

**Cobham Parish Council Meeting.
Monday 4TH November 2019 at 7.30PM
St Mary's Church Room.**

PRESENT

Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Rosemary Dymond
Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Jessica Elliott, Cllr M Haig, Cllr Robert Pryor

In Attendance Community Warden Paul Hassell, Mrs Tina Sampson (Clerk).
7 Parishioners

1. (51) Apologies for absence, Cllr Ben Smith, Cllr Bella Gabbitas, Cllr Mike Booth and Cllr Tony Rice (GBC).
2. (52) Declarations of Interest - None
3. (53) Minutes: to confirm the minutes of 7 October 2019.
Agreed as a true record, proposed by Cllr Dymond and seconded by Cllr Pryor.

4. (54) **Matters arising from the previous meeting.**

- **GBC – overruling CPC advice** regarding permissions granted or refused.

The clerk had contacted GBC three times and it has been confirmed that the enquiry has been passed to the Director of Planning

- **Water Leak outside Sole Street House**

The clerk explained that both she and Cllr Rice had escalated the issue as did Cllr Sweetland. KCC are going to take ownership of the investigation to identify where the problem lies. They met with the resident of the property where the water appears to be emanating from and they have agreed that KCC will excavate / investigate along both sides of the boundary between highway and property to see if we can locate the source of the leak.

A parishioner mentioned that the owner of the farm had said that there used to be a tap at the old entrance to the farm before the house was built and wondered if that could be where the water was coming from.

- **Poplar Trees on Battle Street.**

Date for the work to be undertaken has not been confirmed yet. Carry forward.

- **War Memorial** – Cllr Dymond is organising another quote for the cutting back of the Yew Tree and she is also discussing with GBC the cleaning of the memorial and the printing of further names on the memorial.

- **Gas in Cobham** - KCC Energy & Low Emissions Consultation. Cllr Elliott reviewed the consultation and said that the key element is around air quality targets, specifically in more populated areas of the country, looking to incentivise the use of alternative heating networks. This is likely to prove more difficult in areas where there are listed buildings. Cllr Elliott suggested that it was unlikely that gas would be brought into Cobham as the idea is to look at cleaner and more innovative alternatives. KCC are also looking at the problem strategically. (No further action)

- **Atmospheric Damage / Air Pollution.**

Cllr Dymond raised the matter of atmospheric damage in Cobham, and it was suggested that this is likely a problem caused by idling of cars and buses during peak periods; like school pick & drop off time. It was suggested the PC could look at some posters to educate car users in the village. Cllr Pryor suggested we request GBC to undertake a survey, so that the survey could show parents what the impact is. It was decided that it might be better to have the survey during the summer.

5. Local Crime

- **PCSO Report - Community Warden.**

Mr Paul Hassell explained that the transit van that had been highlighted at last month's meeting had been picked up in Essex.

The small Vauxhall which was also mentioned last month had been pulled up by police in Valley Drive; the two youths have been dealt with and the car has been crushed.

- **Fly-tipping on Round Street**

Cllr Mason referred to the problem of a recent episode of the clerk fed back the latest information she had received from one of the residents most affected, that the police and KCC were taking it forward.

ACTION- Clerk to follow up

- **Ram Raid of 'The Little Shop'**

Thankfully the thieves were not successful in breaking through the security, but severely damaged the front of the shop, the community came together and raised money to help the shop. The owners were grateful but asked for the money to go to charity. The car used was found in Sevenoaks.

6. (55) Working Group Reports

- **Planning Group – Jessica Elliot Planning Applications & Recommendations**

20191113

Demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of a chalet bungalow within amenity land currently serving Broadview.

Broadview, Round Street, Cobham, Gravesend Kent

OBJECTED

20191089

Retention of a 1.8 high metre panel fence along the eastern side.

Meadow House, The Street, Cobham, Gravesend Kent

RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION – no objection

20190310

Continued use of mobile home and site office.

Land South East of Cozendon Wood, Copthall Road, Cobham, Gravesend Kent.

OBJECTED

20190944

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission

reference no. 20141082 for the use of the land for the

stationing of a caravan for security purposes; to allow the caravan to be located elsewhere on site.

White Post Farm, White Post Lane, Cobham, Gravesend

ONGOING OBJECTION

20190822

Demolition of existing kitchen, wc and entrance lobby extension and erection of new entrance extension on Manor Road frontage (south elevation); erection of kitchen, store and wc extension at the rear (west elevation); construction of entrance ramps and paved areas; replacement roof and new and replacement fenestration

St Marys Church Room, Sole Street, Cobham, Gravesend

NO OBJECTIONS

Cllr Dyer added that GBC had now also granted permission

- **Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr Elliott explained that although there is a Gravesend plan it is important that we have our own Neighbourhood plan and a meeting of the Planning Group has been arranged for January.

- **Cobham Playing Fields Group – Steve Dyer**

The recent playground survey highlighted some issues with slippery moss, loose fittings on one of the pieces of equipment and repairs needed to some of the matting.

ACTION- Cllr Ben Smith said he would clean the moss with a pressure washer and look at tightening the spring.

There is also a pothole at the access road, which Cllr Smith will also look at addressing.

- **Local Traffic Working Group – Matt Mason**

Cllr Mason explained that he and Cllr Booth with Cllr Steve Dyer had met with a Transport Consultant and had looked around Cobham & Sole Street. Matt is required to provide some more information for the consultant who will then be drawing up a proposal to present to the council before Christmas.

The recent re-surfacing has helped with rumbling road noise.

It has been reported that HGVs have been parking in the parish overnight suggested that these are reported. One was parked up on Manor Road Sole Street.

ACTION- Clerk to inform Community Warden

Busses & HGV's - There is nothing further to report on the discussion about the busses travelling through the village. Traffic Group to discuss at its next meeting scheduled for 26th November

Carry over to the next agenda.

Cllr Pryor attended a Transport Conference that had been run by KALC. He found it useful and fed back that there is a push towards integrated transport systems, including cycleways, this might be helpful when looking at the pedestrian footway in Sole Street.

There has also been a trial around Maidstone restricting HGVs from using local roads utilising number plate recognition. If this is successful it could be rolled out around country.

Cllr Pryor mentioned how depressing it had been, at the conference, to hear about the amount of new development due to take place over the next 15 years- the figures he had 85,750 around the Gravesham area 1.64 million across Kent. He had been pleased to learn that CPRE had been successful in challenging some of the proposals.

He also suggested that we ask for a mobile speed van to carry out a road safety check for the 20 MPH zone.

Lower Thames Crossing – Nothing to report

Road Signage – some of the recommendations put forward from the Signs Survey which was undertaken by Tony Rice have been reported and actioned.

- **Cobham – Lead Councillor. Rosemary Dymond**

The Village Pump & Reservoir - It is not thought that the reservoir is listed, but Cllr Mason will follow this up. But he also asked whether it needed to be listed?

Planting in Cobham – Cllr Dymond distributed some daffodil bulbs to volunteers in Sole Street and Cobham to plant. Cllr Dymond will also be providing some quotes for the wooden planters for the Cobham Chicane, these planters would be a temporary measure until the self-watering planters could be purchased. The wooden planters could be moved to the Meadow Rooms, Cllr Elliott suggested they could be used in Sole Street.

Cllr Dymond also mentioned the **West Kent Downs Countryside Trust** who had been trying to find out who owned the plots behind the Mausoleum so they can hand them over to the National Trust, the Chairman's intervention and with the support the local MP, we managed to persuade the government office of the Bona Vacentia Department to give the plot lands that were in their control to the WKDCT

Britain in Bloom - as discussed last month the Parish won Silver Gilt and the certificates have now arrived and will be given out. Cllr Dymond also exhibited the trophy for the Front of House Competition, which will be awarded.

Sole Street - Lead Councillor. Steve Dyer

St Marys Church Room

Planning permission for the refurbishment has been approved gone through.

At last month's meeting the matter of a cleaner being employed by the PCC was raised, a parishioner asked for further info on timings etc.

Cllr Haig said she would feed this back to the PCC.

7. (56) Other Village Matters

- Meadow Rooms – Cllr Gabbitas not present

- Footpaths – Rosemary Dymond – nothing to report
- Cllr Haig mentioned that a man was rough sleeping on the footpath by the recreation ground and is vulnerable to small vehicles travelling along there.
ACTION - Clerk to report to the Community Warden.
- Manor Road – leaves and conkers on the pavement.
ACTION - Clerk to check with KCC and GBC who is responsible for clearing
- Church & Church Rooms Cllr Haig had nothing to report
- Jeskyns – Cllr Smith received an update from Jeskyns which the clerk read on his behalf.

Surfacing of grass overflow car park This is due to start middle of November 19 with planned completion by end Dec 19.

Action Clerk to check on planning history.

Centenary Celebration Tree Planting

On Weds 27th Nov, an English Oak tree will be planted on site to mark 100 years of the Forestry Commission. Forestry England Chief Executive, Mike Seddon will be joined by Richard Cornish (Natural England COO), staff, partners and volunteers at this special celebratory event. Would be great to have a representative from Cobham Parish Council there. A formal event will follow shortly.

Gravesend Beekeepers make Jeskyns their new home

They will be relocating from Cobham Hall bringing with them 15 hives (that's over 100,000 bees!), a wealth of experience and boundless enthusiasm. Not only will their bees be pollinating our fruit trees and wildflowers, the members will be running taster beekeeping courses, visiting local schools and demonstrating at local events.

Tree works on site Trees need space to grow and so over winter, our Forest Crafts people will be cutting down some of the trees on site. Some of the sweet chestnut and hazel blocks are being coppiced and we are also removing some alder which was originally planted as a "nurse species" in the walnut blocks. Thinning young trees at this stage allows light in which enables many more species to flourish. Dead wood is an important part of the woodland ecosystem, so some of the cut timber will be left on site to rot down, providing excellent habitat for wildlife.

It was raised that there is still a problem of parking in Church Road should be brought to the attention on KCC.

- Parish Notice Boards – Quote received to replace the boards but not the surrounds at a cost for each replacement. £600 +£50 for fitting.
ACTION – to be discussed at the Budget Meeting
- Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial – the programme is at the printers, in line with budget planning, it was agreed to donate £50 from the parish to the Royal British Legion.

8. (57) Other Reports

- KCC Matters – Bryan Sweetland – Not present

- GBC Matters – Tony Rice – Not present
- Chairmen’s Group – Steve Dyer attended the meeting in September the minutes have been published on GBC website.
- KALC – Rosemary Dymond reminded us that in two weeks’ time- it will be the AGM.
- Rural Parishes Forum - nothing to report.
- NHS consultation – closes at midnight tonight (4th Nov), Cllr Dyer has sent a response from the PC but encouraged others to respond before midnight.

9. (58) Meeting Suspended for Parishioners Comments

A parishioner raised the matter of containers being stored at the old varnish factory – Cllr Elliott explained that there was already an enforcement order in hand with GBC and the owner is in contradiction of planning.

The matter of Sweeps Hole was raised, and it was reported that the pond had been cleared in September in line with the contract the PC has.

A parishioner spoke of the removal of the Victorian Iron Bridge and was reassured that it would be replaced with something similar.

The bright flood Lights at the front of a Sole Street house were raised.
ACTION- Cllr Mason to speak with owner.

A few parishioners have reported the potholes on the road and pavement on Manor road.

10. (59) Public meeting closed. 8.35pm

CPC Meeting Continues in Private:

- Correspondence -The Clerk offered councillors the CPRE magazine.
- The Clerk confirmed that the Parish had received £800 as part of the Community Toilet Scheme
- Parish Email system, the Clerk had taken note of the issues some people were having and is arranging an opportunity for some tech support to be provided.

11. (60) Items raised by Councillors

Cllr Haig praised volunteers for doing so well in tidying the Village especially around the War Memorial, with the white posts being re-erected.

Cllr Mason mentioned the number of children doing ‘Trick or Treat’ down The Street, Cobham and suggested that next year the Parish Council pro-actively place signs up at each end of the village to slow down traffic and make it safer for children and adults.

The matter of the election money was referred to along with the Business rates on the toilets. All this will need to be discussed at the budget meeting on 2nd December.

Cllr Haig gave her apologies as she will be out of the country when the meeting takes place.

Some of the suggestions to be considered at the budget meeting were;

Planters

Notice boards– sponsorship?

Playground refurbishment – sports club assistance?

Finance Report.

Cheques to be Signed:

Clerk's Salary £338.77

Clerk re-payment for McAfee security. £5.93

KALC – payment for Cllr Pryor attendance at Transport Conference. £72.00

Grass cutting – Smooth and Rugged October Cut £30.00 (OPEN SPACES ACT 1906SS.9-10)

Total - £446.70

Incoming

Community Toilet Grant from GBC £800.00

The finance report proposed and seconded.....

The meeting ended at 9.05

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS 2020/21 BUDGET.

7.30 pm, 2ND DECEMBER IN ST MARY'S CHURCH ROOM, SOLE STREET.