

**Cobham Parish Council Meeting.  
Monday 6<sup>TH</sup> January 2020 at 7.30pm  
The Meadow Room Cobham.**

**Present**

Cllr Mike Booth (Chairman), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Jessica Elliott,  
Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Rob Pryor  
In attendance:  
Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Mrs Tina Sampson (Clerk)  
5 parishioners

- 1) (68) **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Ben Smith
- 2) (69) **Declarations of Interest** - None
- 3) (70) **Minutes:** It was confirmed that the minutes of the Budget Meeting of 2 December 2019 was a true record of the meeting and was proposed by Councillor Steve Dyer and seconded by Cllr Rob Pryor.

4) (71) **Agreement of the 2020/21 Precept.**

The Chairman asked the Parish Councillors if they agreed to the adoption of the budget & proposed precept of £21,000. The Chairman proposed the budget and it was seconded by Cllr Margaret Haig.

Action: Clerk to request the precept from GBC

5) (72) **Matters arising from the previous meeting.**

(a) Water Leak outside Sole Street House

Works are scheduled for week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> January. KCC plan to excavate within the carriageway first between there and the property boundary. If nothing found, they will extend the excavation into the garden by about 1m. If the leak is not found to be emanating from a pipe KCC may lay a pipe to allow the water to join the large drain-away.

(b) Poplar Trees on Battle Street

The clerk explained that the property owner is still trying to arrange for the work to be undertaken and apologised for the delay. **Action:** carry over to the March meeting.

(c) War Memorial.

Cllr Dymond is still awaiting a response from the relevant authority regarding adding a name to the war memorial, the person is already named on another war memorial so it seems that it is unlikely that permission will be given- **NFA**

(d) Yew Trees at the War Memorial

The Parish Council agreed that the trees did need attention and two quotes had been obtained, the amount is similar, and the Chairman wishes to consider both quotes, but it was agreed that the work should be undertaken. **Action:** Chair to make decision on which contractor use.

(f) The Village Pump Reservoir.

Cllr Mason explained that the reservoir is not listed and is not included in the deeds for Meadow House. The last record of the reservoir date back to 1902 when it was still in the ownership of Lord Darnley but disappears from the records in 1986 when the Pump was taken on by English Heritage. **Action:** Clerk to investigate further.

(g) Repairs to tablet inscription and wall (Cllr Smith)

Ben spoke with a local man and he would be able to do the work in April – at a reasonable cost of approx. £150 per day. **Action** carry forward to Feb meeting.

(h) Buses - Cllr Booth will contact both KCC and Cllr Sweetland to discuss the number of busses going through the village. **Action:** carry forward to the Feb meeting.

(i) Signage

The Chairman thanked Cllr Rice for the survey work he did and his subsequent report. Some of the signs in Cobham and Sole Street have been cleaned or replaced, but Cllr Rice will undertake an audit on what has been done. He explained that some of the requested works will need to be part of the traffic plan.

**Action:** Cllr Rice will keep the traffic group and CPC updated.

(j) Water bills at the Playing Fields – The discussions about the meters and billing is still ongoing with Business Stream and Southern Water. **Action:** Clerk to update at the March meeting

(k) Notice Boards – Cllr Dymond confirmed that the carpenter will provide the replacement board at a cost of £575 this does not include the sign writing and she is still to discuss design. The Parish Council agreed that the work would be carried out in warmer weather and that Cobham's notice board would be replaced first. **Action:** Clerk to place order.

(l) Planters – Cllr Dymond has already paid for the wood for 16 planters – these are being made now as the carpenter is a volunteer the amount to be paid for his work is not clear. Cllr Dymond to find out. Once a planter is made permission on where the planters can go will be sought from KCC highways and GBC to ensure they are suitable for a conservation area. **Action:** Cllr Elliott will consider where the planters can be placed in Sole Street.

6) (73) **Report from the Community Warden** – Paul was not present

7) (74) **Working Group Reports**

#### **Planning Group**

20191204 Cranbourne Farm, Copthall Road, Cobham, Gravesend Kent (awaiting comments)

20191199 Application for a minor material amendment to planning Stonehigh, Round Street, Cobham, Gravesend

No Objections

20191194 Application for Listed Building Consent for 1 And 2 Owletts Cottages, The Street, Cobham, Gravesend.

No Objections

Cllr Elliott explained that she was still awaiting comments and feed-back from some members of the CPC planning group. Cllr Elliott had learned from GBC that the building on Millfield Shaw will need retrospective planning permission.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Parish Council will be holding a meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to discuss the importance of having a Neighbourhood Plan Cllr Bob Lane and Cllr Tony Rice will be attending and Cllr Elliott will be providing a large copy of the current map of the Village. It is important for the Parish to identify possible building development sites so any development can be managed.

### **Cobham Playing Fields Group**

Update on repairs Cllr Smith hopes to pressure wash the playground surface over the coming weekend. The latest safety report had been undertaken and there was nothing of an urgent nature needing attention just some maintenance.

### **Local Traffic Working Group**

Cllr Mason explained that the group is looking at the volume of traffic along The Street and Sole Street. Please see the Cobham Parish Council website for the minutes of the group's meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> January. The group approached a traffic consultant with a view to find some solutions whilst looking at the area strategically. He explained that some work is taking place with GBC following Cllr Rice's meeting discussing the traffic data collected additionally the matter of air quality was discussed with GBC offering to conduct a survey in the village. TR finding smaller items that will help in the long run. Cllr Rice also explained that driving on the pavement is illegal except in emergency. He has approached the Police to visit The Street to observe in January. Cllr Elliott said that the police should be in plain clothes and stand back from the road. Cllr Pryor said the paint on his house is discolouring due to pollution. Cllr Rice said the idea was to bring all complaints to one area so that it can be used as evidence when trying to address the issues with the authorities.

Lower Thames Crossing – GBC Cllr Tony Rice said that following discussions, GBC believed that the LTC traffic modelling is understating the volume of traffic. Cllr Rice also said that it is likely LTC will be undertaking a supplementary consultation.

LTC Legacy Fund – Cllr Booth and Councillor Mason attended a meeting in London, LTC wanted to get an idea of the kind of requests they were likely to receive. The sort of ideas discussed ranged from additional train lines, walking routes, cycling routes. Cobham would obviously consider the Sole Street footpath and refurbishment of Cobham Playground at the sports field as part of any request to the fund.

At this point the discussion moved on to the appointment of a Traffic Consultant.

The Chairman explained that RGP-Transport Planning and Infrastructure Design Consultants (on the KCC approved list) had been approached to provide a quote for undertaking a full survey with recommendations in relation to the traffic issues in the parish. The quote is £2,500 plus VAT.

The Chairman then explained that due to the anger and frustration of local people and the safety concerns caused by the large volume and speed of vehicles in the parish it required urgent action and the quick appointment of a consultant was necessary. For this reason he asked the PC to consider the suspension of section 18f of the Parish Council's standing orders (*18f Quotes £750 after which we need more than one quote 2 quotes should be sufficient for work between say £750 and £2500 after which we should require 3 quotes*) to allow for the speedy appointment of the consultant. The Chairman also explained that the Clerk had researched the cost of a consultant with a Parish Council, that had already undertaken a traffic plan, and the costs were very similar.

The Clerk emphasised that any suspension of the standing orders should be a very rare occurrence and only undertaken when there was an urgent or extreme need as obtaining the best value for money is always a priority.

The Chairman then put to a vote the suspension of the standing orders and the acceptance of the consultant's quote. Five Parish Councillors voted for the suspension and acceptance of the quote and two parish councillors voted against as they had concerns around not obtaining further quotes.

**Action:** The Chairman confirmed that the appointment of the consultant would be undertaken.

#### **Cobham – Lead Councillor. Cllr Rosemary Dymond**

Daffodil bulbs have been planted around the Parish.

Cllr Margaret Haig stated that there was a large sink hole on Halfpence Lane and that the engineer said that it had been caused leaks and works undertaken by Southern Water and was likely to be their responsibility for fixing. Cllr Haig said that it is likely that HGV's are causing the damage to water pipes. **Action:** Cllr Booth to approach Cllr Sweetland as KCC is responsible for the maintenance of the highways.

Cllr Dymond would like to organise a litter pick

**Action:** Clerk to post info on the website

#### **Sole Street - Lead Councillor. Cllr Steve Dyer**

Nothing specific to report, currently no update on Church Room, however, Cllr Haig said that a cleaner had been appointed.

Cllr Elliott said she had been informed of some noisy works being carried out on the railway lines from 17<sup>th</sup> January.

**Action:** Clerk to post info on the website.

#### **Other Reports**

**KCC Matters** – Bryan Sweetland -Not present

**GBC Matters** – Cllr Tony Rice raised the matter of Fly Tipping Hot Spots, he also said that the bottom of Battle Street is flooding and affecting residents KCC came and cleared the debris on the drains, but GBC need to clear them more regularly.

Potholes in Battle Street have been reported. Cllr Rice also went to visit GBC officers as residents are fed up with fly-tipping as it keeps happening. GBC explained that there is more

funding available so evidence should be given to identify the hot spots. Action: Clerk to prepare a list of hot spots in the parish.

**Parish Chairmen's Group** – Cllr Dyer attended a meeting on 20 November, the planning and waste managers were present. One of the questions posed by CPC was asking how many fly-tipping prosecutions have taken place, there had been 3 prosecutions and 39 fixed penalty notices. When reporting fly-tipping you may be asked to attend court as a witness, parishioners were, once again, encouraged to use the Country Eye app to report fly-tipping. GBC may also be reviewing the charges for depositing waste at the recycling tips. The head of planning reported that Gravesham is likely to be 6,000 – 8,000 houses short by 2038 and are looking for plots for building around 100 houses. There will also be a green belt review. Cllr Bob Lane is challenging the stats.

KALC – Rosemary Dymond the next meeting will be on the 27<sup>th</sup> January at Meopham. There is to be a Health and Wellbeing course at Swanley.

Rural Parishes Forum – There have not been any recent meetings.

### **Other Village Matters**

Meadow Rooms – Gabriella Gabbitas – not present

Footpaths – Rosemary Dymond -concerned that walkers had not been informed of the closure of the footpath for the Iron Bridge repairs. The clerk explained that a notice had been published on the website and the notice boards.

Church & Church Rooms – Margaret Haig nothing further to add.

Jeskyns – Ben Smith spoke with Denise at Jeskyns and awaiting email. Church Road is an issue with the parking, unfortunately a traffic warden was in the area but did not ticket anyone. There was a traffic problem recently because of the Park Run.

An email has since been received: *'just to let you know that the car park surfacing works are progressing and we are aiming for a February 2020 completion date.*

*We also hope to start construction of the new outdoor seating shelter at the café in February.*

*Planning permission for this was awarded at the same as that for the car park works.'*

VE Day commemorations – Rosemary Dymond - It was agreed not to have fireworks but a bonfire with BBQ and music, perhaps a choir singing wartime songs. This would take place on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> May. A display of memorabilia and costumes will take place in the Meadow Room on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May. A street Party will possibly take place in Sole Street on the Saturday. There is £200 in the budget for commemorations. Need to check what the local pubs are doing.

### **8. (75) Meeting Suspended for Parishioners Comments**

A Parishioner from the college said that 9-14<sup>th</sup> June is the Dickens anniversary. Cllr Gabbitas and Gravesend tourist board are organising a costume promenade on 6<sup>th</sup> June, it was suggested that it would be good to involve the Parish Council.

**Action:** Clerk to email Cllr Gabbitas.

The matter of potholes on Stone House Yard was raised as they are affecting college residents. The Chairman said that the property owner is responsible for repairs, not something for the Parish Council.

**Public meeting closed at 9.35.**

**9.(76) CPC Meeting Continues in Private:**

It was brought to the attention that the Youth club is currently suspended due to a lack of professional help running it.

Correspondence- the clerk ran through some of the emails received and the action taken

Training – the Clerk is attending a Web accessibility course at Ditton.

**Items raised by Councillors**

Cllr Pryor has been in touch with CPRE seeking support and assistance for the traffic plan.

Cllr Haig relayed some of the concerns raised with her by Parishioners – she will provide a list for the Clerk to work through. These included: Horse Pond lane fly tipping, Knotweed by the Ship, Potholes at Dabbs Place and a request for more police presence (not just in cars), large vehicles are eroding the daffodil patch.

**10. (77) Finance / Cheques – agreed**

Agree purchase of defib cartridges etc £600 - agreed

Agree new Laptop purchase £700 - agreed

Agree the suspension of Standing Order (financial controls and procurement 18f) in relation to the Traffic Consultant's fee as a preferred provider and agree to pay £2500.00 - agreed

Agree grant to Cricket Club for cleaning of Village Toilets £600 - agreed

**Finance Report – Cheques to be signed 6th January 2020**

MI Payroll and Bookkeeping Service	£60.00
Councillor travel expenses for LTC meeting	£37.00
Councillor refund for map boards	£20.79
Cobham Cricket Club grant for toilet cleaning/supplies	£600.00
Clerk's December Salary	£338.57
HMRC	£254.00
St Mary's church room hire (2019)	£164.00
KALC Training Course/Web access	£72.00
Meadow Room Hire	£30.00

TOTAL £1,576.36 - All agreed by Parish Councillors.

**THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL BE 3rd  
FEBRUARY 2020 IN THE MEADOW ROOMS**