



Minutes for the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9th May 2023

Present – Cllr Mike Booth, Chairman, Cllr Steve Dyer, Vice Chairman,

Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Bennet Smith, Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Zoe Gee

Cllr Samir Jassal, GBC, Cllr Dakota Dibben, 1 Parishioner, Charles Amis, Clerk

1. The parish councillors signed their disclosure of pecuniary interest forms plus their acceptance forms prior to the start of the meeting.
2. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Russ Nichols, Matthew Peterson-Pearce
3. The Chairman and Vice Chairman stood for election. There were no other nominations. Cllr Booth was re-elected as the Chairman, proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Mason. Cllr Dyer was re-elected as the Vice Chairman, proposed by Cllr Booth and seconded by Cllr Pryor.
4. Declarations of Interest: None
5. Vacancy - co-option of Matthew Peterson-Pearce: Matthew Peterson-Pearce did not attend the meeting
6. The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 7th March 2023 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Pryor. The minutes for the Annual Parish Assembly were proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Dymond.

We have 4 Parish Councillors representing the Cobham Ward & 5 Parish Councillors representing Sole Street & Ifield Ward who are elected every 4 years at the same time as the Gravesham Borough Council elections – the next election will be May 2027.

Cllr Booth agreed to step down as the lead councillor for Cobham and Cllr Dymond took over as lead councillor for Cobham with Cllr Pryor, Cllr Smith, and Cllr Booth.

Cllr Dyer remains the lead councillor for Sole Street with Cllr Gee, Cllr Mason and Cllr Nichols.

The **Planning Group** consists of Cllr Dyer, Cllr Booth and Cllr Dymond. Cllr Gee and Cllr Mason offered to join the Planning Group.

The **Playing Fields Group** consists of Cllr Booth, Cllr Dyer, Cllr Smith and Matthew Peterson-Pearce. Cllr Dyer asked to leave the Playing Fields Group.

Traffic Group: It was suggested that Cllr Nichols takes over the lead from Cllr Booth. The traffic group currently consists of Cllr Mason (Lead), Cllr Booth, Cllr Dyer, Cllr Smith, Cllr Pryor plus Tony Rice. Cllr Dymond agreed to step down from the group.

The **Footpaths Group** consists of Cllr Dymond and Cllr Pryor. No changes proposed.

The **Local Crime Working Group** consists of Cllr Dymond and Cllr Pryor. No changes proposed

6. Parishioners Comments – None

Meeting continues

Crime: All of the parish councillors were encouraged to sign up to My Community Voice. Two males were arrested for stealing a motorbike. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to ask the Police & Crime Commissioner if My Community Voice could be more specifically focused to parishes.

Round Street Bus Stop: The clerk had written to Stephen Pay, Planning & Operations Manager for Public Transport at KCC. It was asked why the location is too dangerous for a bus to stop and pick up passengers. Michelle Norris had circulated the updated Highways Improvement Plan.

Cobham Church Bus Stop: KCC Highways have said they will not move the bus stop to opposite the Leatherbottle PH. The width of the road and the pavement are an issue. Also the pavement is not high enough. **Action:** Clerk to write to Chris Broadley.

Village Signs: Mat Peterson-Pearce to come back with a firm proposal with cost and design. It was asked if there should be three village signs within the parish at Cobham, Sole Street and Ifield. There was significant enthusiasm for a village sign in Cobham. **Action:** Clerk to email Cllr Peterson-Pearce for the latest update.

St Mary's Church Rooms: The Leader of the Designated Funds Committee for the Lower Thames Crossing Mitigation Fund has agreed to give £150,000 towards the restoration of the St Mary's Church Rooms. It will take eight weeks for the funding to be transferred. **Action:** Cllr Booth to update the Local Funding Group.

Cobham Pre-school has received £4,000 for a garden makeover and Cobham Brownies and Guides received £500 all from the same source. CPC continue to request funding towards the proposed footpath beside Sole Street and the Children's Corner.

Youth Club: The Grand still need to send a Service Level Agreement form for CPC to sign. There have no sessions during May as Cobham Amateur Dramatic Society have booked the Meadow Rooms at the same time. **Action:** The Grand to send posters for the event at Gravesend riverside.

Jeskyns and Young Farmers Club: The Young Farmers Club's permit had expired in Autumn 2022. Forestry England had not renewed their permit as they had safety concerns. Forestry England had given the Young Farmers Club a grace period to resolve concerns on how the club were operating and were able to remain at Jeskyns. However these concerns were not addressed and Forestry England has served the Young Farmers Club a notice to quit.

There was still an issue where dog owners were not taking control of their dogs at Jeskyns. Forestry England had put up notices and had put reminders on to their Facebook page. The current situation is discouraging horse riders from using Jeskyns. CPC will continue to monitor the situation.

Munchies: Munchies in the Meadow will not be taking place this year. The community shop was celebrating 10 years since opening.

Bonham Hayes Trust: The clerk had submitted six nominations to GBC.

Owletts: The Baker Family are moving out of Owletts in June. The National Trust are looking to increase the rent significantly. Owletts had received 300 visitors since reopening in April. **Action:** Clerk to add the letter from the National Trust to the CPC website.

Planning Group

Norbond Site – With the Planning Inspectorate

White Post Farm – GBC Planning Enforcement have given the owner time to move out.

Cranborne Farm – Tony Rice had a meeting with Planning Enforcement in March. Tony Rice had sent an email to Planning Enforcement asking for an update. **Action:** Cllr Gee to forward the email from Tony Rice.

Bluebell Barn, Copt Hall Road – nothing to report.

GBC Local Design Code – It is unlikely that the Controlling Group at GBC will release the local plan until sometime after the local elections.

39 The Street, Cobham – no objections. Cllr Booth declared an interest.

Hartland House, Sole Street – Still with the Planning Group.

2 Manor Court, Sole Street – No objections

Action: Cllr Jassal to arrange to meet with Nick Brown, GBC, to discuss the current planning enforcement. CPC to raise planning issues with Cllr Jassel and Cllr Dibben between meetings. Cllr Jassel can call in planning applications if needed.

Traffic Group

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) – **Action:** Cllr Nichols to arrange a meeting for the Traffic Group.

Village Gateway Sign for Halfpence Lane – KCC had previously designed a village gateway sign for £4,500. Only half of the existing village sign is still there and is buried in the undergrowth. **Action:** Clerk to write to Michelle Norris and ask for an update on costs and design.

Weight Restriction on Halfpence Lane – There is a 7.5 tonne weight restriction sign except for access plus a blue no HGVs sign. There is also a 7.5 tonne weight restriction sign at the junction by Owletts. The round sign with a red border is sign that must be obeyed but the blue background sign warns vehicles that the road is unsuitable. There are still some HGVs driving through Cobham. HGVs needing access to certain premises is normally permitted.

Tube Counter in The Street: **Action:** Clerk to ask KCC Highways when the tubes will be installed.

SID Software – Cllr Smith had changed the batteries for the SID. The SID is currently on Sole Street.

Playing Fields Group

Children's Corner – Refurbishment Update – There was no update.

Car Park Refurbishment – Contributions – The Sports Association had contributed £2000 and Cobham Primary School had contributed £1000. Contributions are still being sort from the Parent Teachers Association and the Bowls Club. **Action:** Clerk to send another email to the Bowls Club with an invoice.

Public Toilets – Southern Water outstanding account – Business Stream/Southern Water has said that CPC and the Bowls Club owe £4,000. The accounts have been frozen for 35 days although Southern Water have not yet sent an engineer to resolve the issues. Business Stream need to supply separate invoices for the water meter at the public toilets and the water meter for the bowls club. The water supply is fed from the meter in the school playground to the public toilets and bowls club. Cobham Primary School receives a separate bill for their water supply.

Action: To chase up the company to complete the work on the gutters.

Parishioners Comments – None

Meeting continues in Private

Cheque Report: The cheque report was proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Dymond. The cheque report included the following cheques. All of the Parish Councillors had received a copy of the CPC Cash flow Spreadsheet before the meeting.

Cheques signed since last meeting

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
22/3/2023	Gravesham Network Development CIC (The Gr@nd)	Professional Youth workers for Cobham Youth club	£1,020
19/4/2023	Fastnet International Ltd	Domain registration renewal 2023/24	£12
25/4/2023	Clerk	Mileage – 20 th - 27 th April 2023	£47.80
25/4/2023	Clerk	Salary 1 st -30 th April “023	£845.10
27/4/2023	Clerk	Purchase of 2 display books from Robert Dyas	£18.98

Cheques to be signed at the meeting

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
1/5/2023	Smooth & Rugged Landscapes	Cut grass at playground area on 13 th April.	£35
9/5/2023	Clerk	Mileage	£12.87

AOB – items from Parish Councillors

Sweeps Hole Pond: KCC have repaired the fence following the accident. **Action:** Clerk to write to KCC to ask for the fence to be painted.

Lower Thames Crossing: The LTC steering group had submitted a minor refinement to their plans and a consultation will run from 17th May to 16th June. The refinement affects Essex where the tunnel boring machine will start and the spoil from the works will be moved to Essex. The examination deadline will be on 18th July.

Cllr Pryor felt the Cobham noticeboard was looking tired. The verge at the corner of Lawrence Drive was looking overgrown. The grass had not been cut due to ‘No Mow May’ to encourage biodiversity and will be cut in June. GBC had cleared the gutters.

Cllr Booth wanted the agenda to be put on to the website earlier and the minutes to be completed more quickly.

Next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday 6th June 2023 in the St Mary's Church Rooms.