**COBHAM PARISH COUNCIL JULY 2017**

**Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in**

**Meadow Room, Cobham on**

**Monday 10 July 2017 at 7.30 pm**

**Following the Highways England Drop in.**

**PRESENT**

**COUNCILLORS:** CLLR R DYMOND (CHAIRMAN)

CLLR S DYER (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN)
CLLR M HAIG

CLLR J BLACKETT

CLLR GABRIELLA BJÖRK GABBITAS

**IN ATTENDANCE:** CLLR B SWEETLAND (KCC)

Mrs T Sampson (Clerk)

* **Apologies for absence**

Cllr B Smith, Cllr M Booth, Cllr Arnott, PCSOs Joanne Hartley and Tioni King,

 Community Warden Steve Gray, Cllr S Jassal.

* **Minutes:** to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of 12th June 2017. These were agreed.
* **Declaration of Interests** – none raised.

The Chairman welcomed everyone following a successful ‘drop in’ event with the Community team from Highway’s England. Further events will be arranged.

The Chairman paid tribute to Molly McLaren and her family. Molly grew up in the Village; attended the local Primary School and was a much loved and well-respected young lady who, had her life not been cut tragically short, had a bright future ahead of her. The meeting then observed a one-minute silence.

1. **Toilets** – Cllr Booth was not able to be present, but the Parish Risk Assessment and Operating Policy has been passed to the sports club. Currently GBC is still looking after the toilets. A parishioner asked what the cost would be to the Parish Council of taking on responsibility for the toilets, but a full costing is not available at present.
2. **Highways England Village Walkthrough** –The Chairman, Rosemary Dymond explained that several Councillors escorted members of the LTC community team on a tour through the village during the morning rush hour, from 8-9am, and beyond they had been able to show some good examples of the morning traffic build up and fully captured the difficulties experienced. The Councillors spilt the group and looked around both Sole Street, Cobham and Henhurst before taking them to Halfpence Lane, Scalers Hill, Thong lane/golf club/Riverview Park/Valley Drive up to Marling cross- Ifield Church- Dabb Place and Jeskyns. – the Community team said they wanted to keep cycle lanes in tact as much as possible. Spoke about how the route needs improving Councillors highlighted the need to tunnel and cut through where possible. The message was put across very firmly. It is understood that traffic flow data was taken some time ago but this is unlikely to be released before Christmas.
3. **Defibrillators checking process.** The Clerk gave update on the defibrillator checking process, Cllr Kerry Smith is undertaking the checks on the machine at St Marys Church Room, The Meadow Room Chairman, Mr C Antrobus will undertake the checks there and Mr Terry Ralf will check the Bowls Club defibrillator. The checking process has started and, so far, is working well.

A Parishioner asked how many times the Defibrillators had been used. It was reported that, thankfully, the machines had not yet been used. Concerns were then raised about the cost and benefit of having the defibrillator- there were some concerns about their use. It was emphasised that the course of action in an emergency is to call 999, you will then be advised whether a defibrillator should be used. A further training course is to be organised by the Clerk.

1. **Knotweed**- Cllr Arnott was unable to be present at the meeting but it will be fed back to her that Meadow House appears to be clear but it is still growing at the Ship and some is appearing in the corner of the sports ground where bonfires take place.
2. **Cobham Bowls Club** – the lease has been agreed and awaiting signing. The Parish Council agreed to pay the Solicitor’s invoice and for it to be refunded by the Bowls Club.
3. **Whitepost Lane** –there does not appear to be anything happening on the old travellers site, some tree trunks have been placed across the opening in to the field and a horse is still tethered in the field. To keep under consideration.

**PARISHIONER’S COMMENTS**

* A parishioner explained that a Caravan had been dumped on Church Road - Clerk to report to GBC.
* The matter of the footway from Scratton Fields to Round Street was raised and a progress report requested. The Chairman explained that the footway will be split on either side of the road. It was also being considered whether the path would run alongside the road surface or up along the bank. Lighting will also need to be considered depending on whether the path is put on the bank or not. The contractor, AMEY has costed the work and there may be some central Government funding available as part of their road safety programme to improve school routes.
* A parishioner referred to a recent incident. He was walking with his 5-year-old daughter along The Street about 6 youths on mopeds came wheeling up The Street and 1 along the path by the school. They were threatening and confrontational and the main offender stopped down the road and produced a set of bolt cutters which he waved at him whilst driving towards him. The group then dispersed in different directions. The 4 registration numbers were given to the police and they all turned out to be stolen. The Police drew a blank again from the very generic clothing and inability to identify them. Nobody was apprehended.
* Trail bikes are once again coming through the village and the problem is growing. Further discussions were had regarding the problem of speeding and traffic in general using the Village. It needs to be decided what would be the best way forward.

The Chairman explained that she had met with KCC to SIDs (electric/radar speed signs) and that they were expensive, Cllr B Smith had also researched SIDs and had provided some prices. It was not thought that this was the best way forward or best use of the money available- Cllr Bryan Sweetland referred to his email to the Chairman:

‘If CPC decide to proceed with this you will need to precept or somehow cover half the cost of a mobile SID and any additional costs incurred in the traffic surveys and show that you can find enough volunteers to operate the scheme. I'm happy to discuss with CPC in more detail on these issues and if we can agree we should engage with Kent Highways as soon as possible.’

It was decided that a separate meeting should be held to discuss traffic issues. Emma ……… from KCC will send some dates to the Clerk so that a meeting can be set up with Councillors, the Traffic Group, Councillor Sweetland and others from KCC- hopefully the meeting can be arranged before the end of July.

**The Big Dig**

Andrew Mayfield fed back that they now have a wide range of properties taking part, the Children from the School have been particularly keen to take part.

An excavation has started in the grounds of the Meadow room. Andrew also explained that he will be in contact with the LTC team in relation to archaeology during the excavations for the new river crossing. He hopes to take the history of the Village back further than ever before.

**Other**

Cllr Dyer has obtained a further quote for the work that needs to be carried out on the children’s playground. Cllr Dyer also tried to repair the fence around the playground but it needs some more work, parishioner Jon Parker has volunteered to do the job.

Cllr Haig referred to the earlier conversation about the Cobham Traffic problems and suggested a National Campaign on how to drive in a Rural Area. Cllr Haig also referred to a dangerous driver who recently caused problems in the Village, parishioners also referred to cars mounting the pavement.

Cllr Haig also suggested that we should be encouraging people to log crimes. Cobham to consider setting up a neighbourhood watch and should be put on the on the agenda for the next meeting –the Clerk to contact the Sole-Street co-ordinator about setting up a new group in Cobham. Cllr Haig said we might consider using the room in the Darnley for meetings.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.**

1. **Flooding in Sole Street**. Cllr Blackett reported that the work has not taken place, the date given had come and gone and the promised letters have not been distributed. Councillor Sweetland will be taking this up with KCC as he is very disappointed at how the matters had still not been addressed. Cllr Blackett explained that the drains had not been cleared for over a year. Cllr Sweetland will take this forward.
2. **Traffic Speed signs** - had been discussed earlier and will be revisited at the separate meeting with Highways Kent.
3. **HGV signs –** Cllr Booth had raised issues with the lack of HGV signs near Scotland Lane. Cllr Sweetland said he had met with Cllr Booth and Lisa Gillham, the District Manager Gravesham. KCC Highways, Transportation & Waste. In an email Mike explained that Lisa has agreed to progress two advisory ‘Not suitable for HGV’s’ signs for Old Watling Street leading to Thong Lane and at the entrance to Scotland Lane. She is also going to chase to get the in-effective narrow road sign on Halfpence Lane moved to a more sensible location.

Lisa is also going to pursue the possibility of a sign for the village indicating the direction to the sports field. Cllr Sweetland also mentioned that Cllr Booth had mentioned the need for a sign for the road where his house is.

1. **Footway from Sole Street to Camer Park**. The Clerk has received further communication regarding this footway. The Clerk reported on the response from the Landscape Technical Support Officer, KCC who emailed to explain that they were aware of the issue with overgrown vegetation and hedges and confirmed that they have a Swathe Programme due out and this will address the lower vegetation.  However, they are aware that there is an issue with ownership of the hedges and they were waiting for waiting the Steward to confirm the location of the obstruction. If the hedge is the Council’s responsibility they will clear the obstructions and place the area on a regular Rural Hedge clearance programme, however if the hedge is private the Steward will need to issue notice. (section 154)
2. **Parking Lorries:** The Clerk reported a lorry that had been parking overnight on Church road- Cllr B Smith had produced a photograph. The Clerk fed-back briefly on the email response received from Liaison Officer, Schemes Planning & Delivery Team KCC:

They explained in the email what was being done in relation to Lorry Parks etc. and that through analysis of data it had been established that the existing evidence does not justify any further engineering measures currently at the location. They will continue to monitor the safety record at the location. However, whilst they have no plans for safety improvements at the location, they would be happy to advise on potential options if the Parish wished to use its budget.

1. **The Clerk reported on the correspondence** received including the overgrown Richard Dadd path that runs alongside the Darnley Trail- this has been reported and the arboricultural officer hopes to have the path cleared ASAP.

 The Clerk also responded to two requests to assist with family tree searches.

**MATTERS RAISED BY PARISH COUNCILLORS**

Cllr Haig mentioned that one of the White wooden posts in Cobham opposite Rose Cottage had been knocked and needs straightening out. She also mentioned a noisy and loose drain cover near her home which the Clerk will report.

She also said that there is overgrown vegetation at the slip road coming up from the A2 from Hever Court towards the Nell’s Café roundabout. Clerk to report.

The Chairman has circulated a map of the Local Fire Hydrants and would like councillors to undertake visual inspection of Fire Hydrants to check for leaks/vegetation –There are 28 Fire Hydrants split between councillors in the two areas for a monthly check.

**Planning Report:** Cllr K Smith was unable to be present to go through the planning report but sent it through to the Councillors.

**July Planning Report (as at 5/7/17)**

Ref No 20170467 - Dalginross Cottage Jeskyns Road Cobham Gravesend Kent

Demolition of existing garage and erection of a two-bedroom dwelling and creation of a parking layby.

Cobham Parish Council objects to this proposal as we feel it constitutes a new dwelling being created in the MGB which would not normally be permitted and we are not aware of any Special Circumstances. The subsequent division of this plot is also detrimental to the original dwelling Dalginross which then sits on a reduced plot, and will no doubt lead to further applications for additional garage/storage in future. The access and parking proposals are inadequate for such a dangerous point on this road which is frequently used by locals wishing to access the A2/A227 via backroads. An increase in traffic may well be more likely once the proposed “Option C” works commence. The proposed “layby” is also detrimental to the rural character of this former hamlet of Dabbs Place.

Ref No 20170586 - 1 Smallholdings Round Street Cobham Gravesend Kent DA13 9AY

Erection of two storey rear extension with front porch and first floor Juliet balcony to the east elevation, provision of vehicular access to Round Street including a change of use of a small area of agricultural land and demolition of existing greenhouse to construct a car port.

Cobham Parish Council has no objection to this proposal.

Ref No 20170459 - Barn Fronting 1 Jeskyns Road Cobham Gravesend Kent

Conversion of existing barn into a two-storey residential dwelling and change of the land to residential.

Cobham Parish Council objects to this proposal. This proposal to convert a “barn” constitutes a new build in the MGB as only the four posts in each corner will remain and the floor will be dug down to provide a basement to allow for headroom.

The report from Mr R Lloyd-Hughes sets out to mislead that the agricultural shed is a “barn” suitable for conversion to a 3-bedroom dwelling which clearly it is not as it’s completely disappearing.

The development of the curtilage to provide a deck and glazed area together with parking for 2 cars and room to manoeuvre them is not in keeping with the character of the MGB.

In relation to the former varnish factory site, the owner has instructed a planning agent to represent him.  I am presently waiting for his formal response.

We have also visited White Post Lane and taken photos.  We are today re-posting copies of the Injunction obtained in 2009 to act as a deterrent.  Unfortunately, at this stage we cannot do anything further.

Ref No 20170444 – Wildacre, Sole Street, DA13 0XZ

Installation of four roof lights in the rear roof slope and conversion of loft space to provide carer accommodation.

CPC has no objections to this proposal.

GBC …..

Ref No: 20170472 - The Dairy, Cobham Hall, Brewers Road, Cobham DA12

Restoration of 18th-Century folly to provide holiday-let accommodation. Works include, minor repairs to stabilise the structure; Reinstatement of missing fabric, including stone floor finishes, plastered internal walls and flat and vaulted plaster ceilings; Reinstatement of slate cladding to original details; Infilling of the south cloister archways in order to provide kitchen and sanitary facilities; Upgrades to the thermal performance of the building with new insulation below the floor and above the ceilings; and, Introduction of services (to provide power, water, and foul drainage)

CPC has no objections to this application.

Ref No: 20170473 - The Dairy, Cobham Hall, Brewers Road, Cobham DA12

Application for Listed Building Consent for the restoration of 18th-Century folly to provide holiday-let accommodation. Works include, minor repairs to stabilise the structure; Reinstatement of missing fabric, including stone floor finishes, plastered internal walls and flat and vaulted plaster ceilings; Reinstatement of slate cladding to original details; Infilling of the south cloister archways in order to provide kitchen and sanitary facilities; Upgrades to the thermal performance of the building with new insulation below the floor and above the ceilings; and, Introduction of services (to provide power, water, and foul drainage)

CPC has no objections to this application.

**Results of Planning Applications Pending**

Ref No 20170138 - 3 Chapelwood Place, DA13 9AG

Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged kitchen/dining room and erection of first floor front extension to form bedroom and bathroom.

CPC has no objections.

GBC Pending decision.

Ref No 20160967 - The Oaks, Sallows Shaw DA13 9BP

REVISED PLANS - Application for minor material amendment to planning permission reference number 20150636 for the conversion and extension of existing garage into a one-bedroom annex and construction of a swimming pool; to allow the demolition of the existing garage and its re-building.

CPC has no objection to this amended application but note that the proximity of the proposed extension to the boundary remains.

GBC Still Pending Consideration

Ref No 20160774 – Revised Application, Knights Place Farm Watling Street, ME2 3UB

Retention of two storey building used as car port and store at ground floor with residential annexe above; conversion of ground floor to form part of residential annexe.

In light of the amendments we vigorously object to the revised planning application.  Notwithstanding the intention to legally tie this outbuilding to the main building, Cobham PC objected to the original application and can find no reason why the amendments change our objections.

This Listed property sits in MGB and an area of AONB; this must surely be viewed as encroachment and flouting of the conditions imposed for its protection, and harmful in all respects.

GBC Still Pending Consideration

Ref No 20170123 - Knightsplace Equestrian Centre Ltd, Pond Cottage Stables Knights Place Farm, Watling St Cobham

Retention of mobile classroom for use in association with the equine teaching facility at Knights Place Equestrian Centre.

CPC do not object to the retention of the mobile classroom and would support a restriction on the continued use of this facility to prevent overnight accommodation.  The temporary nature of the mobile classroom does not give rise to a need for a permanent structure, and as an educational facility cannot be converted into a dwelling of any sort.

GBC Still Pending

Ref No 20170034 - The Murrells 29-31 The Street

CPC has no objection to the application for listed building consent for internal allegations to the layout of the new stud walls, care of original timber posts, studs and sole plate, reinstallation of water, electricity and hearing service, repairs to the fireplace and damp prevention.

GBC Still Pending.

**July Finance**

Cheques signed at meeting and previously signed at earlier meetings.

**MI Payroll (**quarterly payment) **£45.00**

**HMRC**-(tax and NI) **£123.60**

**Maintenance Man (Jul) £120.00**

**Clerk (Jul) £213.00**

**Total £501.60**

**Awaiting signature**

**Gullands Solicitors £1,812.00**

**Agreed –** Proposed by Cllr Dyer, Seconded by Cllr Haig

**The Chairman closed the Public meeting at 9.35pm**

Chairman…………………………………………………………………………………………………