

Cobham Parish Council
Minutes of a meeting held on
MONDAY 9TH JULY 7.30PM
St Mary's Church Room Sole Street

Present

Cllr R Dymond (Chairman)
Cllr S Dyer (Vice Chairman)
Cllr G Gabbitas
Cllr M Booth
Cllr M Haig
Cllr J Blackett
Cllr M Mason
Cllr J Elliott
Mrs T Sampson (Clerk)
7-Parishioners

1. The Clerk received apologies from Paul Hassel the Community Warden (report sent) and Adam Holloway MP.
2. The Chairman confirmed, with those present, that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting of the 4th June.
3. Declaration of Interests - An interest in the planning application for the land North of Scalers Hill. (GBC are aware of Cllr Booth's interest).
4. The Chairman introduced the two new co-opted councillors, Mr Matthew Mason and Mrs Jessica Elliott, both will represent the Sole Street ward.
5. The Clerk gave an update on the action points taken from the last meeting- this will be reflected within matters arising from previous meeting.
6. Parishioners Comments:
One Parishioner enquired about the next steps to be taken following GBC's planning consultation she also asked about an update on the White Post Lane planning application. These matters were due to be addressed later as part of the agenda.

7. Matters Arising from previous meeting

- a. **Parking:** Greenlands –Since a parishioner raised this issue the Chairman raised the matter with GBC at the Chairman's meeting and provided an update. The Chairman then asked the representatives of Greenlands for their views and suggestions.

They explained that the difficulties are caused by the fact that the road around Greenlands is a particularly narrow service road and local residents, rather than commuters, are parking on the road without consideration. It was explained that many residents of Greenlands had widened their own driveways, at their own cost, to ensure that they do not have to park on the road. It was also mentioned that some people park their cars in Greenlands for up to a week without moving it. One of the residents will send details, to the clerk, of a car that has been left in the road for some time. It was stated by one of the representatives that Greenlands is not Sole Street's car park. The residents of Greenlands feel that the road is dangerously full and there are real concerns that future blue light emergencies will end with the loss of life. One parishioner said that she lives on the bend and is disabled and often has difficulty getting off her drive, having to perform a '6 point' turn.

Dust carts are more careful accessing the road, but other lorries are not so careful. The busiest time for parking is from 5pm onwards until people leave for work at 8am in the morning. Visitors need to park on drives or in Manor road. The residents can apply for one permit per household, but houses on Sole Street are able to apply for two. A parishioner volunteered to keep a tally of the number of parked cars and will feedback a weekly stat to the clerk. A resident contacted the police about the parking but was told to drive across gardens if necessary.

Their suggestions were:

- Make a limited number of allocated parking bays.
- Make permit parking necessary for 24hours a day and weekend.
- Allow parking outside, May Place and Vine cottages, this may help to reduce the speed of traffic and prevent the road becoming a rat run when the new river crossing is open.
- Possible use of the banks along Scratton fields.
- Look at using the garages behind the Church Room.

It was agreed that double yellow lines opposite driveways and on the corner of the roads would be helpful.

ACTION – The chairman will contact GBC and set up a meeting to discuss options and she would like parish councillors to attend.

- b. **Footpaths:** fence with nails protruding. This was reported to Kent footpaths, who then contacted the owner of the fence requesting that the nails are removed, the garden waste picked up and that the leaning post is made upright. NFA at present.
- c. **Council membership-** update Chairman. The new Co-opted members were introduced earlier in the meeting. The PC is now up to its full membership of 9 members having worked with 8 members for 10 months.
- d. **Village Pump** – the Chairman has contacted a local blacksmith regarding the tap and tray that had originally formed part of the pump- the gentleman has looked, but is yet to provide a quote, however Heritage England must agree with the repairs being undertaken.
ACTION: Cllr Gabbitas will contact the National Trust to see if they had anyone that could carry out the repairs. Cllr Elliott will also enquire with her work colleagues regarding a suitable tradesman.

The Chairman also mentioned that Andrew Mayfield (Landscape detectives) is contacting the owner of Meadow House about access to the large reservoir which is in the area behind the village pump. Mr Mayfield is planning for the service cover the reservoir (next to the village pump) to be replaced temporarily while the original door is repaired, and he sought the Parish Council's permission which he received. There is currently no cost to the Parish Council. The idea is to hopefully create a historical destination which will be open to the public on certain days.

- e. **Speed Indicator Device-** update Cllr Blackett-
Speed camera installed at Sweeps Hole Pond on 13th June 2018
Approximately 4 weeks of data have been collected and analysed.
This shows peak traffic flows of 400 to 600 cars per hour in the morning peak and around half those values over a longer period in the evening peak.
Speeds recorded vary from 10 to 70 mph, although the clear majority are 30 to 40 mph. Note the camera detects vehicles just before they enter the 30-mph zone.

The overall average speed varies between 27 to 37 mph, but from 7am until 6pm stays close to 30 mph
Camera to remain at Sweeps Hole pond for 8 weeks and then be moved to Cobham, near the Terrace.

The battery life for the device is not as good as hoped and Cllr Blackett has had to change it a couple of times. It was mentioned that feedback from Cobham residents was quite negative regarding the placement of the SID in Sole Street. However, Cobham residents will have the device at the end of July.

ACTION: Cllr Blackett to consider how we might better interrogate the stats provided by the SID, also look at peaks and possible disruption on the A2.

f. **Footway through Sole Street** – update Chairman

The Chairman received a note of the minutes of her meeting with various members of Kent Highways regarding the requested Sole Street footway. The notes were shared with Parish Councillors.

KCC appreciated the PC's ambition but for various reasons, most notably funding, they felt that it was not feasible to consider the proposal of a footpath a viable option for construction. They said there would be significant safety concerns with any design put forward due to the restricted land available and the visibility in terms of lack of lighting and surrounding vegetation that would need to be removed.

They rejected the idea of a resident funded painted footpath that would run at the side of the road, as they would not be able to support this for safety reasons.

They did propose some alternative options for the PC to explore going forward including:

KCC providing some advance signage to alert vehicles of pedestrians in the road.

The bus stop location is not a formal bus stop but has simply arisen due to the bus operator's decision to serve the village in this way. Therefore, we may want to consider approaching the operator to see if this location could be changed. If the operator of the service changes at any point the new operator would not be bound to uphold any current agreement.

Use of the public footpath that exists behind the houses that goes from Round Street to Sallows Shaw, about a mile in distance.

The notes also explain that KCC spent £7,000 on researching the viability of the project and the footpath would cost approx. £250,000 which they will not fund.

The Chairman and Clerk have been working on a response to KCC which notifies them that CPC and Parishioners will not let the matter slide, sending feedback from individuals, the chairman asked parishioners to send their own concerns to the clerk so that they can be added to the response.

One parishioner raised the issues of people pushing prams this was corroborated by one of the parish councillors who experienced problems crossing the road and entering the 'little shop'. Local residents have always crossed the road – so crossing the road for the footway

Would not be any different.

The use of pedestrian signs and rumble strips were also discussed, the chairman will ensure all options are raised at the meeting with Highways.

Rumble strips near or across the bridge were also suggested.

- g. **Community Toilets** – The clerk was asked to enquire about the community scheme funding - if the pubs or local businesses wish to take part in the scheme they can apply directly and receive their own funding. The Parish Council will receive a quarterly payment, some of which would be given to the Sports Association towards the cost of cleaning products etc. Some funding would be retained by the PC towards the cost of insuring the building.
- h. **Planning consultation** A parishioner asked earlier in the meeting about the GBC consultation and what were the next steps when it closed. The chairman reminded everyone that the consultation closes on the 11th of July and encouraged people to respond if they hadn't already done so. It is understood that the outcome of the consultation and the plan will be announced in September.

Gravesham rural residents group together with the CPRE have set up a petition as follows: "Gravesham Borough Council is considering options to remove 80 hectares of land from the Green Belt to allow 2,000 new homes to be built. These homes will not be affordable, and this will do nothing to address the problems faced by the residents of Gravesham - all it will do is attract more people to the area and put more strain on local services and infrastructure. We do not believe it is necessary to build 8,000 new dwellings to meet local need. We call on Gravesham Borough Council to reject government-imposed targets, and to focus on developing brown-field sites to provide affordable housing where it is needed and for the local people who need it."

They have also posed further questions about the slowdown in population, meaning the houses built are likely to be for people outside of the area. Has the council asked other authorities about the infrastructure? Why aren't more brownfield sites, retail space and the canal basin being used.

Cllr Mason has experience of the building/development sector and feels that realistically the green belt is likely to be hit in the future even if it is not this time, he also suggested we take the matter of planning into our own hands. The chairman wants parishioners to stay positive in their fight against greenbelt development.

Cllr Dyer said it is hoped that the original plan for 6,000 homes will be enough this time round.

8. **Committee reports**

Playing Fields Committee Report

No issues to report

Footpaths Committee Report

No report - however correspondence was received regarding the canopy hanging over the footpath 192, the homeowner has been contacted and will make good.

ACTION -Cllr Elliott reported an area of overgrown vegetation on Manor road – she will provide the details for the clerk.

Local Traffic Report

A parishioner attended the Rural Transport Big Conversation at the Elite centre- and fed back about the new 3 schemes that are being considered: feeder service, mini bus, call a ride, basically all on-line. **ACTION** Cllr Elliott said she would put details of the consultation on Facebook.

Planning Committee Report

The most recent application handled was regarding the Land North of Scalers Hill REFERENCE NO. 20180244 – CPC objected to the change of use from rural to industrial.

White post Farm 20171000 / 20171001

–CPC objected, and the application is still showing as pending.

The old Norbond site/Varnish factory, concerns were raised that the application had gone to appeal. The Parish Council had not received any notification of an appeal.

Rural Parishes Report

The Chairman referred to the joint GRP and CPRE petition as mentioned earlier.

9. **GBC Matters** – no representative present and no report provided.
10. **KCC Matters** - no representative present and no report provided.
11. **KALC Matters** - The chairman mentioned training courses available to KALC members and the recent changes to the procurement rules.
ACTION- Clerk to update standing orders where necessary.

The Clerk had received a brief report from Paul Hassell, our community warden:

- Various people have been spoken to about allowing their dogs to foul the footpath advice given.
- Suspicious vehicle parked in Cobham Woods was reported.
- Multi Agencies operation carried out on the 20th June regarding fly tipping.
- General visible presence carried out and various people spoken to.

12. Correspondence /GDPR:

The clerk is working with Satswana regarding the employment of a DPO for 1 year. Additionally, correspondence had been received regarding footpath No 192 and a couple of adverts offering health and safety and consultancy services.

ACTION – Clerk to find out about the latest news from the Information Commissioner's Office regarding the need for Parish Councillors to individually register.

13. Matters Raised by Parish Councillors

Cllr Haig mentioned that the Knotweed by the Ship pub appeared to be under control as action had been taken and nothing was happening with the knotweed on the Sports Ground. Cllr Haig mentioned that the Ship garden area was being left in an untidy state and the bin was not being regularly emptied and rubbish was often flying about. Crockery and condiments had also been left out overnight. Cllr Haig said that a few parishioners are keeping an eye on the situation.

Cllr Dyer mentioned that the Pepper Hill rubbish site was still closed and not likely to open until September.

Cllr Elliott mentioned the Bees nest in Cherry Tree, behind the school. It was agreed that a bee keeper remove them to Higham. The nest is well established and the bees very active, if they are shown to be a hazard they can be destroyed, but there were no incidents reported at this time. **ACTION** Cllr Haig and Cllr Smith will monitor.

Cllr Dymond mentioned the white post opposite Rose Cottage Cobham had been knocked down. **ACTION** Cllr Smith volunteered to reinstall it.

Cllr Dymond also prompted a parishioner to explain about the Apple Day that will take place at Sole Street House on 7th October. Funds raised will contribute to the cost of the architect working on the refurb of St Mary's Church Room.

Scripps farm has offered to help with the day, they have also offered a tour of the orchards to the Parish Councillors. Councillors were keen to accept the offer. **ACTION** Cllr Dymond to contact the manager to ascertain suitable dates for the visit.

12 Any Other Business

The matter of a bus stop and dropping off point at Sweeps hole bus stop by the pond, at the was mentioned and the chairman said that this would also be discussed with Highways at the meeting. **ACTION** Cllr Dymond to include in her meeting with highways.

13 Finance Cllr Dyer proposed the acceptance of the Finance Report and this was agreed by Cllr Booth

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy Summer Holiday.

The Meeting closed at 9.35 pm.....

NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 3RD SEPTEMBER IN THE MEADOW ROOMS
COBHAM