



## **Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 8pm**

**Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms**

Present

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

Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Ben Smith,

Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas, Cllr Matt Mason

Present

Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Charles Amis (Clerk)

6 Parishioners

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

**2. Minutes** – The minutes for the Parish Council Budget Meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Dymond

**3. Declarations of Interest** – None

**4. Matters Arising**

**Youth Club** – The youth club had met for the first time since Covid on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January at the Meadow Rooms. Thanks to the Grand providing 2 youth workers to run it - 32 young people attended the first session. CPC have agreed to support the youth club to get it started but the youth club needs to be run separately from CPC in the long term. It was agreed that CPC will fund a third youth worker as per The Grand's policy of 1 youth worker per 15 youngsters.

**Action:** Cllr Booth and Cllr Dyer need to sign the SLA and CPC are still waiting for a revised invoice.

**Public Toilets/Business Rates** – **Action:** Clerk has confirmed details of the Non-Domestic Rating (Public Lavatories) Act 2021 **which states that no business rates will be charged in 2022**

**5. KCC Matters** – Cllr Bryan Sweetland

**Flooding on Halfpence Lane** – KCC Highways have agreed to install earth bunds beside the pond to hold back the water.

**Batts Road** – The verges along Batts Road have been damaged by an HGV who was making a delivery to Lodge Farm. Cllr Rice has been in contact with Cllr Sweetland and KCC. KCC Highways staff are due to inspect and repair the damage. The KCC Recharge Team are likely to approach the transport company owner to recover the costs.

**Action:** Cllr Rice to review the current HGV signage and feedback to KCC Highways.

## **6. GBC Matters – Cllr Tony Rice**

**New Village Car Park** – GBC has not completely refused permission for a visitor's car park off Halfpence Lane. The parkland was brought by GBC after HS1 had opened to protect from development. It was suggested that an alternative site for a village car park could be the unused allotments behind Cobham College.

**Action:** Cllr Rice will keep pursuing with Stuart Bobbie at GBC.

**Church Road Parking** – It was agreed that if the double yellow lines were extended further along Church Road the parking would move nearer to the residents who had been the main complainants about the parking in the first place. It was decided not to take any further action.

## **7. KALC/NALC – Rosemary Dymond**

New Romney Town Council have set up a computer programme to monitor their carbon footprint but only certain sections are applicable for rural parishes. It was agreed this was not suitable for Cobham.

KCC are introducing a wilding scheme where the verges are cut less often. Probably more about saving money than giving credence to Wilding. There is a wilding area by Sole Street Station and other areas were discussed - including by the war memorial, outside the old police houses, and on the corner of Lawrence Drive. It was felt more important that these areas were kept neat and tidy.

GBC is pressing on with their carbon neutral strategy for up to 2030.

## **8. Planning Group – Cllr Steve Dyer**

**Norbond Site** – GBC have refused retrospective planning permission. Previously Cllr Rice had escalated this case to Nick Brown, Head of Planning at GBC. GBC will be taking enforcement action and will be carrying out a site inspection next week. It is likely that the site owner will appeal.

**White Post Farm** – This planning application has been with the Planning Inspectorate for 16 months. Cllr Rice had sent an email to the Planning Inspectorate asking for an update.

**Orchard Cottage, Round Street** – CPC had objected.

**Bluebell Farm, Round Street** – GBC will update planning application as this had expired.

**35 The Street** – No objection

**Telecoms Mast, Colewood Reservoir** - No objection

**1 Gables Cottage, Round Street** – No objection

**Green Hedges, The Street** – No objection

**Rochester & Cobham Golf Club** – No objection. Planning application for building to store golf trolleys.

**14 Scratton Fields** - Objected

**The Railway PH, Sole Street** – No objection

**9 Manor Road** – No objection

**Long Reach, Sole Street** – with the planning working group

**The Barn, Jeskyns Road** – with the planning working group

**Neighbourhood Plan** - It was decided not to take this any further.

## **9. Traffic Group**

**The Street – Traffic Calming Scheme.** Installation starting 12th February.

The scheme has been designed to reduce the width of the carriageway to single file traffic by installing wooden bollards and widening the footway in places the length of the Street from 25 – 55 with priority from both ends.

Cllr Booth explained that the parish council had been working with others over the last 4-5years to find a scheme to solve the traffic issues in The Street (kerb mounting, speed, and congestion) and this scheme was not necessarily the final answer but the latest attempt to find a solution.

As the discussion continued it soon became apparent that despite the plans of the scheme having reached the public domain via facebook the local residents had not been officially notified by a KCC Highways door to door mail out as planned.

This scheme was born last summer and funding was approved through a bidding process last July but bearing in mind the current budget restrictions it had to be agreed for the works to be completed in the current financial year – hence the reason that there had not been a full formal consultation.

Part of this scheme included the need to introduce the DYL's outside the church to keep traffic sight lines open. This did involve a consultation where there had been 21 responses of which 17 responses supported the scheme and 3 were opposed. This encouraged the council to continue to approval of the overall narrowing scheme.

This may not be the final answer and will be continually reviewed.

**Action:** Cllr Booth to chase the distribution of the plan and details of the changes. Cllr Booth to speak to Sevi at the community shop with regard to the financial effect of the closure.

**Batts Road** - A parishioner attending the meeting was concerned about traffic using Batts Road as a diversion route when The Street was closed. It was suggested that a temporary no entry sign could be installed at the junction of Gold Street and Batts Road but to leave Cobhambury Road and Henley Street as they are. The suggested diversion route by KCC is a very long way round through Gravesend but KCC would have needed to gain Highways England's permission to use the A2. Electronic signs could be sited at the Cobham Hall Roundabout to warn traffic of the road closure although CPC may need to pay for this.

**Action:** Cllr Booth to take forward with KCC Highways.

**War Memorial Roundabout** – KCC Highways have agreed to install wooden bollards along the hedge line outside Pilgrims to protect the property from cars over shooting the roundabout and leaving the road.

It was also suggested that flower troughs could be installed in front of the hedge.

**Speedwatch** – Cllr Rice has prepared a new rota for the spring and summer.

**The Speed Indicator Device (SID)** - is working again and currently outside Green Hedges on The Street. It was suggested that the screen that displays on the SID could be switched off while the SID could still be used to collect traffic speed data.

**Action:** Data from the SID needs to be sent to Ian Grigor at KCC Highways.

**Lower Thames Crossing** – The consultation has closed and the impact from the original consultation has been reduced. Cllr Booth and Cllr Dyer to ask Eva Simunovic about funding for local projects from the LTC legacy fund.

**10. Village Crime Group** – The PCSOs are holding a surgery on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January outside the St Mary's Church Rooms. Both of the PCSOs had attended a meeting with the Sole Street Neighbourhood Watch. Kent Police have introduced My Community Voice where Kent Police send out news and information to the general public and the public can feedback their views and concerns.

**Action:** Put up My Community Voice posters on to the noticeboards.

## **11. Playing Fields**

**Children's Corner Refurbishment** – Nothing to report.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Points** – CPC are still waiting to hear from KCC regarding the installation of 3 charging points in the playing fields car park.

**12. Public Toilets** – It was agreed at last months Budget Meeting to fund the public toilets for another year. CPC can claim up to £1,147 towards the costs of opening the toilets post Covid from the KCC Contain Outbreak Management Fund. Clerk to complete online application for the Contain Outbreak Management Fund.

**Action:** Need to get a plumber to fix the water supply to foot pedal for the hand basin in the ladies toilet.

**Action:** Clerk to obtain another quote for the timed electronic locks for the toilets.

**Action:** Cllr Booth to check the lighting in the toilets which appears to be on all the time.

**13. St Marys Church Rooms** – The architect's plans had gone to the builders for tendering.

A lot more money still needs to be raised to complete the restoration of the building but it is possible that the cost of labour and the materials are increasing far more quickly than the fund raising can keep up with

**Action:** Cllr Dymond to speak to the funding group.

**14. Social Media – Website & Facebook** – Cllr Booth is concerned that the current approach is not really fit for purpose and we need a Media Manager.

**Action:** Clerk to look at other parish council websites. Clerk to feedback at the next parish council meeting. Clerk to email James Blackett about taking ownership of the of the parish council email addresses.

**Parish Magazine** – The residents of Cobham College would like to receive a hard copy of the parish magazine and are willing to pay for this.

**Action:** Chris Broadley to speak to the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council.

## **15. Other Village Matters**

**Village Sign** – Nothing to report.

**Meadow Rooms** – The Chairman of the Management Committee sent an update. The upgrade to the Internet access from the Meadow Room has been completed, with a significant upgrade in the bandwidth available to users and a greater increase in Wi-Fi coverage. In addition signage for the CCTV has been put up and the new notice board has been installed outside the Meadow Room on the block paved area. The Meadow Rooms are hoping to host a line dance club once a month from January. Cash reserves are at a solid level and sufficient to maintain the operations, with bookings and enquiries continuing to be healthy.

**Footpaths** – The No Cycling signs had been installed along footpath NS178.

#### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

**Action:** Cllr Dymond and Cllr Smith to speak to Cllr Peterson-Pearce regarding Munchies on the Meadow event which could run over two days. The clerk had received an email from the Clerk at Vigo asking what events the other parish councils had organised and the dates for the planned events. It was asked if The Street could be closed for a day over bank holiday weekend.

**Defibrillator** – Concerns were raised over the broken defibrillator at Cobham College despite a resident raising this several years ago. It was felt that there should at least be two defibrillators at the college as there are 41 residents. The Chairman expressed his concern that the management of the New College did not consider it important to provide defibrillators for the residents.

**Action:** Cllr Dymond to speak to the Secretary at Cobham College. Chairman to write a letter to the Trustees at Cobham College if the situation is not resolved

Cllr Mason said there were no instructions on how to use the defibrillator at Sole Street. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to check for the instructions. Clerk to check Defibrillator maintenance requirements.

Gravesham Life Saving Club are running a defibrillator training session for the parish residents on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January. **Action:** Clerk to check with Gravesham Life Saving how much other organisations pay for their defibrillator training. CPC could match the funding.

**Assets of Community Value** – **Action:** Clerk to complete an Assets of Community Value form for The Little Shop at Sole Street, the Darnley Arms and Cobham College.

**Bus Stop** – The Clerk had sent a request from KCC website about moving the bus stop from outside Cobham Church to opposite the Leather Bottle. This had been raised with Cllr Sweetland and KCC Highways. **Action:** Clerk to chase KCC for a response.

**16. Parishioners Comments** – There were no parishioner's comments.

#### **Meeting Continues in Private**

##### **AOB – Items from Councillors**

Some of the white posts around the war memorial have fallen over and need to be replaced. It was suggested putting in some boulders alongside the kerb but this would make it difficult for lorries to turn into Lodge Lane.

Water is collecting on the new patch that was laid over the sink hole in Halfpence Lane. The patching is sinking due to lorries turning the corner.

**Action:** Clerk to follow up on the installation of a textile recycling bin at the playing fields or the Meadow Rooms for the Children's Air Ambulance.

Cllr Dyer proposed the cheque report and Cllr Dymond seconded. Cllr Booth signed the cheque report.

The clerk said that his pension had been set up with NEST.

The clerk reported that he had completed the Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) qualification.

Meeting Closed at 10.15pm