



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

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at 8pm**

**Meeting took place at the Meadow Rooms**

### **Present**

Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Mat Peterson-Pearce, Cllr Robert Pryor  
Cllr Rosemary Dymond, Cllr Ben Smith, Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Matt Mason

### **Present**

Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Charles Amis (Clerk), 3 Parishioners

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Mike Booth, Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas, Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC)
- 2. Minutes** - The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Haig and seconded by Cllr Dyer.
- 3. Declarations of Interest** – None
- 4. Matters Arising from previous meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022** – Already covered in the agenda
- 5. KCC Matters – Cllr Sweetland**

**Bus Stop outside the Church** – KCC conducted a site visit at the beginning of August. There is nothing to report.

**Bus Stop at the corner of Round Street and Sole Street** – There is nothing to report.

**Bollard outside 46, The Street** – There is a debate between KCC and CPC on who is responsible for replacing the bollard. KCC originally installed the bollard.

**Replace wooden bollard opposite the Ship PH** – KCC has agreed to action this but still waiting for them to carry out the work.

**Bollards to protect Pilgrims and new signage at the war memorial** – KCC has agreed to action this but still waiting for them to carry out the work.

**New white lining at Lodge Lane** – KCC is unable to refresh the white lines at Lodge Lane because the road is private. A parishioner has agreed to buy paint and to paint the white lines but needs permission from the owner of Lodge Lane. **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce to speak to Sacha Dyer.

**Village Gateways Features – Halfpence Lane, Cobhambury Road & Owletts** – CPC had received a quote from KCC for £2,500 for each gateway. **Action:** CPC need to chase KCC for a response.

**Weight restriction on Halfpence Lane** – There is a 7.5 tonne weight limit on Halfpence Lane from the Cobham Hall Roundabout. It was suggested that extra signage be added to help motorists.

**Flooding on Halfpence Lane** – KCC Highways have built a wall alongside the pond by the entrance to Ashenbank Wood car park and have cleared the soakaways.

**Jeskyns Court, Jeskyns Road** – KCC have been in contact with the owner of Jeskyns Court to find a solution to the problem. The road surface was raised with the recent resurfacing.

**6. GBC Matters – Cllr Rice** – Nothing to report.

**7. KALC/NALC – Cllr Dymond** – There is the KALC AGM on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November. Some of the issues to be raised was village air pollution and cycle paths. It was suggested that painted cycle lanes could be installed along Sole Street. GBC have lots of small sections of cycle paths that need to be linked together. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to feedback to KALC.

## **8. Planning – Cllr Dyer**

**Norbond** – The site owners have appealed against the planning decision by GBC. Cllr Mason has put together letter to send to the Stuart Bobbie, CEO at GBC. **Action:** Clerk to send letter to Stuart Bobbie.

**White Post Farm** – Cllr Rice had been in contact with Planning Inspectorate. Cllr Rice raised with the PINS that it had been two years since the start date of the appeal and in the interim multiple progress enquiries have been made. Cllr Rice asked the Planning Inspectorate the following questions:

Could someone please provide a meaningful update on what PINS is planning to do to progress this appeal to a conclusion?

Additionally, could someone please let me know whether PINS has any responsibility to conclude an appeal within any maximum timeframe, or whether it is in fact allowed to do to progress this appeal to a conclusion?

Additionally, could someone please let me know whether PINS has any responsibility to conclude an appeal within any maximum timeframe, or whether it is in fact allowed to do it in any timeframe it chooses at its own discretion?

**Orchard Cottage, Round Street** – GBC have approved the planning application subject to conditions. The conditions are planting new trees and hedges and includes indigenous species around the garden and the paddock and around the entrance to the paddock.

**1 Eden Villas, Round Street** – **Action:** Cllr Dyer to check if replacement windows are compliant.

**Singlewell Infrastructure Maintenance Depot** – CPC have objected.

**Jeskyns Country Park** – A parishioner had notified CPC that a wooden building had been built on Jeskyns Country Park. This has now been removed following a visit by GBC Planning Enforcement.

A parishioner raised the issue of planning approval conditions being ignored by the owners of Cranbourne Farm and Bluebell Barn. The owner of Cranbourne Farm has installed an indoor riding arena and the existing outdoor riding arena had been relocated.

## **9. Traffic Group – Cllr Mason**

**Pavement outside the Darnley Arms** – Trudie Mochrie, the landlady, had written a letter to CPC regarding outstanding issue of rainwater entering the Darnley Arms following the recent profiling of the pavement outside. CPC have been chasing KCC Highways to resolve this issue. **Action:** Cllr Rice advised Trudie Mochrie to log a complaint on to the KCC website.

**DYL outside Cobham Church** – There are no parking restrictions signs.

**Speed Indicator Device** – The SID is currently by the junction with Sole Street and Scratton Fields. There had been problems with the batteries and only one battery is working.

**Sole Street Traffic Feasibility Study** – Cllr Booth had circulated a draft report from KCC with some suggestions.

**10. Lower Thames Cross Crossing** – Cllr Booth and Cllr Dyer have a copy of the statement of common ground to review. The date for the roadshow at Dartford Town Centre has been moved. There is a two day roadshow at Bluewater. It is proposed that Scotland Lane will be downgraded from a byway to a bridleway. Concerns were expressed regarding traffic and disruption during the construction phase. **Action:** Cllr Dyer to circulate the statement of common ground,

**11. Village Crime Group** – The Cricket Club had been broken into and the Ship PH had heating oil stolen from their tank. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to ask the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator to arrange a meeting. Clerk to ask the PCSOs to start sending their monthly reports again.

## **12. Playing Fields**

**Children's Corner Refurbishment** – CPC had received a grant from the National Lottery and are waiting to hear back from Tesco for their grant application. It was suggested that an all-weather path be created from the steps by the cricket pavilion to the playground.

**Electric Vehicle Charging Points** – CPC are still waiting to hear back from KCC.

**Sports Association – Funding for refurbishment for sports association** – CPC would like to see the proposals for the sports pavilion are.

**Car Park** – The contractor, Mackelden, who had previously surfaced The Landway, had been asked to quote for the resurfacing of the area of the car park beside the Bowls Club. It was felt by some of the parish councillors that the costs should be shared with the Sports Association, Bowls Club and possibly Cobham Primary School.

**13. Public Toilets** – It was said that the toilets are a significant expense for the parish. The toilets are well used when there are sport events on. The volunteer who closes the toilets is stepping down and the volunteer who was due to take over is now unable to take this on to due to work commitments. **Action:** Cllr Dyer offered to obtain a counter device to record the usage of the toilets.

## **14. St Mary's Church Rooms**

**Refurbishment** – A local appeal raised £10,000 and a table top sale raised £1,450. The Gilbert & Sullivan supper made £950 and the series of art lectures brought in £833. There will be a wreath making event in December. The Local Funding Group is hoping to raise £9,000 to match fund a grant application for the All Churches Trust.

**Asset of Community Value** – The Local Funding Group thanked CPC for applying for the Asset of Community Value.

**Withdrawal of Planning Permission** – Cobham Parochial Church Council need to reapply for planning permission to restart the building work. The local funding group would like to appoint another architect.

## **15. Social Media – Website & Facebook**

**Stats of use of Facebook & CPC Website** – **Action:** Cllr Peterson-Pearce to produce a report on the statistics.

**Parish Magazine** – the uptake for the parish magazine has been high. The magazine was missed when it was not printed during Covid.

## **16. Other Village Matters**

**Cobham Parking** – CPC has approached GBC several times on setting up a car park off Halfpence Lane. The land is owned by GBC as part of the compensation for the building of HS1 across Cobham Park and is currently rented to a tenant farmer. The car park would require planning permission as it is greenbelt land. GBC has advised that allowing parking in a farmer's field for 28 days per year is a permitted development and it can be any day in the year. Another field could also be opened which could be opened for parking to allow another 28 days for parking. There would be an opportunity to use another farmer's field for another 28 days.

A resident from Lawrence Drive had asked GBC if a controlled parking zone could be installed but this did not have the full support of local residents.

**Cobham College** – There had been no response to a letter sent by CPC to Cobham College regarding their defibrillator.

**Defibrillator Maintenance** – Cllr Mason is demolishing his garage and the defibrillator which is attached to the wall needs to be moved to another position.

**Youth Club** – The youth club remains popular although there were less youngsters at the last meeting. The Grand are providing youth workers until December 2022. A parent has volunteered to manage the finances.

**Village Sign** – CPC have been quoted up to £7,000 for a village sign and three would be needed for Cobham, Sole Street and Ifield. It was suggested that parishioners could vote on whether to have a village sign.

**Meadow Rooms** - July and August saw the Meadow Room host a 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration, a Running Club Meeting, a Kennel Club Meeting, band practice and 11 children's parties, most of the parties made good use of the Meadow thanks to the glorious weather. Current regular bookings are the WI and a circle dancing club who meet monthly.

The works to the roadside verge and entrance were completed with the replacement of the wooden bollards on the grass verge by The Street and the gate posts to the right and left of the car park entrance. Also, the fencing at the far end of the car park by the roadside, was made permanent with a pedestrian gate installed across the gap in the hedge for easier access during events etc.

The repairs to the dropped curb stones are still to be undertaken along with the refurbishment of the old noticeboard that is to be repurposed as an event sign.

Cash reserves are at a solid level and sufficient to maintain the operations, with bookings and enquiries continuing to be healthy.

**Footpaths** – The fence alongside Footpath NS191 still needs to be repaired. The owner has a large aggressive dog which is able to escape from the garden due to the large gaps in the fence. GBC needs to enforce the dog fouling on Footpath NS191 and the pavements beside Manor Road.

**Action:** Cllr Smith offered to speak to the owner. Clerk to report the fence to John Pelham. Cllr Smith agreed to remove the tree roots from Footpath NS178.

**Assets of Community Value** – The owners of The Little Shop had been opposed to registering their premises as an Asset of Community Value.

**Rural Kent Coffee & Information Point** – This has been suspended due to the CEO resigning and the volunteers are unable to run the pop up café sessions as they do not have anyone to report to.

Previously the Rural Kent Coffee & Information Project had visited St Mary's Church Room four times during the summer. The sessions have been very successful and around 12-18 residents have visited the café. On three visits the sessions have been outside, which has attracted passer byes including cyclists. Another session took place inside the Church Rooms where an organisation called Imago also attended. Mandy Colson, KCC Warden has also attended several sessions to provide advice and guidance. **Action:** Cllr Dymond and the Clerk will find out how the other GBC parish's pop up café's are running.

**Owletts and other National Trust Properties** – Owletts had their last possible open day on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September. There have been around 1000 visitors to Owletts this season despite the National Trust cutting open days from every Sunday from April to September to just one open day per month. The Baker family are planning to create a Sir Herbert Baker Society.

**Proposed installation of a handrail at Cobham Church** – Cobham Parochial Church Council have suggested installing a handrail with metal posts and wooden rail. This would run from the slope by the bus stop to the church door. Concerns were raised that maintenance vehicles would not be able to access the church. Cobham PCC are looking to apply for a grant from CPC. **Action:** The PCC will come back with the costs of the handrail.

**Citizens Advice Bureau** – It was decided not to support the Citizens Advice Bureau. **Action:** The Clerk will send a reply to CAB.

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

### Meeting continues in Private

### **18. Correspondence & Announcements**

The clerk had received an email from a visitor who had incurred a parking fine when leaving their car on the double yellow lines by Cobham Church. They had written to GBC to appeal and asked for CPC's help.

The Clerk had attended the Clerk's Conference at Ditton Village Hall on 7<sup>th</sup> September.

Cobham was awarded Village of the Year 2022 by South and South East in Bloom

### **19. Finance**

**Cheque report** – Cllr Dyer proposed and Cllr Dymond seconded.

**Opportunity to choose another External Auditor** – The contract for the existing external auditor is coming up for renewal and a new external auditor may be appointed. The clerk had circulated an email with these details which also gives CPC an opportunity to appoint their own external auditor.

**New bank account for the Youth Club** – The Clerk has opened a new bank account with the Co-operative Bank for the youth club. CPC are still waiting for the money to be transferred from the previous bank account.

#### **20. AOB – items from Councillors**

Cllr Pryor said the cherry tree at the bottom of the garden to the left of The Landway needed to be cut back. **Action:** Cllr Smith to speak to the owner/groundsmen.

**Action:** Cllr Haig asked the Clerk to find out the organisations that use the St Mary's Church Rooms.

**21. Next Meeting – Parish Council Meeting at 8pm on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November at the Meadow Rooms.**