



Minutes of Cobham Parish Council Meeting

Tuesday 9th April 2024 at 7.30pm

Meeting took place at the St Mary's Church Rooms

Present

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

Cllr Robert Pryor, Cllr Matt Mason

Present

Cllr Kirsty Lane (co-opted at meeting), Charles Amis (Clerk), 4 parishioners

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr Bennett Smith, Cllr Russ Nichols, Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC), Cllr Samir Jassel (GBC)

2. Minutes - The minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 5th March 2024 were confirmed and proposed as a true record of that meeting by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Dymond. The minutes for the Parish Council Working Group Meeting held on Monday 14th March 2024 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. Co-option – There was complete support from everyone present for Kirsty Lane's co-option to fill the Parish Councillor vacancy. Cllr Peterson-Pearce had resigned as a parish councillor and CPC are looking to fill the vacancy. **Action:** Clerk to contact Sara Gray regarding the vacancy. Clerk to write a thank you email to Cllr Peterson-Pearce.

5. GBC Matters – Nothing to report.

6. Planning – The planning sub group will be meeting soon to discuss local planning issues and discuss agenda items for their meeting with GBC Planning in early May.

Gold Street Vineyard – The owner has changed the name to Cobham House Vineyard. GBC Planning Department had originally approved the planning application for an agricultural building at the Gold Street Vineyard under permitted development rights. The current planning guidance confirms the building needs to be 25 meters from the road and 20 meters from the railway. Additionally the access road to the building must only be of a certain length.

GBC Planning Department have since admitted they made a mistake with the planning application for the vineyard at Gold Street. The agricultural building was close to neighbouring properties on Gold Street. The planning application has been rescinded following a Judicial Review that was enacted by local residents. The local residents had a site meeting with the owner who was happy

not to proceed with the current planning application. The owner has said he wants to work with the local people and will be submitting a new planning application. A water supply has been connected and power is being planned. Some vines have been planted.

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.

White Post Farm – A caravan has been removed. A local resident had said White Post Lane had been closed so that water and electricity could be installed. The owner had put up several small sheds in the adjacent fields. GBC had said they would send a copy of the Legal Injunction Notice to CPC. **Action:** Clerk to report the recent activity at the field between White Post Farm and Sole Street to GBC Planning Department. Clerk to report the damage to the surface of White Post Lane.

45 Scratton Fields – The owner wants to install a small ground floor extension. No objections.

7. Traffic Group –

Sole Street – Update - It was suggested that KCC Highways should in future provide solutions to the traffic issues as up to now KCC have rejected most of CPC suggestions on traffic management within Cobham parish. KCC Highways had rejected CPC’s suggestion for a mini roundabout to be installed at the junction of Round Street and Sole Street. The Joint Transport Board meets every two months but tends to focus on Gravesend.

Speed Watch – Action: Clerk to send PC Jo Hammond the future dates for the parish council meetings. Clerk to circulate the monthly crime report and to put on the website. Clerk to ask PC Jo Hammond for a job description of the Speed Watch Co-ordinator Role.

20 mph zones – KCC and Kent Police have confirmed that the 20mph speed limit signs along The Street are advisory and motorists are unlikely to be prosecuted for speeding. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to circulate a review of the Joint Transport Board that was carried out by KALC. Traffic Group to hold a meeting

8. Lower Thames Crossing – The Planning Inspectorate passed on their decision to the Secretary of State for Transport to review on 20th March. The SOS for Transport is likely to give their decision on whether the LTC will be given approval by 20th June 2024 or shortly after. Adam Holloway, the local MP, had been opposed to the LTC and it was uncertain if he had lobbied against. GBC had been opposed to the LTC but had managed to get the tunnel extended and for a new junction with the A226 Gravesend Road to be removed from the plan helping to protect Chalk from possible traffic issues.

9. Village Crime Group – It was suggested that PC Jo Hammond could give a talk about off road motorbikes. This is a particular problem on Scotland Lane and Battle Street. There was an issue of motor bikes riding along The Street on Sunday lunchtimes. PC Hammond had offered to arrange for the Rural Task Force to intercept the motorcyclists on their return journey. It was noted that the Rural Task Force had not run any operations lately. PC Jo Hammond is holding a surgery at the St John’s Centre, Meopham on Friday 12th April.

10. Playing Fields Group – The work for the new kitchen has been completed. New cupboards are being installed in the back room for the archives. The Sports Association will be meeting on 26th

April and are due to approve the next area of work for the patio. The new patio will be larger than the existing patio by a further three metres. The existing brick walls will be removed and the patio will be enclosed by a recycled plastic picket fence to comply with the standards of the conservation area. It was asked if the fence could be made from wood but this would need more maintenance. The community pay back team will be painting the outside of the pavilion.

Funding had been received to improve the drainage of the playing fields. Grants had been applied for the new female changing rooms and showers. There were two unused rooms in the pavilion which had been used as changing rooms in the past and the plumbing was already in place.

A new fence will be installed between the Bowls Club and the playing field to protect the bowlers from cricket balls. The Tennis Club appears to be short of members. They don't play competitive matches. The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs were offering a grant towards the installation of an all-weather path.

11. Public Toilets – It was agreed that the Sports Association would take over the running of the public toilets and CPC will give the Sports Association a grant of £5000 to cover the running costs. Cllr Booth and Cllr Mason are attending the Sports Association Meeting on 26th April.

No further progress had been made with Business Stream and Cllr Booth was waiting for them to respond.

Action: Clerk to cancel the opening and cleaning of the public toilets with Medway Norse. Clerk to ask GBC if they could clean the public toilets. Cllr Dyer to speak to Cobham Primary School staff about cleaning the toilets.

12. KALC/NALC – Nothing to report.

13. St Mary's Church Rooms – The Local Funding Group had produced a newsletter that failed to mention CPC's help towards the fund raising. The Local Funding Group had organised some events for 2024 including an event to commemorate D Day, an evening of music at Sole Street House and a scavenger hunt around Sole Street.

The Parochial Church Council were now responsible for the refurbishment of the SMCR and had set up a management committee. Ron Chamberlain was now responsible for the bookings for the SMCR. It was suggested that Wi-Fi be installed following the refurbishment.

Lisa Brooks, the project manager for the refurbishment of the SMCR, had circulated three tender documents. The three companies who had tendered before were on the list of tenders. They will need to respond by the end of April. A local volunteer group were taking responsibility for the conversion of the former kitchen into a servery.

14. Social Media – The clerk had been updating the news section for the CPC website. Cllr Dyer is currently responsible for updating the CPC Face Book page. It was suggested that a What's App group be created for Neighbourhood Watch but there could be GDPR compliance issues because there would potentially be no control over what local residents would write. Crockenhill Parish Council are updating their website and CPC's website could be updated at the same time.

Action: Cllr Lane agreed to take on the updating of the Face Book page. Clerk to report the number of hits for the website at future parish council meetings.

15. Other Village Matters

Defibrillators – Action: Cllr Mason to ask neighbour on the other side of Round Street if the defibrillator could be relocated there.

Youth Club – It was asked where the subscriptions were going. They are kept for the buying of tuck and to replace broken equipment. **Action:** Clerk to speak to the youth workers at The Grand about moving some of the subs to the CPC budget. Clerk to ask The Grand to provide a report for the Annual Parish Assembly

Footpaths – The footpath that starts from the stile to the rear of Cobham College is overgrown. The stile was installed to allow residents of the college to access the churchyard. **Action:** Cllr Dymond to speak to the Warden at Cobham College. **Action:** Clerk to report the fallen tree at Sole Street to KCC Highways.

Village Sign - Cllr Peterson-Pearce had been looking for someone who had access to CAD to take the village sign design forward. **Action:** Cllr Mason offered to speak with Cllr Peterson-Pearce.

Meadow Rooms - Nothing to report

Village Pump – The owner of Meadow House had given permission for the contractors to access the rear of the flint wall from the nearby field and for pesticide to be sprayed around the base of the wall. The repairs to the wall will be completed over several stages starting at the back of the pump. The clerk had applied for grants. **Action:** Clerk to circulate the three quotes to all of the parish councillors.

Wooden Posts around the War Memorial – Cllr Pryor had found some replacement wooden posts. The Clerk had received one quote for the work.

16. Parishioners Comments

A parishioner raised the state of pavement by Sole Street between the Yeoman's House and Scratton Fields which had several puddles. The Clerk had raised this with KCC previously but they are not significant enough for KCC to take any action.

A Parishioner had commented that residents along Sallows Shaw and Manor Road had been unhappy about the suggested diversion of the bus routes along those roads. This had been suggested by KCC Highways after they had asked the bus companies to stop picking up school children at Round Street. Cllr Nichols had spoken with the bus companies but there were issues with the buses turning round and Round Street was too narrow for a bus route and it was difficult to turn from White Post Lane into Round Street. KCC Highways had also suggested the school children could use Footpath NS192 to access the bus stops by Scratton Fields and the Railway PH. No further action being taken on alternative routes or stopping points for the buses.

Meeting continues in Private

17. Correspondence & Announcements – There had been another accident at the junction of Henhurst Road and Jeskyns Road. BT had replaced the telegraph pole and KCC had replaced the chevrons. **Action:** The clerk will keep a record of all of the accidents at the junction.

A parishioner had reported two dead foxes at Halfpence Lane. GBC had removed a fox and a neighbour had removed the other fox.

18. Finance

Payments made since the 5th March meeting

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
25/3/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£22.41
25/3/2024	Clerk	Purchase of a Notepad	£3.65
25/3/2024	Meadow Rooms Management Committee	Room Bookings for 2022	£270
26/3/2024	Meadow Rooms Management Committee	Room Bookings for 2023	£246
26/3/2024	Cobham Parochial Church Council	Grant for the Christmas and Easter editions of the parish magazine	£500
13/3/2024	MI Payroll & Bookkeeping	Payroll for January-March 2024	£60
2/4/2024	Clerk	Salary	£845.10
2/4/2024	HMRC	Income tax and National Insurance	£41.67
2/4/2024	Clerk	Pension	£23.71
26/3/2024	Medway Norse Ltd	Opening and cleaning toilets March 2024	£675.22
4/4/2024	Gravesham Network Development CIC (The Grand)	Provision of two youth workers for Cobham Youth Club	£1020

Payments to be made after the 9th April Meeting

Date of Invoice	Company	Reason	Amount
9/4/2024	Clerk	Mileage	£24.93
9/4/2024	Clerk	Gravesham Parish Clerk's lunch – CPC are hosting	£44.09
1/4/2024	KALC	Subscription for 2024/25	£681.28

Cllr Booth proposed the payment report and Cllr Dyer seconded. Action: Clerk to look for another bank account that offers a higher rate of interest.

19. Items from Councillors – Cllr Pryor and Cllr Dymond will carry out a review of all of the traffic signs in the Parish.

Cllr Dyer said there was broken glass on the 'Rabbit Bridge' from Church Road to Singlewell Road.

Action: Clerk to report to PC Jo Hammond GBC and KCC Rights of Way team.

A new head teacher, Dr Polly Crowther had been appointed at Cobham Primary School and will start at the Autumn Term.

20. Annual Parish Assembly at 7.30pm on Tuesday 23rd April at the Meadow Rooms and Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday 21st May at the Meadow Rooms.