



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 11th June 2024 at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms

Present

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

Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Matt Mason,

Present

Cllr Julie Wilder (co-opted at meeting), Cllr Samir Jassal (GBC), Charles Amis (Clerk), 4 parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr Mike Booth, Cllr Bennett Smith, Cllr Russ Nichols, Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC),

2. Declarations of Interest – None

3. Minutes - The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9th April 2024 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Lane and seconded by Cllr Dymond.

4. The Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24, Section 1 of the Annual Governance Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2024 was approved and signed by the Vice Chairman and the Clerk.

5. The Accounting Statements for 2023/24, Section 2 of the Annual Governance Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2024 were signed by the Vice Chairman.

6. The proposed dates for the Exercise of Public Rights were noted from Monday 17th June 2024 to Monday 26th July 2024

7. The updated Asset Register for Cobham Parish Council had been circulated to all of the parish councillors prior to the meeting and were noted by all of the Parish Councillors present.

8. Co-option – There was complete support from everyone present for Julie Wilder's co-option to fill the Parish Councillor vacancy.

9. GBC Matters – Cllr Samir Jassal had asked GBC Planning Department for the bi-monthly planning meetings to be held on a monthly basis. There was a temporary appointment to cover Nick Brown's former position who had recently retired. Cllr Jassal had spoken to Stuart Bobbie, CEO at GBC, following the last planning meeting. **Action:** Cllr Jassal needs a quick email update on the current planning issues. Cllr Jassal and Cllr Sweetland were looking at Local Government grants for CPC.

10. Planning –

Cobham House Vineyard – The owner has submitted a new planning application where the agricultural building has been re-sited halfway down the field and further away from nearby properties. GBC Planning Department had rejected the previous planning application as the agricultural building was too visible and impact the surrounding landscape. The local residents had launched a judicial review against GBC. The owner had spoken to the local MP, Adam Holloway, who had spoken to Stuart Bobbie, CEO at GBC.

Norbond – The Planning Inspectorate had dismissed the site owner's appeal. The site was not suitable for storage units as it was next to green belt land. The Planning Inspectorate also rejected the planning enforcement notice issued by GBC as the wrong reasons for the enforcement had been used. GBC are deciding whether to enact a Judicial Review against the Planning Inspectorate's decision or to reissue a revised Enforcement Notice to the site owner. GBC had 28 days to respond to the Planning Inspectorate's quashing of GBC's enforcement notice and were seeking legal advice on how to proceed.

White Post Farm – The owner has appealed the Enforcement Notice issued by GBC. The Planning Inspectorate are due to carry out a site visit. **Action:** Cllr Jassal to find out if the site visit took place.

8 The Beeches, Sole Street – The owner wants to install a small extension to the side and rear. No objections.

Hartland House, Sole Street - The owner was carrying out a significant amount of work to the property. The owner was installing a new wall beside footpath NS192. **Action:** Cllr Mason to speak to the owner about the works. No objections.

Halfacre, Round Street - The owner is building a small extension. No objections.

7 Scratton Fields – The owner wants to install a small rear extension. No objections.

Lomas, Sole Street – The plan is to demolish the bungalow, Lomas, which is next to the Little Shop, and to build two detached houses. GBC had resubmitted the application as there had been changes to the plan.

Cllr Jassel left at 7.55pm

11. Traffic Group –

Sole Street – Update – Cllr Nichols continued to review the traffic calming options. The Traffic Group are proposing to carry out a survey of local residents for the different traffic calming options. KCC Highways have said CPC have used all of their allocated fund and any future road projects will need to be funded by CPC. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to speak to Cllr Nichols about the setting up of the next Traffic Meeting. Clerk to complete a briefing note on the proposed traffic calming measures at Sole Street.

A parishioner had the side of their car damaged by a speeding motorists who had overtaken their vehicle without leaving enough space to get passed. Witnesses had been approached for their possible dashboard camera footage.

The Clerk had circulated a link to Otford Parish Council's website. Otford Parish Council had used a firm of consultants who had encouraged KCC Highways to install some speed cushions and a chicane despite the lack of street lighting. **Action:** Clerk to speak to the Parish Councillor who helped to implement the scheme.

Cllr Dyer had attended a Traffic Seminar on Zoom that had been run by Ethos, a traffic consultancy firm, who had worked with several local authorities when implementing 20mph zones and traffic calming. The seminar gave the impression that there was no easy solution to slowing traffic.

Speed Watch – The Speed Watch group will be meeting on Saturday 15th June. Tony Rice, the previous Co-ordinator, will pass on the equipment to Chris Zgoda, the current co-ordinator. Tony Rice will carry on as the administrator for now. Chris has completed all of the training. It is fine for two volunteers to carry out Speed Watch sessions. **Action:** Clerk to send a list of Speed Watch volunteers to Chris Zgoda. Cllr Dymond needs to complete the basic training.

The Speed Indicator Device was still not working and it was asked who had the batteries for the SID. **Action:** Clerk to ask Cllr Smith and Cllr Nicholls if they know where the batteries for the SID are.

12. Lower Thames Crossing – The SOS for Transport may be give their decision on whether the LTC will be given approval by the end of June 2024 but this could be delayed until the middle of October. Some of the stakeholders had been asked for further information. The forthcoming General Election is likely to affect the deadline for the final decision.

13. Village Crime Group – All of the Parish Councillors were signed up to My Community Voice. The recent burglaries of the sheds and garages at Cobham College had been reported to the police.

There had been an incident at the Sports Ground car park on Wednesday 5th June. The CCTV has found some evidence.

14. Playing Fields Group – There was a design problem with new the new kitchen and Howdens are coming back to replace some of the items. The Community Pay Back Team have been painting the outside of the pavilion and will be returning in the summer to carry out some more work.

The drawings for the new patio are ready. The Sports Association will be submitting a planning application for the work. Work will start on the new ladies changing rooms. There were a lot of grants for resolving the drainage issues.

A new fence will be installed between the Bowls Club and the playing field to protect the bowlers from cricket balls. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs were offering a grant towards the installation of an all-weather path. One company had quoted for the work.

The 50th Anniversary party was a success and around 1000 people attended.

15. Public Toilets – The Sports Association have taken over the running of the public toilets and CPC have given the Sports Association a grant of £5000 to cover the running costs.

No further progress had been made with Business Stream and Cllr Booth was still dealing with the issues.

16. KALC/NALC – The next Gravesham Area KALC Meeting will be taking place on Tuesday 16th July at the Memorial Hall in Higham. It was mentioned that the other parish councils in Gravesham are also meeting regularly with GBC Planning Department.

17. St Mary's Church Rooms – The refurbishment of the St Mary's church Rooms is due to start from Friday 5th July 2024. The works had been delayed due to GBC using the building as a polling station on 4th July. Gransden have been awarded the awarded the contract for the work. Lisa Brooks, the project manager, had come to an agreement with GBC Planning Department regarding the replacement window frames, extra door and the outside landscaping.

The Local Funding Group had raised £1,200 at the recent dinner with a guest speaker.

18. Social Media – The CPC website had 560 page views over the past 30 days (Down 43%) and there were 290 unique visits (Down 7%). There was an average of 1.9315 unique page views per visit (Up 10%).

19. Other Village Matters

Defibrillators – It was suggested that the defibrillator be put on a new post beside Round Street. The defibrillator at SMCR will need to be moved when the refurbishment works start at the SMCR. CPC needs to get the agreement of the SMCR task group. **Action:** Cllr Mason to ask neighbour on the other side of Round Street if the defibrillator could be relocated there.

Youth Club – Only two children attended the youth club on Friday 24th May but this was the day before the start of Whitsun Half Term. The Youth workers plan to speak at a school assembly at Cobham Primary School. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to meet with the youth workers.

Footpaths – The footpath between Sole Street and Luddesdown was overgrown. The footpath between Round Street and Sole Street had recently been cleared. The KCC Rights of Way Team had said the surface on Scotland Lane would be upgraded following funding from the LTC Legacy Fund.

Village Sign – Cllr Lane had sent the village sign drawings that were originally prepared by Mat Peterson-Pearce to a design company who had quoted £1,200 for the work. The sign would be made from steel and the company will come back with three designs. The other village sign quotes had been around £7,000. It was suggested that the village sign for Sole Street be taken forward first. All of the parish Councillors who were present agreed to proceed with the next stage. **Action:** Cllr Lane to circulate the designs to all of the parish councillors.

Meadow Rooms - Nothing to report

Village Pump – Three quotes have been received for repairing the flint wall behind the village pump. Nothing has been agreed.

Wooden Posts around the War Memorial – The wooden posts have all been replaced. Everyone present was pleased with the work.

20. Parishioners Comments

A parishioner commented that KCC Highways had closed Halfpence Lane for one day on 7th June but there did not seem to be any repairs carried out. A pothole had been filled in and KCC Highways had closed Henhurst Road to repair the potholes on the side of the road.

A parishioner asked why KCC Highways or Kent Police did not appear to have a disaster recovery plan following an incident on the A2 where traffic leaves the A2 and diverts through Cobham and Luddesdown. Previously Cllr Booth and Cllr Mason had met with Highways England. **Action:** Cllr Mason to find out the information from the meeting held with Highways England. Clerk to ask PC Jo Hammond for a traffic management plan.

The recent accident on the A2 was caused by lorries parked on the hard shoulder. KCC had put in traffic cones by the London Bound carriageway past the petrol station to prevent this from taking place.

A parishioner raised the ongoing roof repairs at Cobham College. The previous company who had started work in 2023 had stopped December 2023 and had taken away most of their scaffolding. A

new company had been found to finish the repairs and will start work once the other company's scaffolding has been removed. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to speak to the Trustees at Cobham College.

A parishioner asked CPC to minute their support for an individual involved in an ongoing court case. As this is a legal matter, it is not appropriate to comment on the case publically.

Meeting continues in Private

21. Correspondence & Announcements – None

22. Finance

Payments made since the 14th May meeting

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
24/5/2024	Sports Association	Grant towards the running of the public toilets	£5000
30/5/2024	Medway Norse Ltd	Opening and cleaning the toilets 1 st -19 th May 2024	£337.61
6/6/2024	Clerk	Salary	£845.10
6/6/2024	Clerk	Pension	£23.71

Payments to be made after the 14th May Meeting

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
23/5/2024	Martin Fielder-White	Internal Audit for 2023-24 AGAR	£80
11/6/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£12.87
11/6/2024	SLCC	Clerk attending a training course on Planning on 10 th July	£78

Cllr Dyer proposed the payment report and Cllr Dymond seconded.

Clerk's Salary – The pay scale for the clerk's salary had increased by £49.40 per month. All of the parish councillors who were present agreed to the pay increase.

23. Items from Councillors – Cllr Dymond will not be able to attend the parish council meeting on Tuesday 9th July.

South & South East in Bloom will be carrying out their inspection of Cobham and Sole Street on Tuesday 18th June.

Cllr Smith was thanked for setting up the beacon for the D Day event. The bell ringers rang a quarter peal at 6.30pm and CPC expressed their gratitude. A member of the Royal British Legion lit the beacon at 9.15pm.

24. Next Meeting - Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9th July at the Meadow Rooms.