



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 5th October at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms

Present

Cllr Mike Booth (Chairman), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas,

Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Bennett Smith

Present

Charles Amis (Clerk)

2 Parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Mat Peterson-Pearce, Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC).

2. Minutes – The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th September were confirmed and proposed as a true record by Cllr Gabbitas and seconded by Cllr Haig

3. Declarations of Interest – None

4. To consider the External Auditors Report and Certificate for 2020-21 AGAR – The Clerk had circulated the External Auditors Report and Certificate prior to the meeting and all the parish councillors present had reviewed and were content with the papers.

5. Matters Arising from previous meeting of 5th September

Youth Club – The professional youth workers provided by The Grand will cost £1152 and the hire of the Meadow Rooms will cost £201.60. This is for eight sessions from 5th November 2021 to March 2022. All of the parish councillors who were present agreed for CPC to provide the funding for the youth club to restart. The condition of the equipment will also need to be checked. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to speak to the head teacher at Cobham Primary School. **Action:** Cllr Smith to speak to his wife regarding the equipment. **Action:** Clerk to organise a meeting with The Grand and the previous volunteer leaders.

Britain in Bloom – Cobham and Sole Street achieved silver gilt for the parish entry and Cobham achieved silver gilt for best village.

Cobham Primary School – 2021 intake – Cllr Peterson Pearce had written to Meopham School about their intake policy but had not received a response.

6. KCC Matters

Flooding on Halfpence Lane – **Action:** Clerk to arrange a site visit with Earl Bourner from KCC and the parish councillors. It was suggested that the ditches at the side of Halfpence Lane needed to be cleared.

Sole Street suffers from flooding by the little shop and the Yeoman's House. Cllr Peterson-Pearce has volunteered to be the Flood Warden.

7. GBC Matters

Proposed car park on West Park – A piece of land has been identified at the West Park off Halfpence Lane as a possible place for a car park. Cobham does not currently have enough parking for visitors to the village plus the parents picking up their children from school. There are many visitors for the sports events that take place at the playing fields. West Park is owned by GBC who are checking that a car park can be constructed there. It was also asked if the farmer would open the parking along Lodge Lane.

8. KALC/NALC

Cllr Dymond had attended an interesting meeting about the KCC Vision Zero Event where the road and traffic technology is used to make roads and driving safer and would benefit Cobham and Sole Street.

9. Planning

Ian Brown the planning enforcement officer at GBC, had produced a helpful update.

Norbond Site – Retrospective planning application. Cllr Rice had chased GBC Planning Department for a response to an earlier letter sent by CPC. The Planning Department at GBC have said that the application will either be decided or referred to the Planning Committee by the end of November.

White Post Farm – Still pending determination with the Planning Inspectorate.

Orchard Cottage, Round Street – GBC are investigating.

Bluebell Farm, Round Street – GBC are waiting for the applicant to make a new application.

Telecoms Mast – Batts Road – CPC are happy with the third iteration of this planning application which took into account comments from CPC and GBC on the previous proposed locations for the site of the mast.

Corner Cottage, Round Street – the revised garage is smaller. There was no objection from CPC and the application is currently with GBC for determination.

30 The Street – no objection in principle. There are no confirmed measurements of the size of garden room and this needs to be confirmed. **Action:** Clerk to confirm the details with GBC

The Laurels, Sole Street – This had been approved in 2012.

Neighbourhood Plan – **Action:** Cllr Mason to prepare something for the November meeting.

10. Traffic Group

Darnley Arms – KCC have come back with a proposal to improve the safety by the Darnley Arms. This needs final approval by senior managers in KCC.

Traffic monitoring tubes – KCC have supplied the traffic speed data to CPC and the mean speed is 19.5 mph, while the 85th Percentile, which is the speed at which 85% of vehicles are driving at or under, is 24.4 mph. According to KCC this is a road operating as it should, self-enforcing the speed limit and KCC do not see the need for any additional measures. **Action:** Clerk to follow up with Cllr Rice.

Bollards on the corner by the roundabout – The bollards had been added to the Highway Improvement Plan. KCC will be installing concrete blocks as a temporary measure but more appropriate bollards will be installed in the future.

Lower Thames Crossing – Cllr Booth and Cllr Dyer had been meeting with Eva Simunovic. CPC have asked LTC to clarify how the 416 bus route will be impacted during the Brewers Road bridge closures. However this will not take place until 2024.

Speedwatch Group – The Speedwatch Group will be holding a training day on Monday 11th October outside Cobham Primary School. There was now a team of seven participants.

Village Gateways for Cobham – There was nothing to report.

11. Village Crime Group – The PCSOs were unable to attend the last meeting as they had an urgent matter to deal with. The Neighbourhood Watch contact had attended but it had been difficult to encourage parishioners to join the meetings. **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce to put up a poster to encourage people to attend the crime meetings. The coffee morning that had been hosted by the local neighbourhood watch contact in Sole Street was successful. The next crime meeting will be in two weeks. There had definitely been a reduction in nuisance off road motorbikes plus motorbikes on Wednesday since Operation Gurkha had started. The PCSOs will be holding another surgery either at the Meadow Rooms or St Mary's Church Rooms.

12. Playing Fields

Children's Corner – Cllr Peterson-Pearce and Cllr Booth will be repairing the matting on Sunday and the missing swing will be rehung.

13. Public Toilets – The Clerk had circulated a quote of £715 for a contribution box which seemed to be too expensive. There was a concern that people could be stuck in the toilets when the electronic locks had locked the door. **Action:** Clerk to investigate getting a card reader for users to pay to access the toilets. **Action:** Clerk to find other suppliers of timed electronic locks.

14. St Marys Church Rooms – The St Mary's Church Funding Group had asked the architect to modify the specification. The Friends of Kent Churches suggested breaking down the repair work on the extension, windows, roof and ground work. The Funding Group is waiting to hear if they are going to receive a £10,000 grant from the Rochester Missional Properties Fund. The funding group is looking for second hand kitchen units. It had been decided to delay the work on the garden area. The National Trust will be cutting back the conifers behind St Mary's Church Rooms and the Funding Group had asked if the garage could be used whilst the work was going on with the Church Rooms. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to check where the drain pipe attached to the garage that belongs to 1 Vine Cottage drains to.

15. Electric Vehicle Charging Points – The clerk had sent an application for funding from KCC and was waiting to hear back.

16. Social Media – Website & Facebook – Cllr Peterson-Pearce was working on this.

17. Other Village Matters

Village Sign – CPC need to decide if the parish wants village signs. The cost of installing a village sign could be around £7,000 and signs would be needed for Cobham and Sole Street and possibly Ifield. This could be put into next year's budget. It was suggested that a survey be carried out for parishioners to give their views using Survey Monkey. CPC could ask Eva Simunovic if the village sign could be funded by the Lower Thames Crossing legacy fund. **Action:** Clerk to check the minutes in the archive from 10 years ago.

Meadow Rooms – The regular hirers have mostly returned to use the Meadow Rooms and the number of bookings remains high. The Meadow Rooms are supporting a couple of charity events. The new cleaning company, KMCM Services Ltd, are providing a good service. The cash reserves are at a solid level and sufficient to maintain the operations.

Footpaths – The clerk had reported the actions from the previous meeting to the KCC Rights of Way Officer. **Action:** Cllr Booth and Cllr Dyer would check if the work had taken place.

War Memorial – The new park fence and gate had been provided and installed by the National Trust. **Action:** Clerk to write a thank you letter to Jonathan Ireland and copy to Rob Wemyss and Sacha Dyer.

The Royal Engineers Association had written to ask where they could park for war memorial re-enactment day. **Action:** Cllr Smith to ask the landlady at the Ship PH if their car park could be used.

Community Bus – The trustees of the Meopham Welfare Committee had decided at their meeting to stop running the Community Bus. It was asked if new trustees could take over the running of the mini bus and the leasing of a new vehicle. The current bus is used every day by various local community groups. **Action:** Chris Broadley to ask Phil King for the details of the other community groups who use the community bus.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee – It is likely that Cllr Dymond would be leading on this. CPC should try to avoid clashing with other events organised by the other nearby parish councils.

Verge Cutting – The clerk had reported the overgrown hedges and verges to KCC and is waiting for them to carrying the work.

Kentish Wine Vault – Cllr Rice had attended the presentation at the Luddesdown Parish Council meeting. **Action:** Clerk to follow up with Cllr Rice.

18. Parishioners Comments – A parishioner said the slope up to the church path was very steep. Previously there had been an opportunity to ease the slope when Southern Water were laying new sewer pipes but KCC and Southern Water could not agree and it was put back as it was. It would take a lot of work to level off and steps would not be practical for access to the church. The nearby bus stop could be moved to another position. CPC will be talking to KCC and could be included in the Highway Improvement Plan.

Another Parishioner spoke about the excessive traffic speeds along Sole Street and asked if speed bumps and if the pavements could be built out. It was particularly blind coming across the railway bridge. In the past CPC had asked residents to give up part of their front garden so that a pavement could be installed but they had refused. The proposed pavements would be added to the Highways Improvement Plan and the Traffic Working Group will take forward. KCC don't have the budget for

this year. **Action:** Cllr Gabbitas to follow up with a local resident had been seriously injured in an accident at Sole Street.

19. Correspondence & Announcements

20. Finance – Cheque Reports – Cllr Dyer proposed the cheque report and Cllr Haig seconded. It was asked if CPC should have a Finance Working Group as per the comments. **Action:** Clerk to speak to the Clerk at Vigo regarding their finance group.

21. AOB – items from Councillors – The War Memorial Re-enactment is not a remembrance event and no wreaths will be laid. The ceremony at the war memorial will run from 10.30am until 11.30am. There will be an exhibition in the Meadow Rooms at 12pm. There will be a series of three talks from 2.30pm in the Meadow Rooms. The first talk will be about Sir Herbert Baker and given by Michael Baker. Sacha Dyer or Rob Wemyss will give a talk on their work around the war memorial and Cllr Gabbitas will give a talk about CPC.

Meeting closed at 21.10.

22. Next Meeting will be on Tuesday 9th November at the Meadow Rooms