



## Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms

### Present

Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Kirsty Lane, Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Julie Wilder

### Present

Charles Amis (Clerk), 4 parishioners

**1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Mike Booth (Chair), Cllr Bennett Smith, Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Russ Nichols, Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC), Cllr Samir Jassal (GBC)

**2. Declarations of Interest** – None

**3. Minutes** - The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Lane and seconded by Cllr Dyer.

**4. Building links between Cobham and a village in Ukraine** – Cllr Jordan Meade, a GBC and KCC Councillor was unable to attend.

**5. GBC Matters** – Nothing to report.

### 6. Planning –

**Cobham House Vineyard** – There had been 340 objections and GBC had extended the deadline to receive objections until 22<sup>nd</sup> October. GBC Planning Department have spoken with the owner regarding the objections.

**Norbond** – GBC have submitted a revised enforcement notice and the owner has until the end of October to respond.

**White Post Farm** – The Planning Inspectorate held a hearing at 10am on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September which went through all of the areas that the owner was appealing. It may be some time before the Planning Inspectorate make their decision. **Action:** CPC to write a letter to the Planning Inspectorate.

**Sole Street House, Sole Street** – The owner wishes to install a stair lift but must apply for planning permission as Sole Street House is a listed building. CPC have no objections.

**8 The Beeches** – The owner wishes to partly demolish the existing side projection and erect part of a first floor and a part two storey side extension, with a single storey rear/side extension. CPC have no objections.

## **7. Traffic Group –**

**Sole Street – Update** – KCC Highways Team had removed the advisory no lorry signs from the beginning of Gold Street near the junction with Sole Street. CPC are trying to convince KCC to reinstate the signs that were removed. KCC are considering replacing the current advisory No HGV sign at Green Lane near the junction at Wrotham Road near Camer Parade, Meopham with a clearer No HGV sign.

A recent traffic incident had closed the A2 had led to traffic gridlock through Cobham and Sole Street with coaches and HGVs stuck in Batts Road and Gold Street. There were some HGVs with trailers passing through Sole Street.

KCC Highways are closing Henhurst Road between Marling Cross and Church Road plus the slip roads on to and off from the A2 overnight from Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October for resurfacing. Valley Drive and Hever Court Road will also have no access to and from the A2. **Action:** Clerk to put the notice on to the website. Clerk to report overgrown 30mph sign at the junction of Sole Street and The Street.

**Speed Watch** – The Speed Watch sessions are alternating between Sole Street and Cobham. There are three authorised Speed Watch sites in Cobham, which include opposite the primary school, opposite the Darnley Arms and between the chicane at the Meadow Rooms and Owletts. The last Speed Watch session saw 275 vehicles pass along Sole Street in one hour. It would be interesting to see how many vehicles are passing through at 7.30am. If a motorist is caught going over one and a half times of the speed limit they will receive a letter

The Speed Watch equipment is shared with Meopham Parish council. **Action:** Steve Holden to send Cllr Dymond the link to the basic training. Steve Holden to hand out the Speed Watch flyers.

**Speed Indicator Device (SID)** – The laptop had been recovered from Matt Peterson-Pearce. Cllr Smith had ordered replacement batteries for the SID and the software still needs to be updated.

**Chevron Signs at Henhurst Road/Jeskyns Road junction** – KCC Highways had replaced the missing chevron signs at the Henhurst Road and Jeskyns Road junction. Local residents are recording details of any future accidents at the junction.

**Village Gateways** – Cllr Booth and Cllr Nichols had previously discussed the replacement of the village gateways at Halfpence Lane and Sole Street.

**8. Lower Thames Crossing** – The SOS for Transport is due to give their decision on whether the LTC may be given approval by 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024. The LTC Team have run a series of roadshows. Skanska will be carrying out the engineering on the Kent side of the Thames and had previously been involved with the realignment and widening of the A2.

**9. Village Crime Group** – Several motorbikes had been stolen recently. Kent Police will be running Operation Paradiso again where they target anti-social behaviour by motor cyclists. A car had been sabotaged in Luddesdown and two youths had been caught on camera. There was nothing to report from the Sole Street Neighbourhood Watch Group.

## **10. Playing Fields Group –**

**Planning Permission for the patio** - Cllr Lane and the Clerk had been preparing the planning application for the new patio at the Sports Pavilion. The works are likely to start in spring 2025. **Action:** Cllr Mason to check the planning application.

**Electric Remedial works for the Sports Pavilion** – The works to replace electrics had started the previous week. **Action:** CPC to send a letter to the Sports Association to give permission.

**Quotes for the All Weather Path and new fencing** – CPC hope to choose a contractor for the installation of an all-weather path to the playground. The Clerk had received two quotes for the all-weather path and two quotes for the fencing. Cllr Lane was prepared to meet on site with the potential companies to discuss CPC's requirements.

**Insurance** - CPC's Insurance Policy is due for renewal in October. **Action:** Clerk to write to Cricket Club and Tennis Club to let them know what the current insurance covers them for and the insurance that they need. Cllr Lane to speak to Lords Wood.

**Memorial Bench** – Cllr Lane had sent round some designs for benches. **Action:** Cllr Lane to look at the design of the bench at the corner of Sole Street and Scratton Fields. Cllr Lane to prepare a map to show the proposed location of the benches.

**Disabled Parking Bays** – It was asked if CPC and the Sports Association are obliged to put in disabled spaces in the car park and how much would they be used. **Action:** Chris Broadley to raise the details about the proposed disabled parking bays at the next Sports Association Meeting.

**Sports Association Lease** – **Action:** Clerk to ask Hatten Wyatt if they held a signed copy of the lease.

**11. Public Toilets** – CPC had paid Business Stream £1260. Cllr Booth had asked a plumber to see if the foot pedal mechanism for the wash basin in the gent's toilet could be repaired.

**12. KALC/NALC** – Cllr Dymond asked for items that could be raised at the KALC AGM. There was a discussion about restarting the Community Bus following on from grants that were offered by KCC. The community bus had not been well used latterly although local residents may have wanted to go other places apart from Gravesend. Restarting the community bus may raise resident's expectations.

**13. St Mary's Church Rooms** – Progress to date includes a new floor has been laid and a second layer has been added to the roof. The old toilet, kitchen and porch have been removed and a new doorway has been installed. The Local Funding Group are running a wreath making workshop for Christmas on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December. The cost is £30 and includes all materials, hot drinks and cake plus booking is required.

**14. Social Media** – The CPC website had 374 page views over the past 30 days (Down 71%) and there were 221 unique visits over the past 30 days (Down 72%). There was an average of 1.5894 average page views per visit (Down 9%).

## **15. Other Village Matters**

**Defibrillators** – The Cobham Bowls club defibrillator was now back in use after Cllr Dyer had adjusted the catch that held the box shut. The Round Street defibrillator will be returned to its original position within 4 weeks.

**Youth Club** – Cllr Dyer had attended the last youth club session in July and had spoken with the youth workers at The Grand about their plans to keep the youth club viable. The Youth Workers were full of ideas for future youth club sessions. Cllr Dymond had also spoken with the youth

workers on a separate occasion who asked for extra pieces of equipment. The youth workers plan to speak at an assembly at Cobham Primary School. CPC have been funding the youth workers and the hire of the Meadow rooms on a fortnightly basis. The Clerk has asked the youth workers for feedback from each session. The Youth Club really needs support from willing parent(s). Higham has a youth club on Thursday evening which is going well.

**Footpaths** – Footpath NS191 is partially flooded from a nearby property. The Clerk had spoken with the owners of Leighton House and had asked southern Water to check where the leak is coming from. The Clerk had also been in contact with the KCC Rights of Way Officer.

Cllr Dyer said there were three missing mats on the 'Rabbits' footbridge over the A2 and High Speed 1 (Footpath NS175A) from Church Road to the linear path by The George at Singlewell. **Action:** Clerk to speak to the KCC Rights of Way Officer.

The hedge beside the pavement at Church Road from Ifield church to the Rectory is overgrown and needs to be cut back. **Action:** Clerk to report to KCC Highways.

**Village Sign** – Cllr Lane circulated the village sign designs for Sole Street and Cobham to all of the parish councillors who were present. Each sign will cost £1,400 plus the cost of the post and installation. Cllr Dymond circulated an alternative design for a village sign but it would cost CPC more money if the revised design was to be used. A vote for the design of the village signs was carried out with 3 in favour and 1 against.

The suggested sites for the sign would be the small green by Scratton Fields at Sole Street and on the corner of The Street and Lawrence Drive at Cobham. The verge outside Pilgrims, on the corner of The Street and Cobhambury Road was suggested as an alternative location. CPC would need to consult with local residents. **Action:** Clerk to ask KCC's permission for installing the village signs at Scratton Fields and GBC's permission for installing a village sign at Lawrence Drive.

**Meadow Rooms** - Bookings were quiet in June; there was a 50th Birthday party, Cobham Parish Council held a D Day Evening event, Cobham Gardeners Club held their Spring Show and Cobham Pre-School held a fundraising film night.

July was busy with the Meadow Rooms being used as a Polling Station for the General Election, a couple of children's parties, a couple of family gatherings and the WI held a basket weaving workshop. During August the Meadow Room hosted a number of children's parties and a quiz night.

The current regular bookings are the Gardeners Club and the WI meet once per month as do a Circle Dancing Club. Cash reserves continue to be at a high level and are sufficient to maintain the operations.

**Village Pump** – CPC had previously received three quotes for the proposed repairs to the flint wall. The repair work needs to be split into specific areas that would be tackled each year. It was confirmed that CPC own the flint wall. **Action:** Cllr Pryor agreed to paint the pump. Cllr Pryor needs to speak to Stuart Edwards about the paint to be used when painting the pump.

## **16. Parishioners Comments**

A parishioner asked about the individual roles of the parish councillors. All of the parish councillors present explained their roles on the parish council.

**Meeting continues in Private**

## 17. Correspondence & Announcements – None

## 18. Finance

### Payments made since the 1st October meeting

Date of payment	Company	Reason	Amount
20/9/2024	Business Stream	To pay back some of the money owed.	£1,230.51
20/9/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£13.98
20/9/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£11.94
26/9/2024	MI Payroll & Bookkeeping	Payroll for July-Sept 2024	£60
30/9/2024	Nest	Pension	£27.18
1/10/2024	Clerk	Salary 1 <sup>st</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	£892.52

### Payments to be made after the 1st October Meeting

Date of Payment	Company	Reason	Amount
2/10/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£13.05
2/10/2024	Kent County Playing Fields Association	2024-25 Subscription	£20
2/10/2024	Matthew Lisney	Litter Picking	£549.12

Cllr Dyer proposed the payment report and Cllr Wilder seconded.

CPC's reserve account could be earning a higher rate of interest and Cllr Lane suggested putting some of the CPC budget into bonds. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to provide details of a building society.

It was agreed by all of the parish councillors that were present that the St Mary's Church Rooms should receive a grant of £2,500 towards the current building works.

It was agreed by all of the parish councillors that were present that We are Beams should receive a grant of £500. We are Beams are working with and providing support to nine local families.

It was agreed by all of the parish councillors who were present that Cobham Parent Teachers Association should receive a grant of £250 towards the cost of equipment for local school children to carry out supervised litter picking.

## 19. Items from Councillors –

Cllr Dymond said that the expiry dates for the list of the Assets of Community Value needed to be checked. **Action:** Clerk to circulate a list of the Assets of Community Value.

CPC archives are still being held at Sole Street House and it was asked where an alternative venue could be found. The Clerk had approached Medway/KCC Archive previously.

Cobham and Sole Street won silver gilt at the South & South East in Bloom competition.

It was suggested that CPC make use of the Community Payback Team to carry out work within Cobham Parish. The Team had been painting the sports pavilion and had cut the grass at the playing field. The Team provide their own equipment but the insurance company would need to know if

they were working in the parish. Action: Cllr Lane to forward the Community Payback Manager's details to the Clerk.

**20. Next Meeting - Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November at the Meadow Rooms.**