



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 10th January 2023 at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the St Mary's Church Rooms

Present

Cllr Mike Booth (Chair), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Margaret Haig
Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Matt Peterson-Pearce, Cllr Matt Mason (arrived at 7.40pm),
Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas

Present

PCSO Simon Mummery, Charles Amis (Clerk), 3 Parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr Ben Smith, Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC)

2. Minutes - The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 1st November 2022 and the minutes for the Parish Council Budget Meeting held on Tuesday 12th December 2022 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Gabbitas and seconded by Cllr Dymond.

3. Declarations of Interest – None

4. PCSO Simon Mummery – Update on Police and PCSOs - There was still an issue with off road motor bikes on Scotland Lane but the police are now able to give chase using 4x4 vehicles. The police have stopped using motorbikes to chase the offenders. Kent Police are looking to cut a number of PCSO positions but will be recruiting more police officers. There will be more police officers going on the beat.

Simon Mummery encouraged everyone to make use of My Community Voice as a way to report crime and to receive updates on crimes that have been reported. There are details on crime prevention and fraudulent texts. There is also a My Community Voice application to download.

Simon Mummery will be moving on to become a police constable and Kirsty Lowe will be transferring as a PCSO to Northfleet.

5. KCC Matters

- Bus Stops outside the Church and at Round Street – Cllr Booth had a meeting with Sam Bassett on 12th August. There has been no further response from KCC.
- Bollard – outside 46 The Street – Still waiting for a response from KCC.
- Village Gateways Features – Halfpence Lane – Still waiting for a response from KCC.
- Weight Restriction on Halfpence Lane – Still waiting for a response from KCC.

These will be taken forward to the February meeting.

7. KALC/NALC – The next Gravesham KALC Area meeting on 22nd February. Carbon Footprint has been raised at the recent KALC Meetings. Solar panels have been installed at Higham Village Hall. Vigo Parish Council have been working with a company who specialise in thermal imaging and have loaned cameras to check heat loss of the properties in Vigo Village. Meopham Parish Council have been working with KCC to resolve the parking issues at Camer Parade. Higham have run a successful Speed Watch scheme outside the primary school and have caught 30 motorists for speeding. Solar panels are due to be installed on the houses on Lawrence Drive. **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce and Cllr Dymond agreed to work on the carbon footprint for Cobham Parish.

8. Planning

- **Norbond Site** – The Clerk had written to Stuart Bobbie and had received a response on 24th November 2022. The planning appeal is with the Planning Inspectorate.
- **White Post Farm** – The Planning Inspectorate carried out a site visit on 23rd November 2022. **Action:** Clerk to ask GBC Planning Enforcement if they had also attended.
- **Orchard Cottage, Round Street** – The owners have been told by GBC to plant shrubs around the entrance gates.
- **Land North of Wildacre, Sole Street** – CPC had objected and GBC had refused planning permission.
- **15 Sallows Shaw** – The owner is changing the front of the property and adding a new porch.
- **Wilmardene, White Post Lane** – no objections
- **Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane** – The current leisure centre will be demolished. Concerns were expressed that the replacement building would cover a larger building foot
- **Attlee House, Chapelwood Place**
- **Cobhambury Court** – no objections
- **36-38 The Street, Cobham** – the owners had withdrawn the planning application
- **St Mary's Church Rooms** – No Objections. There are no changes from the previous planning application.

9. Traffic Group

- **Review of current traffic numbers and speeds** – CPC had asked KCC to install speed tubes on The Street. **Action:** Clerk to check previous papers/records.
- **Speed Indicator Device** – The software for the SID appears to be out of date despite the SID being no more than 5 years old. **Action:** Clerk to ask Cllr Rice if he has spoken to Cllr Bob Lane regarding an update for the SID's software.
- **Church Road, Ifield** – A parishioner who lives in Church Road near Ifield Church had said that their fence had been damaged twice by motorists who were possibly driving too fast around the bends by Ifield Church. Church Road is currently National Speed Limit. **Action:** Cllr Mason to forward the email to Michelle Norris and to the Clerk.
- **Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)** – The Sole Street Traffic Feasibility Study is part of this. There had been no further outcome from the LTC Legacy Fund regarding the funding of the highway improvements at Sole Street. The Traffic Working Group are meeting with Michelle Norris on 26th January to carry out a site visit and look at the traffic issues.

10. Lower Thames Crossing – The latest Development Consent Order and Planning Application has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. CPC need to complete an application to register with the Planning Inspectorate by 24th February. An email has been circulated with a link to a You Tube

video that shows the proposed route of the LTC. The LTC workers will have their hours controlled such as being bussed into work and not working on Sundays.

CPC had not heard if they had been successful in their legacy funding bid for a pavement along Sole Street from Scratton Fields to Round Street. The West Kent Downs Countryside Partnership had received funding from the LTC legacy Fund for an Avant Loader.

11. Village Crime Group – A car that appeared to have been left badly parked on The Street has been removed.

12. Playing Fields

- **Children’s Corner Refurbishment** – Cllr Peterson Pearce had a site visit on 12th December 2022 with Cllr Tony Rice and James Young, the Parks and Open Spaces Manager at GBC. Cllr Rice had been lobbying GBC for the past year for help with refurbishing the playground. GBC have agreed to pay for the clearing and preparing of the Children’s Corner site before March 2023. It may be possible to sell the existing playground equipment to a company who buy second hand playground equipment. A strip of land behind the bowls club pavilion would need to be used for the construction of a surfaced pathway. Cllr Peterson-Pearce advised that grant funding for Tesco where shoppers could vote for the cause by inserting blue counters. Further grant applications will be made to Lafarge plus a second lottery funding bid.
- **Electric Vehicles Charging Points** – There was no update on the electric vehicle charging points.
- **Sports Association** – The Sports Association are joining the Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) which will allow them to apply for grants. Cllr Peterson-Pearce is currently working on some CAD diagrams.
- **Car Park Resurfacing** – CPC had received three quotes for the resurfacing of the car park. Mackledens Civil Engineering had been chosen to resurface the car park and had previously surfaced The Landway. CPC had been pleased with their work. The car park should be resurfaced over the February half term. CPC will ask the Sports Association, School and Bowls Club to contribute towards the work.

13. Public Toilets –

- **Opening and Cleaning of the toilets – Contract Review** – The ball cock in the ladies toilet cistern has broken and was overflowing. The water supply has been turned off and CPC are waiting for Medway Norse to send a plumber to repair. The whole toilet needs to be re-plumbed.
- **Southern Water** – A local plumber has been asked to produce a plumbers report to show that any possible leaks and issues with the water meters. Southern Water will not send an engineer to check the water supply and meters until this has been carried out.
- **General Maintenance** - The roof and gutters at the toilets still need to be repaired and the floor in the gent’s toilet still needs to be painted.

14. St Mary’s Church Rooms –

- **Funding Group – Monthly Coffee Mornings** – The popular Rural Kent Coffee & Information Point has now ceased running. The Local Funding Group has suggested taking over the running of the pop up café and there were several volunteers willing to help. Other groups and charities could be invited to help run the sessions on different months. These could

include Mothers & Toddlers, Keep Fit, U3A group etc and the parish council could run a surgery. It will need to be advertised in the parish magazine. CPC was fully supportive of these ideas. Shorne, Vigo and Harvel run similar pop up cafes. **Action:** The Local Funding Group will confirm following on from their meeting.

- **Refurbishment** – The original planning permission expired in October 2022 and a new planning application has been submitted to GBC by the Parochial Church Council. A local resident had kindly paid for this. There is currently £58,025 in the account with the promise of a further £35,000 in grants. The grant applications require the architect to sign the work off. The All Churches Benefit Trust had given £4,500. The Local Funding Group will be applying to Veolia for a grant. A cleaner has been employed on a regular basis.

15. Social Media – The number of visits to the website fell by 12%. The number of visits to the Facebook page was up by 2,700 due to the Santa event in December and 300 visitors clicked on the link. There were 130 children at the actual event and the Santa Event will be run again this year. **Action:** Clerk to subscribe to the parish magazine.

16. Local Elections – Thursday 4th May – CPC need to consider which parish councillors will be standing or leaving. **Action:** Clerk to obtain nomination papers.

17. Other Village Matters

- **Defibrillators** – It was agreed to allocate someone to be responsible for each defibrillator. The following parishioners have agreed to look after their respective defibrillator: Cllr Dyer - St Mary's Church Rooms, Cllr Mason - Round Street, Cllr Gabbitas - Meadow Rooms and Terry Ralph - Bowls Club. **Action:** Clerk to circulate the defibrillator check list. It was asked if the defibrillator box at Sole Street Railway Station was still empty.
- **Youth Club** – CPC had not received a new contract from The Grand. The funds from the previous youth club's bank account had been transferred into the CPC's bank account.
- **Footpaths** – The fence alongside Footpath NS191 had been repaired by the owners of Leightons. There were still some tree stumps beside Footpath NS178. **Action:** Clerk to ask the Luddesdown Rights of Way Group to remove their posts from Owletts.
- **Owletts and other National Trust Properties** – The National Trust had not been aware of the trial opening of Owletts during the summer. The Baker artefacts would go into store if Owletts was closed to the public. Owletts would be rented out to someone else. The Baker Society is still being set up by the Baker family. Adam Holloway has been involved in lobbying the National Trust. **Action:** Cllr Booth agreed to write to the National Trust.
- **Village Sign** – Cllr Peterson-Pearce circulated some village sign designs for Ifield, Sole Street and Cobham. The signs are made from black cast metal and will be on a wooden post. The village names will be in gold lettering. It would be helpful if most of the parish councillors were in agreement. **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce to report back at the end of February.
- **Meadow Rooms** – The management committee had recently met and are looking for new committee members. There are proposals to install new windows in the main hall and the boiler had been replaced with a more economical model. The hire fees will be increased to cover the rising energy costs. There are several children's parties. Chris Antrobus, the Chair, has agreed to take on the organisation of Munchies on the Meadow.
- **Rural Kent Coffee & Information Project** – The scheme has now been closed.
- **King's Coronation** – Cllr's Dymond and Gabbitas offered to organise some events and will liaise with other village organisations. There may be a children's party.

18. Parishioners Comments - None

Meeting continues in Private

19. Correspondence & Announcements – A parishioner had asked if a hawthorn bush beside the war memorial that was damaged in the recent storms could be removed.

20. Finance

- Cheque Report – was proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Peterson-Pearce.
- Online bank account – **Action:** Clerk to resolve the issues with online banking.
- New bank account for the Youth Club – **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce offered to look for a new bank account for the youth club.

21. AOB – items from Councillors

Cllr Pryor said that some parishioners have asked if the front entrance could be reopened at the community shop. It was decided that this is not a parish council matter.

Cllr Dyer said that the pot holes on Round Street had been filled in by KCC but Southern Water had not fixed the water leak. There are many pot holes on the roads around the parish and these can be reported on KCC's website. **Action:** Clerk to raise with Southern Water.

Cllr Haig said the owners who live at Pilgrims expressed their gratitude to CPC for helping to get the bollards installed. Cllr Sweetland had been approached regarding obtaining extra bollards.

Cllr Dymond said that Sweeps Hole Pond was looking good and the flooding had stopped. The wall around the pump needs the weeds to be removed and the brick work needs repointing. **Action:** Cllr Gabbitas to forward the contact details for Mark Tickle to the Clerk.

Cllr Gabbitas said most of the wooden posts that support the bank along The Street from Owletts to the Meadow Rooms are rotten and have fallen over. **Action:** Clerk to raise with KCC Highways.

22. Next Public Meeting Tuesday 7th February 2023 at the Meadow Rooms