



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms

Present

Cllr Mike Booth (Chairman), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Rosemary Dymond,  
Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas, Cllr Matt Mason

Present

Charles Amis (Clerk)

1 Parishioner

**1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Mat Peterson-Pearce, Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Bennett Smith, Cllr Tony Rice, Cllr Bryan Sweetland.

**2. Minutes** – Cllr Dymond asked for changes to the Britain in Bloom paragraph in the October minutes. Cobham and Sole Street came first in the South East in Bloom as a parish entry as well as winning Silver Gilt for the parish entry.

**3. Declarations of Interest** – None

**4. Matters arising**

**Youth Club** – The clerk had not been able to organise a meeting between the youth workers from The Grand and the previous voluntary youth workers. Previously the youth club had been for Year 6 children who were in their last year at Cobham Primary School. A parent of a Year 6 pupil helped to run the youth club. It is hoped that something could be got going for June and July 2022. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to talk to Headteacher at Cobham Primary School about the youth club.

**5. KCC**

**Flooding on Halfpence Lane** – Cllr Booth had a site visit with Earl Bourner. It was agreed that the flooding is coming from Ashenbank Woods the responsibility of the Woodland Trust. Earl Bourner thought KCC might be able to help develop some mitigation in conjunction with the Woodland Trust. **Action:** A site meeting with the Woodland Trust, KCC and Cllr Booth has been organised for 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Road Salt – KCC Highways** – The clerk contacted KCC for bulk bags of salt for Scotland Lane, Cobham Church and the New College.

## 6. GBC

**New village car park** – GBC Councillor Rice had requested an opinion from Stuart Bobby, Chief Executive of GBC, for the proposal to build a car park on land owned by GBC east of Halfpence Lane. The response received from Stuart Bobby was quite negative rejecting the idea because the location is in a conservation area and is on registered land for parks and gardens. The parish councillors agreed that we should persevere and put in a planning application.

**Boundary Commission Review** – The current ward is Shorne, Cobham and Luddesdown. The Boundary Commission have proposed boundary changes which suggested that Cobham and Luddesdown should be joined with Istead Rise. Originally Luddesdown were going to be part of Meopham North ward but Luddesdown said that Luddesdown had more in common with Cobham and CPC were quite happy to supported Luddesdown in this. The deadline for responding to the proposals is 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to respond on behalf of CPC.

**Verges** – The clerk had asked KCC to cut the verges along Henhurst Road, Halfpence Lane, Sole Street and Old Watling Street plus Cobhambury Road to Batts Road. The verges had been cut along Henhurst Road and Jeskyns Road but not at the other locations. A member of staff from KCC had contacted the clerk to confirm the details before starting the work. **Action:** Clerk to chase KCC.

**Church Road Parking** – CPC had asked for the double yellow lines to be extended on the north side of Church Road but had no response from Nick May at GBC. **Action:** Clerk to follow up with Nick May.

**7. KALC** – Nothing to Report

**8. Rural Crime** – There is a meeting with the PCSOs on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November at the St Mary's Church.

**Community Warden** – it was generally agreed that there is not the need for a Community Warden now that we have two PCSOs working in the parish and the community warden had not held any sessions since Covid lockdowns began. Cllr Booth had completed a survey.

**No Cold Calling Zone** - The PCSOs to investigate this further. **Action.** Crime working group to follow up

**PCSO Surgeries** - **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce to prepare a poster to advertise the meetings on the website & facebook.

## 9. Planning Group

**Communication Mast off Batts Road** – Approved on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Norbond Site** – This is still with GBC

**White Post Farm** – This is still with the Planning Inspectorate.

**Orchard Cottage** - CPC had objected - due for determination on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021

**Bluebell Farm, Round Street** – CPC had objected - due for determination on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Corner Cottage, Round Street** – GBC approved on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

**30 The Street** – Revised application 20211319 smaller with a flat roof 7 x 3.5mts showing at 2.5mts. There were questions about the measurements for the shed at the end of the garden. The drainage has been shown.

**14 Scratton Fields** – Still with CPC

**The Barn, Jeskyns Road** – Still with CPC who prefer the original application.

**Neighbourhood Plan** – To create a Neighbourhood Plan is a very large piece of work. The Clerk had forwarded an email to Cllr Mason from a session from KALC Clerk's Conference that had been helpful. GBC should provide funding towards the production of Cobham's neighbourhood plan as Meopham had received funding from GBC for this. **Action:** Clerk to ask the other clerks in GBC if they could forward their neighbourhood plans.

## 9. Traffic Group

**Highways Improvement Plan** – Cllr Booth had a meeting on Zoom with Cllr Sweetland and Ian Grigor, Kent Highways Schemes Manager and they had taken away CPC's concerns. Cllr Booth was pleased with the outcomes of the meeting.

**Speeding Traffic** - CPC have requested that the whole parish become a 30mph zone with The Street, Sole Street from the junction of Round Street to the Railway PH becoming 20mph zones. It may not be practical to roll out the 30mph across the whole parish and the police will not support this. Henhurst Road suffers from speeding traffic. **Action:** Ian Grigor to agreed review against current traffic data from the SID.

**Battle Street to Sole Street** – CPC have identified this stretch of road as a speeding hotspot. Ian Grigor has agreed to review and investigate traffic calming measures. **Action:** Cllr Mason to supply SID data to Ian Grigor

**HGV Traffic. The Street** – Ian Grigor agreed to review the current TRO and possibly introduce a 7.5 tonne only restriction with specific exceptions for local businesses.

**Sole Street – Round Street to Gold Street and Scrattons Fields** – CPC have identified this stretch of road as the most dangerous in the parish. Ian Grigor has agreed to ask the KCC Bus Stop team to investigate the establishment of a permanent bus stop at the corner of Sole Street and Round Street. Ian Grigor has also agreed to a feasibility study on the traffic management including a pavement alongside Sole Street. CPC have indicated that they might be able to fund the cost of the feasibility study (£4,000- £5,000) and have identified this project for help from the Lower Thames Crossing Legacy Fund. **Action:** Cllr Gabbittas to send report from the parishioner who was knocked over on this stretch of road.

**War Memorial Roundabout** - CPC have identified this area as an accident black spot. The green beside the roundabout is owned by KCC and Ian Grigor agreed to design and cost protective bollards. CPC have indicated that they might be able to fund the cost of the bollards.

**Double Yellow Lines/parking restrictions** – The Street – KCC had received three objections about the double yellow lines. The double yellow lines are only experimental.

**Village Gateways** – The estimated cost of the village gateways is £4,968. The proposed locations are Halfpence Lane and outside Owletts on The Street. The signs will say welcome to Cobham. It was

asked if there needs to be a village gateway sign outside Owletts. Cllr Booth circulated photographs of the proposed gateways. The current village signs at Sole Street were installed and paid for by KCC and are very different from the proposed village gateways for Cobham. CPC could approach KCC for village gateway signs at Sole Street although it is unlikely that they would be changed.

**The Street – Traffic Calming** – The pavements will be built out on both sides of The Street and wooden bollards will be installed into the kerb from the Darnley Arms, past the community shop and up to Wisteria Cottage. KCC have agreed to pay for the residents to be informed in January 2022 regarding the new traffic calming measures on The Street. Installation will mean that The Street will be closed for one week in February half term 2022 whilst the work goes ahead.

**Darnley Arms** – There will be a stick down kerb outside the Darnley Arms very soon. This is a temporary measure to be installed by KCC Highways until the main scheme calming measures are installed in February 2022.

**Availability of replacement cobblestones on The Street** – The clerk had reviewed old papers held in the archive but had not found a name of the company who had supplied the cobblestones. The clerk had written to Kevin Gore to ask that KCC Highways look through their records.

**Speed Watch Group** – Only one parishioner from Sole Street had volunteered for the Speed Watch Group although two parishioners had offered their support. It was interesting that drivers tended to slow down when they saw the Speed Watch Group at the side of the road. There needs to be more speed limit signs along Sole Street. The Speed Watch can only take place 30 minutes after sunrise and 30 minutes before sunset.

**Speed Indicator Device** – The SID will be moved to the Sole Street railway bridge by the Railway PH. **Action:** Cllr Smith to replace the batteries for the SID. CPC need to ask James Blackett to change the software. The data needs to be sent to Ian Grigor. The monitoring tubes on Henhurst Road, Sole Street and The Street over the past 12 years have pre covid data.

**Lower Thames Crossing** – Cllr Dyer had just had a meeting with Eva Simunovich. The rerouting of the 416 bus route was discussed when Brewers Road bridge is being replaced from 2024. Letters of notification to local residents will be sent out. The development consent order is currently pending.

## 10. Playing Fields

**Children's Corner** - Cllr Peterson-Pearce had replaced the damaged matting at the Children's Corner and Cllr Booth had rehung the missing swings. A grant of £60,000 had been applied for from Heritage Lottery Fund.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Point** – CPC are still waiting to hear from KCC regarding the installation of 3 charging points in the playing fields car park

## 11. Public Toilets

**Collection Box** – CPC decided they did not want a collection box as it was expensive and would take too long recoup the money spent.

**Electricity** – The electricity supply is being metered through the pavilion and paid for by the cricket club. A new time clock, hand driers, and LED lighting have been installed

**Night Locking** – Cllr Booth asked if the same people who locked the gate at the Ashenbank Wood Car Park could lock the public toilets at the playing field. **Action:** Clerk to email Shorne Wood Country Park.

**Water Leak in the Ladies** – CPC have received a quote for D Bishop for £1,985 for repairing the water leak. **Action:** A parishioner will provide the details of the plumber that looks after the New College.

**13. St Mary's Church Rooms** – The architect had promised to get prices and tenders but nothing had happened yet. The planning permission expires in October 2022. Su is encouraging the PCC to appoint a cleaner for the church rooms. The Funding Group should hear soon if they have been successful in securing a grant from Rochester Missional Trust. The friends of Kent Churches had given a grant of £10,000 and the Jigsaw Puzzle Competition had raised £1,736.04. Cllr Booth had written to Alan and Su Rowe offering to tidy the outside area. The drain pipe from the guttering on the adjacent garage drains straight on to the concrete surface as did the two drain pipes at the rear of the building. The drain pipes on the front of the building go directly into drains. The base of the building appears to be permanently wet. **Action:** Cllr Dymond will be attending the next meeting of the Funding Group and will raise the guttering and drainage.

**14. Social Media – Website and Facebook** – The website is often out of date and is not attractive. The clerk said they had not received any real training for managing the website. It was asked if CPC should use an outside provider for maintaining the website and Facebook page. The other option would be to increase the clerk's hours to allow more time to manage the website. **Action:** Clerk to speak to the other Gravesham clerks regarding how they manage their websites. And to come back with plans for making the website work better.

**Parish Magazine** – The parish magazine is circulated mostly online. It was felt that the magazine should be printed and Cllr Booth had obtained a quote from a printer. A parishioner in Battle Street was making arrangements for the magazine to be printed. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to speak to Janet Weaver.

### **15. Other Village Matters**

**Kent Rail Summit virtual meeting** – Nobody had attended.

**British Legion Grant & other grants** – The wreath for CPC will cost £18.50 and it was agreed that CPC would make a further donation of £50.

**Luddesdown Rights of Way Group** - **Action.** Clerk to email.

**Village Sign** – It was asked if CPC wanted a village sign and why does CPC want a village sign. The village sign could improve the look and feel of the parish and make parishioners proud of where they live as well as giving a sense of identity. The cost of a wrought iron village sign is £7000-£8000 and there would need to be two village signs for Cobham and Sole Street. There were several potential locations for the Cobham village sign which could include the corner of Lawrence Drive or by the war memorial roundabout. The possible location for the Sole Street village sign would be beside the St Mary's Church Rooms although this would be subject to the restoration of the church rooms. It was agreed to take the village sign proposals forward.

**Meadow Rooms** – The Chairman of the Management Committee had sent an update. The regular hirers have returned to use the Meadow Room and bookings continue to be healthy. During the

previous month the Meadow Rooms was used for two children's parties, the Jigsaw Puzzle Competition, Cobham War Memorial Rededication and Exhibition, Gardeners Society talk and a celebration of life gathering. The Meadow Rooms will host the Cobham Amateur Dramatic Society show and the Church Christmas Bazaar. An additional CCTV camera has been installed to cover the meadow and there has been an upgrade to the internet access. The Meadow Rooms need to be kept clear for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

**Footpaths** – John Pelham had installed the new no cycling signs on NS192 and clear up after your dog signs on NS191. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to check if the new no cycling signs had been installed on NS178.

**Community Bus** – Cllr Dymond had spoken to Cobham Hall School who were quite interested in allowing their buses to be used for a community bus service. The school will supply the drivers as the school's buses are larger than the current community bus and the drivers would need to be paid. Additionally the school's buses are used by pupils at the beginning of the school day and at the end of the day so the other users would need to fit around this. It was asked if this is something that CPC should be involved with. At the moment only 3 or 4 passengers are using the community bus on Thursdays. Meopham Welfare Committee have offered to donate the bus to the New College for nothing. However the bus will need replacing soon and there is a lot of paperwork. It was decided to remove this item from future agendas. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to continue speaking to Cobham Hall School regarding the use of the school buses.

**Queen's Platinum Jubilee** – There will be a children's party, a garden party at Owletts, an afternoon tea at Cobham Hall. The Sports Club have been asked to run a Pig Roast for the evening the beacon is lit. Cllr Peterson-Pearce was organising Munchies on the Meadow for either Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June or Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June. Jonathan Ireland is planting some elm trees in Cobham Wood as part of the Queen's Green Canopy and will keep Cllr Booth updated. Trees could also be planted outside the old police house, at Lawrence Drive and on the bank between the primary school and the Ship PH.

**Action:** Cllr Dymond and Cllr Gabbitas to find out what other village organisations are doing. Cllr Dymond and Cllr Gabbitas to discuss Munchies on the Meadow with Cllr Peterson-Pearce.

**Remembrance Sunday** – This will run from 10am to 10.30am on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr Booth will welcome and thank everyone for attending. The bugler will time the two minute silence.

**Assets of Community Value** – All of the public houses apart from the Darnley Arms are registered as Assets of Community Value. **Action:** Cllr Booth to speak to the Landlady of the Darnley Arms. Clerk to find out if the Little Shop is registered as an Asset of Community Value.

**16. Parishioners Comments** - A parishioner asked if seats can be located by the war memorial so that people can admire the war memorial and view. It was confirmed that this is not allowed as this is special land. It was asked if a bench be sited by the daffodil patch.

It was asked if Ben Smith was going to put up a Christmas tree outside their premises this year. We hope so.

It was asked if the bus stop going west outside the church where the steep slope is could be moved to Stonehouse Yard or opposite the Leather Bottle PH. There is already a bus stop outside the Darnley Arms going east. **Action:** Clerk to contact KCC and find out the procedure for moving the bus stop.

## **17. Correspondence**

The clerk had received an email from a visitor who had complained about the lack of parking for Cobham Park and had asked if parking could be allowed again at Lodge Lane. **Action:** Clerk to send a reply

## **18. Finance**

The Cheque report was proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Dymond.

## **19. AOB**

It was agreed that the parish council meetings would carry on being held on the first Tuesday of the month in 2022. Cllr Rice has been unable to attend the last two parish council meetings due to a clash GBC meetings. **Action:** Clerk to ask Cllr Rice for his availability on Tuesday evenings.

**Defibrillator** - The clerk had found a contact who could run a training session on using a defibrillator. There was a preference for an evening for up to two hours. **Action:** Clerk to arrange training session for January.

**New College Defibrillator** - It was noted that there was no defibrillator at the New College. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to take this up with the warden at the New College.

## **Next Meeting – Budget Meeting**

**7.30pm on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December at the St Mary's Church Rooms.** This is a closed meeting and is not open to the public.