

Minutes of a Cobham Parish Council
meeting held Monday 4th June
Meadow Rooms Cobham

Present

Cllr R Dymond (Chairman)
Cllr S Dyer (Vice Chairman)
Cllr G Gabbitas
Cllr M Booth
Cllr M Haig
Cllr J Blackett
Cllr S Arnott
Mr Andrew Mayfield of Landscape Detectives
Mrs Tina Sampson (Clerk)
4 Parishioners

1. **Apologies** were received from KCC Cllr B Sweetland, GBC Cllr S Jassal, Cllr B Smith and Community Warden Paul Hassell.
2. The Chairman read through the **minutes of 14th May** and confirmed with Parish Councillors that the minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting.
3. **Declaration of Interests** – there were none.
4. **Landscape detectives**
Andrew Mayfield explained that as part of this summer's archaeology season, the Cobham Landscape Detectives are hoping to work on sites across the Parish again. Following last summer's dig, they found evidence of activity from the 14th Century, but they are interested in looking for finds from earlier periods. Andrew has been speaking to parishioners and with Owletts about further digs.
Andrew believes that it is possible that medieval manors may have joined together to form the village of Cobham and will be looking for evidence to support this. They would like to have more areas to excavate and are particularly interested in unearthing finds from the Saxon period, they will be investigating Cobham Hall, but are not looking at further digs at the College. Ideally, they would like to find a home for their finds so that they can be exhibited in the longer term. The landscape detectives hope to be back in the village in July or August, they have funding until Spring next year, but volunteers will still be active after that. Cllr Gabbitas mentioned that a wall had been uncovered in Owletts grounds which Andrew may be interested in. Andrew also mentioned that he had ventured in to the old underground reservoir last year and it was very impressive and hopes to publish photographs in the future. The group would like to do a walkover of Scripps farm.
ACTION: The Chairman will investigate who owns the land where the entry to the reservoir is located and will contact the farm manager of Scripps regarding the walkover

5. Parishioners Comments

A parishioner raised concerns about the gullies and drains along Sole Street and the fact they haven't been properly cleaned for some time, another parishioner also mentioned that there was a similar problem in Manor Road. Cllr Blackett was also aware of the issue and had taken some photographs which he will pass on to the clerk. The Chairman had spoken to Highways and had been told that there just too many other issues to deal with which has meant the drains were not being seen to.

ACTION: Clerk to report to Highways.

Fly-tipping-a mattress has been dumped on Halfpence Lane, a short discussion followed about the delays being caused to collection because of the closure of the Pepper Hill waste site. Sadly, the skip facility provided by a parishioner, had also been removed.

The clerk reminded people that fly-tipping could be reported via the Country eye app <https://countryeye.co.uk/> and a parishioner also mentioned the GBC website could also be used to report the matter <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/street-care-and-cleaning/fly-tipping/report-fly-tipping> .

ACTION: The clerk will report the dumped mattress to GBC.

6. Matters arising from previous meeting/minutes

a. Parking at Greenlands had been raised by a parishioner with the clerk following a serious blue light incident where an ambulance could not relay an ill parishioner to the hospital because of difficulties exiting the cul-de-sac. The Clerk had reported it to the Community Warden who was going to take the matter forward with police colleagues. The matter was also submitted to the GBC Parish Chairman's meeting on the 30th May. The chairman read out the GBC advice and suggestions and suggested these should be discussed with the residents of Greenlands to find a possible resolution to the matter.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the correspondent with an update and invite them to the next Parish meeting where Greenlands' Parking will be on the agenda.

b. Footpaths- Cllr Arnott provided an update in relation to the dangerous protruding nails on the fence along the footpath opposite the Railway Public House on Sole Street. It appears some attempt has been made to hammer over the protruding nails, but there are still a few sticking out. In addition to the nails, I am aware that there have been complaints via the Sole Street general Facebook page that grass cuttings have been thrown over the fence on to the footpath.

It appears that residents have complained to GBC before about the nails, but it is not clear which department.

ACTION: Clerk to report it to Mr P from Kent footpaths

c. The rubbish in the Dew pond in Scotland Lane – The clerk had contacted the Forestry Commission and they confirmed that the asbestos present in the bottom of the pond had been removed in March. They are monitoring the area for any fly-tipping. NFA required at this time.

d. Council Membership – The Chairman explained that she had received two expressions of interest and CV and that the two candidates were present this evening.

Following the public meeting the candidates would have the opportunity to speak with parish councillors and ask them about the role and explain their interest in the role. There will then be a ballot held among the Parish Councillors to decide on who will fill Cllr K Smith's position on the council.

- e. The missing part of the village pump. – the Chairman was unable to find a clear enough photograph of the pump when the bottom tap was still in place. Cllr Gabbitas will action when a photograph has been found, Cllr Haig mentioned that a Battle Street resident may be able to help with the metal work.
ACTION: To find a suitable image of the pump.
- f. Speed indicator device- the posts for the device were now in place and the Clerk was in contact with Highways for a date for the SID to be put in place.
ACTION: Clerk to pursue a date for the fixing with Highways.
- g. Footway through Sole Street – The Chairman attended a meeting on the 23 May with six members of Kent Highways. Highways explained that they had spent £7000 on studies which included looking at the painted lines option. Disappointingly they said that it would not be possible to put in a footway as requested. They do not feel that the stats they gathered during a week-long survey back in November 17, do not provide enough evidence to support the need for a footway; there had not been enough speeding traffic recorded and there had not been a fatality on the road. Additionally, the engineer did not feel that the footway would be safe due to the need to cross from one side to the other and the lack of street lighting. And they had a concern because they would need to close the road for 12 weeks.
Despite the local landowners saying they were willing to hand over their land for the footpath, Highways said they would still need a legal agreement with the landowners at the cost of £2000. There was also the total cost of the work at £100,000 so they will not go any further with it. The Chairman will still pursue the matter and we will keep it on the books as our LTC legacy – but we will need patience. Very disappointing.
- h. Community toilets- the Clerk explained that we could still join the Community toilet scheme without the local hostelries having to join. The Parish Council would receive some funding towards the upkeep of the public toilets, but it is not clear if the pubs would also receive a payment.
ACTION: clerk to contact GBC about the funding.
- i. Planning consultation – The Chairman had placed a map at the back of the hall for parishioners to look at, it was the same map that had been on display at the local pop in sessions run by GBC. Cllr Dyer said that there was to be another pop in session on Tuesday evening at 7.30 pm in Chalk and encouraged people to go along. The Chairman wondered if a meeting should be held at St Mary's Church Room for those parishioners having difficulties with the questionnaire, the feed back from the parishioners present was that they felt it would not be well attended. It was decided that the Parish Council would do a letter drop encouraging people to get involved with the consultation and help stop the encroachment on to Green Belt land. The Chairman and Cllr Dyer attended a meeting with the local MP, Adam Holloway, however Mr Holloway was unable to enlighten them with any information at that time but encouraged the rural parishes to stick together.

Cllr Haig made the point that smaller homes, in the local community, were needed so that older people could down size and make their homes available to families, but where to build the smaller properties was still an issue.

ACTION: Cllr Dymond and Cllr Dyer to draft a letter to Parishioners, Cllr Dymond to find the list of delivery split for the Parish. Clerk to find out the cost of printing by the Church Printing Room.

7. Committee reports

Playing Fields Committee Report:

The grass in the Children's Corner is being cut twice monthly now, and the new contract is working well. There is, however, an issue of the upper and lower playing area not being cut regularly, and the cricket club is cutting it.

ACTION: Clerk to contact GBC about how often they cut the grass.

Footpaths Committee Report: ref; earlier report from Cllr Arnott, additionally the matter of a Bees nest was raised at last month's meeting. A parishioner identified the bees as Honey Bees and Cllr Smith contacted a bee keeper who was able to advise what to do when the nest quietened down a bit.

Local Traffic Report: There will not be any CPC representative at the Joint Gravesham transportation meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to circulate the minutes when they have been received.

Planning Committee Report:

Reference no. 20180313

Proposed development application for the removal of condition 2 attached to Planning permission reference number 20151139 for the Demolition of the existing structure and erection of a Dwelling with associated parking, access and landscaping Works; to allow the substitution of approved drawing no. 16/0388 -01 with 16/0388 50c.

Location Oldlands barn, Gold street, Cobham

No objection to amendments

Reference no. 20180105

Proposed development application for a lawful development certificate in respect

Of the continued use of land for open storage including Storage containers.

Location yard 2, Knights Place Farm, Watling Street, Cobham

Gravesend **cpc objected**

Reference no. 20180445. Proposed development erection of single storey attached annexe to the rear and side.

Location Lawndahls, Sallows Shaw, Cobham

Cpc objected

Cllr Dyer said that it was disappointing how many planning applications were stuck in the process for so long.

Rural Parishes Report: The Chairman said that all the rural parishes were working together regarding the planning consultation

11 GBC Matters Cllr Jassal was not present, however had emailed asking for any casework to be forwarded to him.

12 KCC Matters Cllr Sweetland was not present, however the Clerk relayed the news that the Parish Council had received a grant of £3000, from Cllr Sweetland's fund, towards the cost of the new speed indicator device.

13 KALC Matters – nothing to report

14 Correspondence/GDPR:

A parishioner contacted the Clerk and raised the matter of the Sole Street Mannequins as it was felt they may be a distraction to drivers and they do not give a good impression of the village. He understood the reasons behind their placement and really sympathised with the parents that are concerned about the speeding traffic along Sole Street. Once the SID is in place it will hopefully reduce speeds.

ACTION: Clerk to contact our traffic police officer regarding the placement of the mannequins, Cllr Dyer to speak with the parents who made the mannequins.

The Clerk was contacted about the destruction of a bollard outside of the medieval house. Highways came out the same day and filled the hole left by the bollard. The Clerk is still in contact with Highways about the replacement of the bollard. It was also brought to the attention of the clerk that some concerns were raised about the position of the bollard, but the Chairman said that all residents had been involved in the positioning of the bollard and the position was carefully measured to allow pedestrians with pushchairs and wheelchairs to get past.

ACTION: The Clerk is to continue to monitor the replacement of the bollard.

GDPR- the clerk contacted three DPO providers with a view to setting up a contract for the next year. There were two quotes received and depending on any additional costs for the training course required the Parish Council will most likely go with the best value provided at £150.

15 Matters Raised by Parish Councillors -

Cllr Haig mentioned that there were loose cobbles are at the left-hand entrance of Lodge Lane as vehicles turn in from Halfpence Lane just beside the finger posts. Cllr Haig believes they are a danger to other vehicles and passers-by. The tree close by has also been damaged by one of the large vehicles.

ACTION- Clerk to report to Highways

Cllr Haig also mentioned that Sweeps Hole is very overgrown and encroaching on the sight line.

ACTION Clerk to check when Baylis is next due to undertake maintenance.

A parishioner who lives on Battle Street would like to know who owns the raised pavement outside of his property as it is being damaged by passing traffic. Cllr Smith was going to look at the property, Clerk to follow up with him.

ACTION- Clerk to contact GBC about the ownership of the pavement

The Chairman highlighted the Front of House competition to encourage more entries.

16 Any Other Business

The chairman mentioned the annual accounts report from the Community Shop and gave some highlights from the report. There was a turnover of £170,000 which was up on the 2016 total (£162,000) and again includes an increase in fund-raising and donations. There was a Gross Profit of £39,777; just below that of 2016 (£40,598). Overheads of £41,789 were pegged at a similar level to 2016 (£41,848). This represents a sterling effort by everyone involved at the shop! and was achieved despite significant increases in some areas - especially electricity charges and the Living Wage which went up in April 2017.

The Chairman congratulated everyone involved in the Community Store.

Cllr Dymond also encouraged people to make use of both Village shops. We are lucky to have them.

17 Finance Report

Receipts:	
Grant from KCC -Via Cllr B Sweetland (towards SIDs)	£3,000
Cheques to be signed:	
CPRE subscription	£36.00
Internal Auditor/Accountant	£420.00
Smooth and Rugged invoice grass cutting	£60.00
Maintenance Man.	£150.00
Clerk Salary	£302.00
Total	£968.00

Cllr Dyer proposed the acceptance of the Finance report and Cllr Blackett seconded.

The Chairman closed the Public meeting at 9.20 pm.....

The discussions with the two prospective Parish Councillors and the result of the ballot will be recorded separately.

NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL 9th JULY St MARY'S CHURCH ROOM SOLE STREET.