



**Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting**

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024 at 7.30pm**

**Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms**

**Present**

Cllr Mike Booth (Chair), Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Kirsty Lane

Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Julie Wilder, Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Russ Nichols, Cllr Matt Mason

**Present**

Charles Amis (Clerk), 8 parishioners

**1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Bennett Smith, 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 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Dyer. The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Lane.

**4. AGAR 2034/24** – All of the parish councillors had received a copy of the covering letter and the AGAR 2023/24 Form 3 prior to the meeting.

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

**6. Planning** – Cllr Dyer and Cllr Mason had met with Shazad Ghani and Sikdeep (Chima) Coyle last week.

**White Post Farm** – The Planning Inspectorate will be holding a hearing at 10am on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September at the Civic Centre in Gravesend. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to check if the hearing will be open to the public.

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

**Bluebell Barn** – The temporary planning permission has recently expired.

**St Mary's Church Rooms** – The planning issues have been resolved.

**4 Jeskyns Cottages, Jeskyns Road** – No objections from CPC.

**8 The Beeches, Sole Street** – with CPC.

**Cobham House Vineyard** – A parishioner said a decision for the planning application for Cobham House Vineyard by GBC is due on 30<sup>th</sup> September. The site is within a National Landscape (formerly an Area of Outstanding National Beauty). The owner has employed a barrister with an experience of viticulture. The owner wants to put another entrance to the vineyard on Gold Street which is by a blind bend. A traffic survey was carried out when Gold Street was closed.

Security staff were employed when the vines were being planted and were escorting the public along the public footpath and a security guard was taking photographs of walkers. A local resident has set up a website that includes an online survey for residents to provide their feedback. It was asked if Richard Gagg had spoken with Scripps. Scripps had grubbed out an orchard and were planning to plant vines. Cllr Jassal can't call in the planning application if it is permitted agricultural development. CPC had been informed by a parishioner that the owner had been leaving their refuse bin out for collection.

**Action:** Cllr Booth and Cllr Dyer to meet with Richard and Michelle Gagg. Cllr Dyer to write a letter to GBC on behalf of CPC regarding the Cobham Vineyard Planning Application. Cllr Dyer to speak to Cllr Jassal. Richard Gagg to send the Clerk the links to a survey to put on the website.

## **7. Traffic Group –**

**Sole Street – Update** – Cllr Nichols had been speaking with Cllr Bryan Sweetland and Neil Baker at KCC about the different options for controlling the speed of the traffic along Sole Street. Cllr Sweetland had offered to speak with Kent Police but there had been no response from KCC despite Cllr Nichols chasing them.

CPC would like to see Sole Street be made a 20mph zone. Discussions were had about installing average speed cameras beside Sole Street plus the installation of chicanes using lighting powered by solar panels.

It was asked if the Sole Street residents are prepared to have some street lighting for the chicanes. It was also asked how much this would cost. There is a possibility of some funding from the LTC mitigation fund. It was asked if CPC should run an official questionnaire for resident's views.

KCC had removed the advisory no lorry signs from the beginning of Gold Street near the junction with Sole Street. **Action:** Cllr Booth to ask Cllr Sweetland if the advisory no lorry signs could be reinstalled.

**Speed Watch** – Only three Speed Watch volunteers had turned up at the sessions so far which was disappointing considering the previous concerns of speeding by Sole Street residents. Alan Watson, Speed Watch Co-ordinator at Kent Police, had advised that the Speed Watch sessions should at least be carried out on a weekly basis and the times needed to be varied.

Other places in the UK had been trialling Unattended Speed Watch which includes a smart phone application. The application can take photographs of the road and sends a warning letter to the driver. It was noted that the Waze application shows speed cameras on their maps.

**Speed Indicator Device** – Cllr Smith had asked Matt Peterson-Pearce to hand back the laptop.

**Missing Chevron signs at Henhurst Road/Jeskyns Road junction** – **Action:** Clerk to ask KCC Highways when the chevron signs will be installed.

**Village Gateways** – CPC had been discussing the replacement of the village gateway at Halfpence Lane. The village gateway at Halfpence Lane is not visible from the road and the village gateway signs at Sole Street are broken. **Action:** Cllr Booth and Cllr Nichols to meet about taking this forward.

**8. Lower Thames Crossing** – The SOS for Transport was due to give their decision in June 2024 on whether the LTC may be given approval by 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 but the deadline for this decision could be extended further. There will be a meeting to introduce the development partners and Skanska will be carrying out the engineering on the Kent side of the Thames. The LTC Team are running a series of roadshows.

**9. Village Crime Group** – PC Jo Hammond regularly attends the Sole Street Neighbourhood watch meetings. Someone had tried to steal a caravan from Scripps's Farm. **Action:** Clerk to give PC Jo Hammond the dates for future meetings.

#### **10. Playing Fields Group –**

**Planned Improvements** - The remodelling works to the kitchen have been completed and the Community Payback Team have finished painting the outside of the pavilion.

**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** – Cllr Booth had asked an electrician, Duncan Holland, to carry out repairs to the electrics at the cricket pavilion. Henson Appleby will sign off the work and supply a safety certificate. The work will be completed by the end of October. John Jackson and Jim Jackson are in agreement.

**Quotes for the All Weather Path and new fencing** - It was asked if there was any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding available for the new all-weather path and new fencing for the Bowls Club and Tennis Club. The Clerk had received three 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. **Action:** Chris Broadley to send details of other companies who could lay the all-weather path and install the new fencing. Cllr Lane to keep looking for grants towards the all-weather path and fencing.

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.

**Memorial Bench** – A request for a memorial bench had been made by the son of a former member of the Cricket Club. Previously a beech tree with a plaque had been planted in memory. The memorial plaque has since been removed from the tree. All of the parish councillors present agreed to the installation of the memorial bench. The family of the member are likely to be funding the bench. CPC does not currently hold a policy document for the installation of memorial benches. The existing concrete benches need to be replaced. **Action:** Cllr Lane to send a policy document for memorial 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** - Clerk to ask Gullands if they hold a signed copy of the lease. Clerk to see if the Land Registry hold a copy of the signed lease.

**11. Public Toilets** – Business Stream are still in dispute with CPC and refuse to acknowledge there is a problem and will not send an engineer. CPC have paid around £3,000 over the past 6 years but Business Stream are still requesting £1,800 from CPC. CPC disagree with this figure and are planning to pay £1,200 to Business Stream.

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.

**Action:** It was agreed by all of the parish councillors who were present that CPC pay Business Stream £1,230.51 as per invoice.

**12. KALC/NALC** – The next Gravesham Area KALC Meeting will be taking place on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October at the Village Hall in Shorne.

**13. St Mary's Church Rooms** – Gransden started work on the refurbishment of the SMCR on 5<sup>th</sup> July before the building regulations had expired. Lisa Brooks, the Project Manager, has a site meeting once a month with Gransdens. Gransdens are employing 3-4 workers. It is hoped that the works will be finished by December.

The inside is being totally rewired, the old entrance, toilet and kitchen and staging have been removed. A new disabled entrance is being installed and the new windows will look more in keeping with the style of the building. Most of the wooden cladding will be kept and any new replacement cladding will be in a similar style.

The total cost of the works is £334,000. Some of the grant suppliers want to see photographs or receipts of the work before paying the grant towards the works. Ron Chamberlain thanked CPC for their support and supplied a recent balance sheet for the works.

The local Funding group have run several successful events and there will be a wreath making workshop near Christmas.

**14. Social Media** – The CPC website had 1122 page views over the past 30 days (Up 61%) and there were 713 unique visits over the past 30 days (Up 66%). There was an average of 1.6535 average page views per visit (Up 2%).

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

**Defibrillators** – The Round Street defibrillator will be returned to its original position within 4 weeks. Gransden had kindly placed the defibrillator at the St Mary's Church Rooms on to the adjacent security fencing. A parishioner had said the defibrillator outside Cobham Bowls Club had been damaged

**Youth Club** – Cllr Dyer had attended the last youth club session in July. There had been no children and Cllr Dyer had spoken with the youth workers at The Grand about their plans to keep the youth club viable. The youth workers plan to speak at an assembly at Cobham Primary School. It was agreed that CPC would stop funding after December if the attendances had not improved.

**Footpaths** – Footpath NS191 is partially flooded from a nearby property. **Action:** Clerk to write a letter to the owner. Cllr Dyer agreed to speak to the owners.

**Village Sign** – Cllr Lane had circulated the village sign designs to all of the parish councillors. Each sign will cost £1,400 plus the cost of the post and installation. It was suggested that a possible site for the sign could be the small green by Scratton Fields at Sole Street and on the corner of The Street and Lawrence Drive at Cobham. **Action:** Clerk to ask KCC’s permission for installing the village signs at Scratton Fields and Lawrence Drive.

**Meadow Rooms** - Nothing to report

**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:** Clerk to get three quotes for each piece of work. Cllr Pryor agreed to paint the pump.

**Children’s Play Area checks** – GBC have confirmed that they carry out weekly checks of the playground equipment. **Action:** Cllr Pryor to repair the gate.

**16. Parishioners Comments**

A parishioner asked if the field behind the barns along Lodge Lane could be used as a temporary car park. The field behind the war memorial had been used as temporary car park for previous village events.

A parishioner asked if the community bus could be restarted. KCC are offering grants to set up community run bus services but it was asked who would pay for the bus in the long term. The previous community bus had not been well used latterly. It was asked if the residents are making use of the 416 bus route. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to raise at the next Gravesham KALC Area Meeting. Clerk to raise at the next Gravesham Clerk’s meeting.

A resident had written to the trustees regarding the ongoing repair work to the roof of the college as the residents had not been kept informed. The works to the south west corner of the college has been completed. The Trustees at Cobham College are meeting in the first week of October.

**Meeting continues in Private**

**17. Correspondence & Announcements** – None

**18. Finance**

**Payments made since the 9th July meeting**

Date of payment	Company	Reason	Amount
31/7/2024	Clerk	Pension	£27.18
7/8/2024	Clerk	Salary 1 <sup>st</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024	£920.72
13/8/2024	Clerk	Microsoft Office Software Licence – Reimburse clerk	£59.99
2/9/2024	Clerk	Salary 1 <sup>st</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup> August 2024	£898.72
4/9/2024	Clerk	Pension	£27.18
5/9/2024	Fastnet International Ltd	Professional Hosting	£115.06

**Payments to be made after the 17<sup>th</sup> September Meeting**

Date of Payment	Company	Reason	Amount
16/9/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£13.95
18/9/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£11.97

**Payments received since 9<sup>th</sup> July Meeting**

Date of Payment	Company	Reason	Amount
18/7/2024	Two Women EV Party in Park	Donation for the Youth Club	£100
22/8/2024	Cobham Cricket Club	Reimburse CPC for insurance for the sports pavilion for 2022/23	£1,163.86

Cllr Dyer proposed the payment report and Cllr Dymond seconded.

It was agreed that CPC would contribute towards the clerk's broadband package.

**19. Items from Councillors – The** Cobham Summer Fete had been a success and the weather had been good. Cllr Booth thanked the people who had organised the fete.

**20. Next Meeting - Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October at the Meadow Rooms.**