



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Budget Meeting

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the St Mary's Church Rooms

Present

Cllr Mike Booth (Chairman), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Rosemary Dymond

Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Bennett Smith, Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Russ Nichols

Present

Charles Amis (Clerk)

**1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Mat Peterson-Pearce, Cllr Zoe Gee

**2. Declarations of Interest** – None

**3. The Parish Council to consider the amount spent so far for 2024/25 and to produce a budget until the end of the financial year March 2025**

The actual income so far for 2023/24 is £78,477.24.

It was decided to leave the training budget at £1000. Councillors are encouraged to attend training courses.

The maintenance man had not been seen around the parish litter picking and had not given any invoices to the clerk. It was suggested that £1,000 be allocated towards the maintenance man's payments.

There will be no election costs in 2024/25.

The clerk's salary is £10,141.20 per annum. It was suggested that the Clerk's salary be increased by 10% of their current salary in line with the National Association of Local Council pay scales.

The toilets received 1000 users over the last three weeks. The costs for running the toilets over 2023/24 was £9,355. CPC would need to put aside £10,000 for the running of the public toilets in 2024/25. CPC will need to reserve £4,227 to pay Business Stream. It was asked if a payment collection system could be installed for users to contribute towards the cost of the running of toilets. This has been previously investigated but the installation cost was too high and would take some time to recover the costs. **Action:** Clerk to forward Cllr Mason the emails with the details of the payment systems.

The new playground at Children's Corner has cost CPC £50,125.60 less the grants. The grassed area around the playground is now much smaller and it was suggested that a member of the Sports Association could cut the grass in the future. **Action:** Clerk to ask Smooth & Rugged Landscapes to stop cutting the grass.

The resurfacing of the sports ground car park had cost CPC £12,610.80 and £6000 had been contributed from the organisations who use the car park.

CPC agreed to continue supporting the Youth Club despite the low attendances. 14 sessions had cost £2,856. There are 57 young people on the books and at least half of those come from Cobham, Shorne and Luddesdown. It was agreed to set aside £2,500 for the Youth Club. The Grand will not receive any further funding from KCC after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 but The Grand hope to carry on after this date using other funding sources.

CPC had given two grants for the St Mary's Church Rooms Local of £2500 in 2022/23 and 2023/24. It was discussed if CPC should give another donation this year.

The flint wall around the village pump will require considerable refurbishment over the next few years. The previous repairs to the wall had used cement mortar when lime mortar should have been used. The bottom of the wall needs cleaning and the rear of the wall towards the right needs repairing. CPC own the pump and the flint wall and the owners of Meadow House own the land behind the wall including the land that covers the underground reservoir. The Lower Thames Crossing Team have offered £9,100 towards the cost. One potential company has been found. £8000 will be put aside for the initial work although the final amount could be around £100,000.

**Action:** Cllr Dymond to provide details of another company who could carry out the work. Cllr Smith to find out the details of the company that carried out the work in Stonehouse Yard.

Baylis Landscapes have cleared Sweeps Hole Pond. **Action:** Clerk to ask Baylis for a cost of the work in 2023/24. Baylis has confirmed that the price remains the same as for 2022/23 at £720.

Traffic Management – KCC do not support the implementation of a 20mph speed limit zone along Sole Street which is favoured by CPC. The expected cost for implementing the zone has been estimated at around £2000-£3000. It was asked if the 20mph zone could be enforced. Cllr Sweetland had requested a speed camera. It was suggested that £10,000 was allocated towards traffic management.

Community Celebrations – There are proposed celebrations for D Day. CPC will budget £1000.

CPC will budget £600 for the maintenance of the defibrillators.

Village Signs – Cllr Peterson-Pearce is looking for a graphic designer to take the design forward. The clerk had circulated of photographs of the new village sign at Crockenhill. It was suggested that the village signs designs should be finalised by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. It was agreed to set £10,000 towards the village sign.

Village Gateway Signs – The Clerk had circulated some photographs of a village gateway sign from another parish. £4,000 would need to be budgeted for the new village gateway signs.

The white posts by the war memorial will need replacing.

**4. To compare spending throughout 2022/23 with the budgetary predictions of 2023/24 and that budgetary needs are met when requesting the precept for 2023/24.**

The precept for 2022/23 was £35,000 and increased to £45,000 in 2023/24. It was suggested that the precept be increased to £65,000 for 2024/25. This would mean that a Property Band D household would see an increase of £66.68 per annum or £1.28 per week.

#### **5. Requests for consideration from Parish Councillors**

Cllr Dymond asked for £1000 for new flower troughs.

Cllr Dyer is arranging to meet with Nick Brown at GBC to discuss planning issues.

All of the Parish Councillors received a copy of the cash flow spreadsheet and the payment report prior to the meeting.

#### **Payments made since the 7th November meeting**

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
9/11/2023	Singlewell Stationery & Print Ltd	Printing Remembrance Sunday programmes	£52
28/11/2023	Medway Norse Ltd	Opening and cleaning toilets November	£675.22
30/11/2023	Clerk	Salary for 1 <sup>st</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> November	£845.10
30/11/2023	Clerk	Pension	£23.71

#### **Payments to be made after the 5<sup>th</sup> December Meeting**

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
7/11/2023	Clerk	Mileage	£11.97
27/11/2023	Information Commissioner's Office	Annual Renewal	£35 if paid by D/D or £40 otherwise
	Royal British Legion	Donation	£50

Cllr Dyer proposed the payment report and Cllr Booth seconded.

The next parish council meeting will be at 8pm on Tuesday 9th January 2024 at the Meadow Rooms.

Meeting closed at 9pm