

**Minutes of a meeting of Cobham Parish Council Meeting.
Monday 7th October 2019 at 7.30PM
St Mary's Church Room.**

PRESENT

Cllr Mike Booth (Chairman), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas,
Cllr Rob Pryor, Cllr Ben Smith

In attendance

Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Community Warden, Paul Hassell, Mrs Tina Sampson (Clerk)

1. (42) Apologies for absence

Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Jessica Elliott, Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC)

2. (43) Declarations of Interest - None

3. Minutes: to confirm the minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting of 2 September 2019. Minutes agreed as true record proposed by Cllr Steve Dyer and seconded by Cllr Rosemary Dymond

4. (44) Matters arising from the previous meeting.

Emergency plan review – Clerk is still updating

5. (45) Working Group Reports

Planning Group - Planning Applications & Recommendations

Councillor Dyer read through the recent planning applications

20190822

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Demolition of existing kitchen, wc and entrance lobby extension and erection of new entrance extension on Manor Road frontage (south elevation); erection of kitchen, store and wc extension at the rear (west elevation); construction of entrance ramps and paved areas; replacement roof and new and replacement fenestration.

LOCATION St Marys Church Room, Sole Street, Cobham, Gravesend – No objections

20190944

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission reference no. 20141082 for the use of the land for the stationing of a caravan for security purposes; to allow the caravan to be located elsewhere on site.

LOCATION White Post Farm, White Post Lane, Cobham, Gravesend - OBJECTION

20190310

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Continued use of mobile home and site office.

LOCATION Land South East of Cozendon Wood, Copthall Road,
Cobham, Gravesend Kent.

- OBJECTION

Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman confirmed that stories around building being agreed on the Orchard land on Sole Street is an unfounded and a rumour.

He emphasised the need for the Parish Council to put a neighbourhood plan together, a meeting to be arranged.

GBC – over-ruling CPC advice

The Chairman also raised the matter of the Parish Council's planning permission being reversed without reference or advice to the CPC. ACTION – Clerk to contact GBC planning team.

6. (46) Cobham Playing Fields Group

Bowls Club planning application– progress report. Cobham PC has signed off on this confirming our agreement for the work to go ahead, allowing the club to proceed and receive the funding it applied for from Veolia.

Southern Water – the billing issues are still ongoing the Clerk is still in contact with Southern Water/Business Stream

Public Toilets - The Clerk had contacted the Treasury to confirm that business rates on public toilets are to be removed, but the Bill is currently awaiting its final reading in Parliament. It is hoped that the business rates will not need to be paid next year.

7. (47) Local Traffic Working Group

Progress Report – Matt Mason unfortunately was unable to make the meeting, so sent a brief update. “In terms of the traffic assessment that is with me still as I had to cancel the session planned for early September.” The traffic group will now meet with a Traffic Consultant on 15th October.

Lower Thames Crossing – Cllr Booth has the new large Map

LTC/ Parish Council a meeting took place and concerns over increased traffic on Henhurst and Sole Street were raised with LTC. Changes have been made to the junction but not all the information has been shared with the PC yet.

Cllr Rice explained that LTC are not sharing all their information until the Development Consent Order is given (DCO). Cllr Rice and Cllr Bob Lane met with the LTC liaison people and they saw some of the issues of traffic in the village for themselves. Cllr Rice said it was important for the PC to get all its arguments straight in advance of the DCO. For information regarding the project visit <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/lower-thames-crossing-home/> It was also suggested that a borough wide meeting be set up in January to bring together interested parties, KCC, Local PCs and GBC Councillors to ensure everyone is informed of the DCO process. It was suggested that a list of questions and concerns be pulled together in preparation.

Village - Road Signage review. – Cllr Rice has pulled together a draft report regarding the signage review, this will be discussed at the meeting of the Local Traffic Group on the 15th October. The chairman had heard that residents would like to increase the number of bollards and they are happy to fund some. This will form part of the report to be produced by the appointed traffic consultant.

The Chairman also raised the matter of the road closure of The Street during Half Term for repairs to areas of the road surface. 21st October.

Action- Clerk to post info of closure on the website.

Buses in Cobham – Issues of large busses travelling through the village. Cllr Rice went to see the Director of Red Route, they were awarded the contract to transport the children by KCC. The use of double decker buses is a temporary measure and normally single decker buses are used when possible, but this is still an issue because of the width of the vehicle in the village. Drivers of the buses are told not to mount the kerb. The Parish Council asked if a smaller bus could be used for non-school travel and asked whether KCC should look for a new operator because it had been heard that the existing operator is selling his business.

Community warden....Paul Hassell, our community warden highlighted the need to stay vigilant as some residents in Higham had recently been targeted by a scammer pretending to be from Southern Water asking for entry into homes to test the water by taking photographs of glasses of water, while all the time checking around the house for entry points and items of value. The man is aged between 40-50 and approx. 5'6" tall. He uses a fake ID.

Additionally, Paul mentioned a Black Corsa with a damaged nearside front wing driving around Cobham/Sole Street late at night by two youths in baseball caps. The car has been reported as acting suspiciously. There is also a grey transit with one blue door that has been fly-tipping in the area, the warden would like the registration number if anyone sees it.

There was then a discussion about using 'Country Eye' to report rubbish and fly-tipping. <https://countryeye.co.uk/>

8.(48) Other Reports

KCC Matters – Bryan Sweetland- Not present

GBC Matters – Cllr Tony Rice reported on behalf of the KCC and GBC and explained that Paul Carter has now stood down as the Leader of Kent County Council and has been replaced by Rodney Gough taken.

Cllr Rice met with Environmental services about fly tipping. Residents cannot see any action being taken but GBC undertook 2,200 'grabs' last year and that is down on last year.

Cllr Rice explained that there are three layers of fly tipping.

- Rogue Traders
- Resident's Anti-Social Behaviour
- Organised Crime from London

Agencies are now working together and are having action days, monitoring vehicles. There is a possibility of Parish Councils using CCTV (consider for Budget next year). KCC spent £200,000 in 2018. The local MP is looking into the problem and putting pressure on GBC.

Cllr Rice reported on the Cabinet decisions around housing. GBC was found to be underdelivering and action plan was needed. GBC had hoped to deliver 95% of their target for the year but only delivered 62%. GBC said that there was not enough land supply and they are putting pressure on developers to use existing brown field sites which have already been granted development rights.

Cllr Rice said that, whatever happens, in about four years GBC will be looking at the Green Belt boundaries. One of the Parish Councillors asked what was driving the need for housing? It is thought the drive is based on growth figures. Central Government decides the figure and if Borough Councils do not meet the target Central Government will step in and dictate. More evidence that we need to be developing our own village plan for housing.

Chairmen's Group – Cllr Dyer attended the Parish Council's Chairman meeting in September.

The Parish Council supplied some questions around planning and GBC answered:

- Update request from GBC on progress on the 8,000 homes to be built.

This question is considered to relate to requesting an update on the Local Plan Core Strategy Partial Review and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document. As advised at Cabinet (9 September) by the Leader of the Council, the Executive are keen for progress to be made with the Local Plan. In that context, work on the Local Plan is being progressed with the next milestone being that the Stage 2 consultation (Regulation 18) being undertaken in early 2020.

The Stage 2 consultation will need to take account of changes made by the current Government to the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Regulations since the Stage 1 Consultation was undertaken in 2018.

- Update request on progress for already approved planning applications with developers such as The Police station site.

This update has been restricted to some of the larger sites of the Borough only:

Ebbsfleet – Springhead: Countryside are currently on-site building

Ebbsfleet – Northfleet Rise: Awaiting clarity from Government and Ebbsfleet Development Corporation regarding how they are seeking to bring forward Northfleet Rise.

Ebbsfleet – Northfleet Embankment West: The landowner is still in discussions with a prospective residential developer regarding the sale of the site

Ebbsfleet – Northfleet Embankment East: Keepmoat Homes are on site and the first residential completions are expected in May 2020

Town Centre – Clifton Slipways: A new planning application is anticipated following an exhibition for alternative proposals held in August

Town Centre – M-Block: A new planning application has been submitted to the Council, with a Regulatory Board level decision anticipated to be made in the next couple of months.

Town Centre – Heritage Quarter: A new planning application is anticipated in the coming months.

Town Centre – Lord Street: Following successful marketing for housing-led development on behalf of the Council, at Cabinet in February, the Director (Housing and Regeneration) was authorised to further negotiate with the selected developer and enter into a contract of sale, undertaking all necessary actions to achieve this.

Town Centre – Gravesend Police Station: The site has been marketed for sale by the Joint LPA Receivers

North East Gravesend – Dalefield Way: Bellway Homes are currently on-site building

Coldharbour Road – Bovis and Persimmon Homes are currently on site building the first phase.

- How does having a neighbourhood plan for each parish help with planning control and should we engage with planning dept. as part of constructing a plan for each parish.

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Qualifying bodies should plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside these strategic policies. More specifically paragraph 29 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.

(NB. The above 2 paragraphs are extracts from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#what-is-neighbourhood-planning>)

GBC is involved and will make decisions at key stages of the process, such as approving the neighbourhood area within which the Neighbourhood Plan will have effect. It will also organise the independent examination of the plan and the community referendum that is held at the end of the process. It is suggested that each interested Parish considers the information provided by the Royal Town Planning Institute and others on Neighbourhood Planning e.g. <https://locality.org.uk/services-tools/neighbourhood-planning/> before deciding whether to embark on a Neighbourhood Plan. Such websites include useful information on support available, resources needed, project management, the role of a neighbourhood plan, the examination process etc.

KALC – Cllr Rosemary Dymond reminded everyone about the AGM on the 30th November, which she will be attending. Cllr Dymond explained that The Kent Police Citizens in Policing Department want to promote their numerous volunteer strands. These are the volunteer roles;

Special constabulary – more mature volunteers needed.

Community Policing Volunteers – launched in 2018 it now has more sub strands – PCSO/Equine/Joint Response Unit/Neighbourhood/Security/S.E. 4x4/ Aviation / Coastal/ Cadet Leader.

Police Service Volunteers – support internal departments.

Volunteer Police Cadets.

Gravesham Rights of Way Committee (GROWC)

No reported pathway obstructions. Next meeting of GROWC at the civic centre is 23rd October.

The Tree Walk in Cobham Woods is highly recommended by councillors Dymond, Gabbitas and Haig who attended at the invitation of the National Trust

There is also a Transport Conference on the 26th Oct. Action -The clerk to circulate details.

Rural Parishes Forum – No meeting

9. (49) Other Matters

Parish Notice Boards – replacement, Councillor Elliott provided an update as follows

The cost of replacing the boards we have with something of the same size with external doors on is circa £1500 + VAT

I've not found anyone yet who does an external, post mounted board that does not have the glass doors on. Based on the above, her questions are as follows;

Do we want the doors and who is going to hold the key? Do we want to charge for advertisements? How would we administer this if we did?

Best to avoid having to administer what would be small amounts of money. The boards are useful for local community activities.

Would smaller boards be acceptable? If so, how many A4 size notes would we want to display?

We cannot afford the oak boards, so it would need to be metal. If the PC decides to proceed, it would need to choose a colour for the frame, a colour for the inside felt, and lettering/design for the wording at the top.

Cobham – Lead Councillor Rosemary Dymond

The Village Pump Reservoir – Listing – (Cllr Mason to update) No Result as yet- keep on agenda

Poplar Trees in Battle Street (update Clerk)

The chairman wrote to the owner, who explained that they had asked a woodman to look at the trees. So far, he has cut all the ivy off the trees and had a good look at them. He said that four of them had been damaged by a lightning strike and should be felled. He has also

identified four other trees that need to come down. A date is still to be arranged. Carry on to next month's agenda.

Gas in Cobham - KCC Energy & Low Emissions Consultation (Update -Cllr Elliott) keep on the agenda

Planting in Cobham – bulbs & containers on chicanes. The quote Cllr Dymond obtained for the self-watering planters was too much and would have to be considered for next year's budget. Cllr Dymond has found someone who could make some wooden planters as a temporary measure, no price was given but the purchase was given the go ahead by the council. Cllr Rosemary Dymond also purchased 260 bulbs which includes 130 bulbs for Sole Street, Cllr Dymond is keen for volunteers to help with the planting.

Sole Street - Lead Councillor. Steve Dyer

St Marys Church Room – the planning application has been agreed- nothing further to add. Water Leak outside Sole Street House – resident confirmed that this leak had never been seen in the past. Action -Cllr Rice and the clerk will continue to escalate.

Individual councillor reports

Meadow Rooms – Cllr Gabbitas explained that a recent party had overrun the 11pm curfew. The matter was raised with the hirer and the time will be emphasised in future.

200 people went to see ET for 'Movie on the Meadow'

The Meadow Rooms are getting some help for the gardens and employing a caretaker for a few hours a week. The Meadow Room committee will meet on 8th October.

Footpaths- nothing to report from Cllr Dymond

Church and Church rooms- Cllr Haig nothing much to report but someone will take on cleaning the Church Room. Some concerns regarding the new welcome mat was raised as it was considered a possible trip hazard.

Jeskyns Cllr Smith had nothing to report.

Parish Notice Boards, Councillor Dymond volunteered to take forward the matter of the notice boards.

Cllr Dymond also congratulated the Parish of, once again, achieving a Silver Gilt award for the Britain in Bloom competition. Cllr Dymond will present certificates to the station, shops, pubs, and Scripps farm. The judges felt that the Front of House competition was a very good community idea, he commented on the good community feel and highlighted how well maintained the war memorial was. He felt that the areas of improvement were the positioning of planters, re-engraving of the inscription behind the pump. The Leather Bottle also received a special mention for its planting.

The gentleman living at the School House won the parish Front of House Competition. A parishioner asked if the results could be published in the Parish Magazine. It was agreed that the free Christmas edition would be ideal.

Cllr Rice is happy for Cllr Dymond to remind him next year about GBC cutting the grass before the judging.

The overgrown Yew Tree by the war memorial needs cutting back in early spring next year. Cllr Booth has obtained one quote for approx. £1,500; 3 quotes are needed, Cllr Dymond will obtain a further quote.

Remembrance Day service? Cllr Dymond will take forward. Vicar to run service.

Meeting Suspended for

10. (50) Parishioners Comments at 9.06pm- Nothing raised from the floor.

CPC Meeting Continues in Private:

Correspondence

During the previous month the clerk dealt with the following:

The removal of trees on a property.

Highways have said that they will not put a mirror at the corner of Camer Park Rd as it is not an accident hot spot.

The Clerk checked with fellow clerks in relation to their use of IT consultants – the response was mixed; however, the Chairman would like to employ a consultant to assist Councillors with the difficulties they are experiencing with the new email system.

The Clerk had been contacted about rubbish being dumped on White Post Lane Field which has now been reported to Gravesham

Received a report of a dead fox on Round Street- reported to GBC for clearing.

Training – Clerk to attend another Cilca course- this one is free. Cllr Pryor to attend the transport conference, clerk to organise.

Items raised by Councillors

Cllr Smith mentioned that the mirror on the corner of Henhurst Road at Jeskyns Court is broken – Action Clerk to report to Highways.

Cllr Dyer explained that he had not had the opportunity to discuss the overgrown hedge on Manor Road with the homeowner, but he will take forward.

There is a NHS consultation about where the new walk in centre should be located, details have been put on to the website and the Notice Boards. Councillors can respond as individuals, but Cllr Dyer will respond on behalf of the Parish Council. Parish Councillors agreed they would like to see the centre located at the Minor Injuries centre in Gravesend.

Cllr Dymond said she had been pleased to see the drain cleaning taking place in Cobham.

Finance Report - cheques to be signed

Came & Co Insurance £1,144.52

Smooth and Rugged Landscapes August 2x cuts cut - £60.00

Clerks pay September - £388.77

Maintenance Man – July, Aug, Sept £390

HMRC Payment – £254
Smooth and Rugged Landscapes -September Cut £30
Fastnet Annual rental renewal £115.06
Meadow Room hire payment (clerk meeting)- £16

Cancelled payment

Post office/GBC for election costs – re-issued cheque - £722.31 – Cheque destroyed-
Payment deferred.

**THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL HELD ON 4th
NOVEMBER 2019 IN ST MARY'S CHURCH ROOM, SOLE STREET.**

Meeting finishes 9.30 pm