



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 5th November 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 Rosemary Dymond,
Cllr Julie Wilder, Cllr Matt Mason, Cllr Robert Pryor

Present

Charles Amis (Clerk), 14 parishioners

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – Cllr Bennett Smith, Cllr Russ Nichols, 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 1st October 2024 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Lane and seconded by Cllr Dyer.
- 4. Building links between Cobham and a village in Ukraine** – Cllr Jordan Meade, a GBC and KCC Councillor was unable to attend.
- 5. GBC Matters** – Nothing to report.
- 6. Planning** – Cllr Dyer and Cllr Mason are meeting with GBC Planning department on

Cobham House Vineyard – The owners attended this meeting to have their say, attempting to counter some of the rumours about their plans for Cobham House Vineyard. A number of local residents also attended.

The owner told those present there will not be a bottling plant on site and bottling will take place once a year for 15 hours at the harvest. The owner estimated that 55,000 bottles would be produced over the next five years. The vineyard will be a family run business and on a smaller scale compared to Silverhand. The owner said they would not be processing grapes for other vineyards and had no further plans to buy any more land.

The agricultural building will house a tractor, mower and pesticides plus a storage container, pressing machine and barrels. There will be no windows on the side of the barn facing towards nearby properties and the entrance and the windows will be on the other side. The owner had left space in the middle of the field for the agricultural building but according to the owner GBC were not happy with this location. GBC Planning had specified that the building must be 25 metres from

the nearest road and railway. The GBC Planning Enforcement have visited several times and the last visit was in September.

The owner had carried out a road safety audit. Deliveries will be made across Adrian Scripps land from The Street at Cobham which would avoid Gold Street which is unsuitable. The owner has asked their suppliers if their deliveries could be made by smaller lorries and the deliveries would be less than once a week. **Action:** The owner will confirm the details of the delivery lorries if given an email address.

The owner said that he had considered siting the barn at Batts Road but GBC have said they would not give permission for that site.

The Chair stated that CPC would like to see the owner make a full planning application for the agricultural building. CPC do not think that development under Permitted Development Rights would provide enough control over what takes place on the land in the future.

The owner does not any plans to divert the footpaths across the land and has been maintaining the footpaths. Wild flowers are now growing beside the footpath.

Norbond – GBC have submitted a revised enforcement notice and that came into effect on the 8th October but an appeal has been submitted against this enforcement notice by the owner.

White Post Farm – The Planning Inspectorate held a hearing at 10am on Wednesday 25th September which went through all of the areas that the owner was appealing. It may be some time before the Planning Inspectorate make their decision.

Brickhole Cottage, 4 Battle Street – The owner has applied to replace the timber windows and doors. Currently with the planning group.

Cobham Service Station South – The owners have applied to install a wall mounted small format illuminated advertising display. Currently with the planning group.

A small piece of woodland is for sale at White Post Lane and it appeared that hard standing is being installed. CPC will be monitoring the situation

7. Traffic Group –

Sole Street – Update – Nothing to report.

Speed Watch – The Speed Watch Group has been re-established successfully. The Speed Watch sessions need a minimum of 3 volunteers per session, and they are trying to alternate between Sole Street and Cobham during the same week. More Speed Watch volunteers are needed for Sole Street and it only requires online registration and training. **Action:** Contact the Parish Clerk via the details below.

The Speed Watch sessions are allowed to run during daylight hours at 30 minutes after sunrise and 30 minutes before sunset. The local beat officer has offered to attend with a speed gun. A recent Speed Watch session at The Street recorded 429 vehicles passing through of which 10 vehicles were travelling at over 35mph. The Speed Watch sessions had recorded over 10 hours, 70 motorists were speeding and 5 motorists had received a letter from the police. Kent Police had previously said that 20mph zones were not enforceable. According to the Speed Indicator Device the average speed of traffic appeared to be 29mph in Sole Street. **Action:** Cllr Booth to send Steve Holden the details about the non-enforcement by Kent Police of the 20mph zones.

A Cobham resident had written to say they had carried a survey on the number of vehicles that had clipped pedestrians along The Street. The survey had shown there were 18 pedestrians who had been clipped by passing vehicles after the bollards had been installed. **Action:** Clerk to forward email to Cllr Bryan Sweetland, Emma Tilbury and Kevin Gore for their feedback.

Speed Indicator Device (SID) – The Speed Indicator Device is now working. Cllr Smith has purchased a spare battery charger. The SID will spend one month in Sole Street and one month in Cobham. The Speed Indicator Device will record those vehicles travelling over the speed limit.

Village Gateways – Cllr Booth and Cllr Nichols will be meeting at the weekend to discuss the village gateways. The village gateways help to warn motorists that they are entering the village.

8. Lower Thames Crossing – The Secretary of State for Transport has deferred their decision on whether the LTC may be given approval to the 23rd May 2025 and the government may be looking at the costs of the project. The LTC Team had run a series of roadshows locally but this may be because the decision to defer next year had not been made. Highways England had bought several properties along Thong Lane.

9. Village Crime Group – Following the survey by KCC and the reduction in funding, the Community Warden who covered some of the rural areas of Gravesham will be moved to Gravesend and shared with the community warden who covers the Dartford area. Vigo Parish Council have asked if all of the parish councils in Gravesham would like to help fund a Community Warden who cover the rural parishes. A meeting will be taking place at 2pm on Tuesday 26th November at the Meadow Rooms with the representatives from the parish councils in Gravesham to discuss this.

The Neighbourhood Watch had been focusing on bogus callers and scams.

10. Playing Fields Group –

Planning Permission for the patio - Cllr Lane and Chris Broadley had submitted a planning application through the Sports Association and are waiting for the application to be validated. The Sports Association will be able to apply for grants towards the work for the new patio once the planning permission has been granted. Cllr Lane was applying to the National Lottery for a grant.

Quotes for the All Weather Path and new fencing – The Clerk had sent all of the parish councillors the quotes for the work from three potential companies. Cllr Booth had met with James Young, GBC Parks and Open Spaces, at a recent meeting and he offered to seek another quote for the work. The work for the new fencing will go ahead as soon as sufficient quotes are received and approved by CPC. It was suggested that the fencing project should include sufficient protection for the bowls green and the tennis courts. Mick Ward from Cobham Colts Cricket had agreed to project manage the work for the patio.

Insurance – **Action:** Clerk to ask Zurich Municipal for a breakdown for the Sports and Pavilion and the Toilets.

Replacement Benches – The Clerk had circulated some proposed designs to replace the existing seven benches that are damaged. It was suggested that the design of the new benches could be similar to the current bench by Scratton Fields. It was suggested if individuals or clubs could be approached to sponsor a bench.

It was asked if the Sports Association could provide advice on parking to visiting football teams. When visiting teams and spectators are visiting the playing fields the parking particularly in Lawrence Drive and along The Street can be very busy especially at the weekends and last for several

hours. It was asked if a sandwich board could be put at the beginning of Lawrence Drive to advise that it is residents parking only. Comparatively the parking by the parents at school drop off and pick up times lasts for a relatively short time. Vigo Parish Council had purchased their own no parking signs installed along Waterlow Road to deter visitors from parking there when visiting Trosley Country Park.

Action: Cllr Lane to ask The Sports Association to put up a sandwich board at the entrance to The Landway.

GBC Parks and Open Space Department had replaced the gate opening and closing mechanism for the Children's Corner.

Disabled Parking Bays – Cllr Lane offered to order one disabled parking sign for the next meeting. The Sports Association will not be painting disabled parking bays.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points – A parishioner asked if there were any plans for the installation of electric vehicle charging points at the playing field car park. CPC had previously applied for a grant from KCC to install charging points at the playing field car park but had been unsuccessful. It is likely that Cobham will need charging points in the future. CPC are not allowed to make money from the electric vehicle charging. **Action:** Cllr Lane to send the contact details of the member of staff at KCC who is responsible for electric vehicle charging points.

Sports Association Lease – **Action:** Clerk to ask Hatten Wyatt if they held a signed copy of the lease.

11. Public Toilets – Nothing to report.

12. KALC/NALC – A National Nature Reserve has been proposed for the North Kent Downs. Mike Philips will be speaking at a meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 19th November at Luddesdown Village Hall. Parish Councils will need to know which land of their parish has been set aside for the National Nature Reserve. A decision on the setting up of the National Nature Reserve should be made by the Secretary of State on 9th December 2024.

KALC had been encourage parish councils to prepare or update their emergency plans. CPC could compile a list of vulnerable residents in the parish. **Action:** Cllr Lane offered to send the Clerk and Cllr Dymond an example of an emergency plan

KALC had circulated a questionnaire on Climate Change.

13. St Mary's Church Rooms – The refurbishment work is going well. The original roof materials were found to be not suitable and a different roofing material has been ordered. It is unlikely that the SMCR will be ready for December.

14. Social Media – The CPC website had 391 page views over the past 30 days (Up 9%) and there were 234 unique visits over the past 30 days (Up 6%). There was an average of 1.5588 average page views per visit (Down 2%).

15. Other Village Matters

Defibrillators – The Cobham Bowls club defibrillator was now back in use after Cllr Dyer had adjusted the catch that held the box shut. The Round Street defibrillator, currently at Cllr Dyer's house will be returned to its original position within 4 weeks.

Youth Club – There had been no sessions since July. The Grand had been due to attend an assembly at Cobham Primary School. One of the youth workers who had helped to run the Cobham Youth club was leaving The Grand. The Grand were recruiting a replacement but have said that Cobham

Youth Club would not start again until 2025 when a new youth worker had been recruited. It was asked if the Parent Teachers Association could provide parent volunteers to help run the youth club with the youth workers or if CPC should send a communication to the parents in Year 6 at the Primary School.

Footpaths – Footpath NS191 is partially flooded from a nearby property. John Pelham, the Rights of Way Officer had told the owner to get a plumber or KCC would employ a plumber and charge the owner.

Footpath NS187 between Sole Street and Gold Street had been churned up by agricultural vehicles and great care needed to be taken when using the footpath. A garden at the rear of a property on Round Street had a dog that was loose and potentially threatening to passing walkers in NS185. A no cycling sign had been removed from a post beside the barrier on Footpath NS178. **Action:** Clerk to raise these with KCC Rights of Way team.

Village Sign – All of the parish councillors present were happy with the village sign design for Cobham. Some of the parish councillors wanted to include Cobham Church into the Sole Street Village Sign.

The suggested sites for the Sole Street village sign would be the small green by Scratton Fields at Sole Street. KCC have said no to the village sign being located on the verge opposite Cobham Primary School and GBC had asked for further information before agreeing to the siting of the village sign on the opposite verge.

It was asked if the Cobham village sign could be located at the flower bed below the churchyard opposite the Leather Bottle PH. CPC would need to apply for permission to the Rector at St Johns Meopham who would apply for permission from the Diocese of Rochester.

Meadow Rooms – There was nothing to report.

Village Pump – CPC will start getting new quotes.

16. Parishioners Comments

The vegetation along the bank at Battle Street was obstructing the pavement particularly if a vehicle was parked at that place. The landowner needs to cut back the vegetation. It was suggested that the Community Pay Back Team could carry out the work. Scripps had been asked to clear the overhanging branches.

Meeting continues in Private

17. Correspondence & Announcements – The Acres Enclosed Dogs Fields had written to ask if CPC would consider setting aside some land for an enclosed dog field. It was agreed to by all of the parish councillors that were present not to take this forward. **Action:** Clerk to write back to The Acres Enclosed Dog Fields.

Cobham won silver gilt for the 2024 South and South East in Bloom after winning the same competition in 2023.

The service for Remembrance Sunday will take place at 10am on Sunday 10th November at Cobham War Memorial. Cllr Dymond expressed her thanks for those who had tidied up that area.

18. Finance

Payments made since the 1st October meeting

Date of payment	Company	Reason	Amount
7/10/2024	Zurich Municipal Insurance	Parish Council Insurance	£1,857.10
9/10/2024	Cobham Parent Teachers Association	Grant	£250
15/10/2024	We are Beams	Grant	£500
29/10/2024	HMRC	Clerk's Income Tax & National Insurance	£27.73
29/10/2024	Singlewell Stationery & Print	Programmes for Remembrance Sunday	£35
29/10/2024	Bennett Grab Services Ltd	Replacement batteries for the Speed Indicator Device	£48.50
31/10/2024	Nest	Pension	£27.18
31/10/2024	Clerk	Salary 1 st – 31 st October 2024	£892.52

Payments to be made after the 5th November Meeting

Date of Payment	Company	Reason	Amount
6/11/2024	KALC	Clerk's Conference 2024	£84
6/11/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£26.73
6/11/2024	Satswana Ltd	Subscription for Data Protection Officer service	£180
6/11/2024	Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Wreath for Remembrance Sunday	£27.50
6/11/2024	Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Donation	£50
Before 30/11/2024	Primary Care Supplies	Replacement pads for Cobham Bowls Club and St Mary's Church Rooms defibrillator	£156 (x2 £78)

Cllr Dyer proposed the payment report and Cllr Dymond seconded.

The Clerk said Lloyds Bank would be charging Cobham Parish Council £8.50 per month from 14th January 2025 for use of the bank account.

It was asked if some of the money in the Reserve Account could be moved to high interest savings accounts. CPC's reserve account could be earning a higher rate of interest and Cllr Lane suggested putting some of the CPC budget into bonds. Cllr Dymond had provided details of a building society.

19. Items from Councillors –

The Government had set up a consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings. This included Town and Parish Councils. The clerk had circulated the details including a survey which everyone was encouraged to complete.

Some of the CPC Councillors have been receiving bogus emails asking them to renew the current website.

Action: Clerk to ask Baylis Landscapes how many tidy ups they have carried out at Sweeps Hole Pond in 2024.

20. Next Meeting - Parish Council Budget Meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 3rd December 2024 at the Meadow Rooms. The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Tuesday 14th January 2025

Clerk's contact details: clerk@cobham-kent-pc.gov.uk