

Cllr Evans noted the ongoing issues related to the yew trees at Trentham Bowling Club and stated that no further decisions could be taken until the WBC tree officer had visited site.

**P 25/161**

**WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

**A. Emergency planning**

None.

**B. Grants**

The Clerk stated that six grant applications had been received, totalling circa £3000. Cllr Grindley requested details of the applications received so far. Cllr Wallace agreed to post reminders on Facebook.

**C. Human Resources**

None.

**D. Neighbourhood Plan**

None.

**E. IT**

Cllr Rolfe stated that the current password for the Barn Wi-Fi was complex and could be changed if members wished it to be. Cllr Nyamie agreed to propose a new password.

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

Cllrs White and Beddoes stated that they had resigned as committee members, along with four other members of the public.

Cllr Wallace stated that the offer received from Sulham Estate had meant that significantly more money needed to be raised to operate the shop. The viability of proceeding with this project is therefore in question.

Cllr White stated that the outreach post office is likely to stop operating. There have been persistent problems obtaining the required post-office internet signal and this has contributed to footfall decreasing to possibly 4-5 people per day. The economic viability of the post office is therefore in question.

**G. Recognition Group**

Ongoing.

**P 25/162**

**COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

**A. AWE Liaison**

None.

**B. BALC / NALC**

None.

**C. Friends of Purley Barn**

Cllr Grindley stated that the Christmas Market had been a great success, raising over £2000 for improvements to the Barn. Members congratulated Cllr Grindley.

**D. Memorial Hall**

Cllr Beddoes stated that coffee mornings continue to be held on Tuesday mornings, with a special Christmas coffee morning being held on 16<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr Beddoes noted that the coffee mornings are organised by trustees of the Memorial Hall. Cllr Rolfe stated that he had thanked the trustees on behalf of the parish council.

**E. Neighbourhood Action Group**

Cllr Abrams stated that the next NAG meeting will be held in January and that arson will be added to the crime statistics report.

**F. Purley Riverside Club**

Cllr Nyamie discussed the recent improvements at the club, including the intention to organise comedy nights, headlined by major TV comedians. Cllr Rolfe requested that an article on the club is included in the parish newsletter.

**G. Purley Sports and Social Club**

Cllr Grindley noted that the new committee is doing well and had contributed to the success of the Christmas Market.

**H. Purley Sustainability Group**

Cllr Evans stated that on the 6<sup>th</sup> December the first tranche of 13 trees comprising apples, pears and plums were planted in the orchard at Bucknell's Meadow. It was a very successful day. Cllr Evans agreed to send photographs to Cllr Wallace for posting on Facebook. On 7<sup>th</sup> December PSG organised a successful wreath-making event at the Memorial Hall.

**I. Trentham Bowling Club**

Cllr Evans noted that Trentham had been covered earlier in the meeting.

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

None.

**P 25/163**

**MEMBERS' ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

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

**P 25/164**

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 Parish Council Meeting. Cllr Rolfe noted that the 2026/27 precept would be proposed for agreement at this meeting.

**The meeting was formally closed at 7:52 pm.**

Signed: .....

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026