

**Minutes of the meeting held on  
Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30PM  
in the Meadow Rooms Cobham**

**Present**

Cllr Rosemary Dymond (Chairman), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Mike Booth  
Cllr James Blackett, Mrs T Sampson (Clerk) 7Parishioners

1.Apologies for absence received from Cllr B Smith, Cllr J Elliott, Cllr G Gabbitas and Community Warden Paul Hassell. Apologies were later received from Cllr M Mason

2.Minutes. The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

3.Declaration of Interests. None raised.

4. Parishioners Comments – *items not already identified on the agenda.*

A parishioner raised the matter of a 20 MPH sign on the way into to the village on both sides of the road, it was explained that the matter had been reported and that it can often take some time for new signs to be provided. The missing 20 MPH signs and reflectors have been reported to Kent Highways. The number of potholes were also raised at the meeting, some of the holes being big enough to damage cars, a parishioner asked what was happening. Another parishioner had already contacted KCC Highways about the 4month old pothole in front of his house on the Street, the hole fills with water which is then splashed against is door causing it to rot. Some of the potholes have been reported and marked with white paint but that it was thought unlikely that anything would happen while the weather is still wet. **ACTION** - The chairman is to discuss these points at her meeting with Cllr Sweetland and Cllr Mike Whiting on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> Feb.

The manager and a member of staff from the Ship Inn public house explained that they have been experiencing problems with people parking inconsiderately in the pub's car park, there had apparently been abusive language used and threats made to staff. These people appear to be parents from the school. The entrance and space that the delivery lorry uses is often blocked and the pub must pay approx. £400 for the missed delivery. Additionally, people are dropping rubbish and allowing their dogs to foul in the car park. The pub is happy for the car park to be used by parents picking up their children in the afternoon, but they do not now open it in the morning, and they have been accused of blocking the village because of this. They are looking to section off half of the car park to ensure deliveries are not disrupted and they are considering putting up signs and CCTV. **ACTION** Clerk to contact the PCSO Jo Hartley and the Community Warden, Paul Hassell to visit, in the morning and afternoon during school time, to keep an eye on the situation and escalate if necessary.

Another parishioner mentioned that the overgrown hedge on Sole Street needs some attention as it is making it difficult to see oncoming traffic and the Railway pub's light can be mistaken for the lights of oncoming traffic.

It was also said that there was an issue with some overgrown trees on Sallows Shaw, which makes it difficult to get along the path. **ACTION**- Chairman to write to home owners enclosing a copy of the KCC document explaining homeowners' responsibilities.

The matter of the Hart Beeps poster on the fence outside the Meadow Rooms was, once again, raised. This had been mentioned to the Chair of the Meadow Rooms. **ACTION** Cllr Dymond to raise it again.

A resident of the street was concerned about the speed of traffic passing the Cobham community shop. The parishioner explained how he had addressed a driver who was driving too fast, which led to him being bombarded with abuse and foul language, he also said that his partner was nearly hit by a van driving up the kerb. He wondered what could be done to help reduce the speed. The chairman mentioned how helpful it had been when the parishioner was renovating the front of his house and had bollards/cones in the road as it slowed the traffic down.

Parishioners also enquired about the PCSO's intended monitoring of the village with the speed gun. There was a request for a mobile speed camera to be used in the village. **ACTION** Clerk to contact the PCSO to confirm the date for speed monitoring.

## 5. Matters Arising from previous meeting

**a. Parking** – Greenlands. The chairman has contacted GBC to arrange a visit to Greenlands and Scratton Fields to assess the number of spaces available. Date to be confirmed.

**b. Community Warden Surgery** -update from Paul Hassell/Clerk Paul was unavailable to attend, however the clerk said that the matter of confidentiality at the surgery had been raised and she will make Paul aware of the concerns. It was also suggested that someone from The Ship public house should attend to discuss their parking issues.

**c. Speed Indicator Device**- update Cllr Blackett. The SID is currently situated at the Terrace Cobham and is monitoring the traffic coming out of the village. Cllr Blackett has not been able to collect the data yet due to the snow, but he could confirm that approx. 600 cars per hour, one way, were using the village in the morning. It was also asked whether anything could be done about SAT NAVs bringing vehicles through villages. Cllr Booth mention revisiting the positioning of the bollards currently in Cobham Village.

**ACTION** – Chairman to raise at the meeting on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup>.

**d. Lower Thames Crossing**- update Chairman/Cllr Dyer

Cllr Dyer provided info from the latest LTC report, they are preparing their planning application and are now taking their engagement with the market to the next stage by issuing a Prior Information Notice (PIN).

**e. Children's playground repairs** – update Cllr Dyer/Cllr Smith.

Cllr Dyer spoke about the possibility of a grant. The clerk spoke about the quotes required. One quote had been received two others are in the pipeline. The main concern is the replacement of damaged matting.

**f. Forthcoming elections** – The clerk explained that notices had been placed on the notice boards asking anyone interested in becoming a councillor to get in touch. The clerk will be attending a briefing on Wednesday 13 March at 6.15pm which is for clerks and prospective candidates. Any parish candidates going on to contest an election will also be able to attend two further briefing sessions about polling day and postal voting on Monday 8 April at 6.15pm and a subsequent session on the count arrangements on Tuesday 23 April at 6.15pm. Again, these will both be held at the Civic Centre, Gravesend.

The deadline for councillor applications is the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

Nomination forms for the elections are currently being updated by the Electoral Commission (EC) and when available can be found on the EC website under the resources sections on Part 2a and Part 2b at this page - <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-and-community-council-elections-in-england-and-wales>.

Polling day is 2 May (7am to 10pm)

**g. Parish councillor's email addresses.** Cllr Blackett has been having some difficulty setting up the email addresses as he had hoped to. It was said at the clerks meeting that Vigo are going to be using GOV.uk addresses. **ACTION**- Clerk to contact Vigo's clerk for advice.

**h. Litter Pick** – Clerk update

A Sallow Shaw parishioner has been busy litter picking Halfpence Lane it has taken, so far, 3 sessions meaning 10-12 hours to clear. The Parishioner is looking for more volunteers, she has obtained some kit and GBC collected all the blue bags full of rubbish. She is being joined by another Sallow Shaw resident who wants to organise a group of volunteers to take ownership of patches. The annual parish council litter pick will take place on 16 March.

## 6 Group reports

Playing Fields Group Report the work needed in relation to children's park had already been discussed. It was agreed that we would continue to use Smooth and Rugged to cut the grass throughout the Spring and Summer.

Footpaths Group Report – It was suggested that Dadds path needed a litter pick undertaken.

Local Traffic Group Report – already covered at length previously.

Rural Parishes Report – Rural police commissioner to visit villages

Planning Group report – There wasn't a report to be read out, but the matter of a new Mobile Phone Mast being erected at Shorne was briefly discussed and whether there was a need for such a construction.

7 GBC Matters – nothing to report

8 KCC Matters – Cllr Bryan Sweetland provided a report:

It continues to be a very busy year at Kent county council. At the moment we are just about to agree our budgets for 2019/20 and the council tax will be increased by just under 5% this year. That sounds like a big increase, but the council tax element is just under 3% and then there's the 2% adult social services care charge which the government introduced a couple of years ago. Again, this year our funding from central government has been reduced by around £50M.

Over the last few months I've had a number of meetings with Highways England, Kent County Council Highways and the Borough Council on the plans to build the Lower Thames Crossing. Together with our MP, Adam Holloway and Bob Lane, I've met with Tim Jones from Highways England, he is the Project Director for the LTC. We had a fairly positive meeting and he explained some of their plans which included the enormous construction site that will be built adjacent to Thong and close to the Southern Valley Golf Course, which will close, probably within the next two years, if not sooner. The site will be the base for around 2000 construction workers, and this is quite worrying for local people. The only positive I can see and something that I've been pushing for is that these new jobs should be offered to local people. There is also an opportunity for dozens of new apprenticeships to be created for local young people.

However, I don't think local people really realise the extent and size of the construction site at the moment. I, together with representatives from the Parish and Borough Council will continue to protect the interests of local people as much as we possibly can.

Over the last 12 months I've been asked by several Parish Councils to fund quite a lot of traffic monitoring on local roads which may be useful to provide statistics as to the direction of traffic, the speed of traffic and whether the vehicles are cars or lorries. We can use this when challenging some of the Highways England assumptions.

We must not forget that KCC has many other responsibilities, such as services for young people and older people, social services, schools, libraries, trading standards, planning, recycling, responsibilities for flood risk and so on. My role as a county councillor is also changing. I'm more and more involved with school appeals, school transport appeals and planning issues. I'm always happy to meet with local groups and parishioners to discuss any issue concerning the County Council and when necessary I will attend Parish Council meetings if there is a specific issue that I can help with. Recently I facilitated a number of events hosted by Matthew Scott, Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner. I hope that these events have proved useful. I have also been involved in the fight to protect our precious greenbelt. I am disappointed that the Borough Council hasn't pushed back on some of the housing targets handed down by central government. I'm also concerned that the necessary infrastructure funding is not going to be there to support the new houses that are being planned. I also don't think it's necessary to build on huge areas of our greenbelt. For example, if Gravesham agrees to the house build targets the government would like to see, there will not be enough senior school places in the Gravesham Rural areas. The same will apply for other important public services as well.

On a positive note, our local schools in Gravesham Rural are all improving with many achieving OFSTED ratings of good or excellent. This is been largely down to the hard work of the teaching staff and governors supported by Kent County Council.

My job is made so much easier by having six excellent Parish Councils and several Community Associations. As a County Councillor I am in Maidstone for about 2 days a week.

I chair two committees covering Policy and Resources and Property. I also serve on several other committees including Personal and the Kent Fire and Rescue Authority. I am always available for any parishioners who need help or advice with any of KCC services and my contact details are at the bottom of this report.

As a KCC Member, I have a discretionary grant available which next year is being reduced from £20,000 to £15,000. Wherever possible, I discuss with local groups or Parish Councils where best to allocate the funding which is usually spent on community projects or small-scale Highways work that might need doing.

Cllr Sweetland report cont'd

Over the last year, I have used the grant funding to:

- Help fund an educational summer camp for 1st Higham Scouts
- Funded various traffic surveys across Gravesham Rural (including the A227)
- Helped with the renovation of Harvel Village Pond
- Sponsored 'Picnic on the Green' at Meopham
- Refurbished the Memorial Hall kitchen at Istead Rise
- Provide a number of public access Defibrillators / AEDs around our villages.
- Provide road signs (No HGVs etc.), Yellow Salt /Grit road side bins, Verge posts etc.

- 9 KALC Matters – Police commissioner explained that penalty notices could now be issued by PCSO.
- 10 Correspondence/GDPR: Update Clerk  
Continued problems with Greenlands Parking email received regarding ongoing problems with inconsiderate parking, arranging for litter pick equipment and the report of a broken drain on Sole Street.
- 11 Matters Raised by Parish Councillors
- Cllr Booth – Parish Pump repairs would be improved by the cleaning the plaque or refreshing of the engraving. He also asked for any news on the Meadow House fence which will need maintaining to keep clear– there was nothing to report from the clerk.
  - Cllr Booth also mentioned that there were no more handy pages being delivered to households.
  - Cllr Haig –asked that local information be put in to the free magazine that goes out at Easter.
  - Cllr Dyer- Kent expanded slightly on the powers of the PCS.  
Powers to issue penalty notices, anti-social behaviour, to deal with drugs, alcohol and tobacco, to deal with vehicles and traffic and other powers to do with truanting, photography and the power to cordon areas.
- 12 Any Other Business  
Cllr Dymond mentioned - *Helping Older People Engage* – through creativity. Two free sessions have been offered to the Community. The college or the Monday Club may wish to book a session in May or June 2019 to celebrate the 'Age of Creativity' Festival - a fun, 'tea and creativity' social experience. This was an initiative sponsored by Canterbury City Council.

The Chairman also mentioned that the Parish won a Silver gilt award for the parish and that we would be going into the village competition this year and hope everyone will engage with the process and make the Parish look as wonderful as always highlighting its local identity, volunteer organisations and community spirit. She hopes to set up a cttee of volunteers around the village. There will be a garden safari taking place on June 16.

### **13 Finance**

#### Receipts

Repayment EDF bill from Sports Association £966.88

#### Cheques to be signed

Planning Conference KALC £72.00

Maintenance Man £120.00

Clerk Salary £301.00

Cllr Dyer accepted the Finance report and it was seconded by Cllr Booth.

### **The Chairman brought the public meeting to a close at 9.30pm**

Parish Councillor matters only

- Planning – the matter of the lack of feedback received from GBC was discussed and it was suggested the planning group sign up for automatic updates from the GBC website.
- Finance Report – the matter of ongoing issues with the water companies were discussed and the clerk gave an update on the situation. The clerk will also look at a new spreadsheet for her cashflow records in the coming financial year
- Training – The Chairman will be attending the next KALC Planning Conference

The meeting of Parish Councillors was closed at 9.45PM

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE ON 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019 IN ST MARY'S CHURCH ROOM SOLE STREET.