

**Minutes of a meeting of Cobham Parish Council  
held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2019 at 7.30pm  
The Meadow Room, Cobham**

**PRESENT**

Cllr Mike Booth (Chairman),  
Cllr Steve Dyer (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Rosemary Dymond,  
Cllr Jessica Elliott,  
Cllr Margaret Haig,

Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas,  
Cllr Matthew Mason,  
Cllr Robert Pryor,  
Cllr Ben Smith,  
Mrs Tina Sampson (Clerk)

**In Attendance**

Councillor Tony Rice GBC, Community Warden Paul Hassell, 6 Parishioners

The Chairman, Cllr Mike Booth, opened the meeting.

1. (17) No apologies for absence had been received.
2. (18) There were no declarations of interest raised.
3. (19) The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting were agreed as a true record, acceptance proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Mason.  
Signed off by the Chairman.
4. (20) Co-option of two councillors to the Sole Street ward.  
The Chairman explained that three people had put their names forward for co-option. This included previous parish councillor, Jessica Elliott, Robert Pryor and Russell Nichols. The chairman proposed that Jessica Elliott be co-opted as she had been an asset to the Parish council previously due to her planning knowledge. The Chairman also proposed Robert Pryor be co-opted as he had stood for election and received a lot of support. This was seconded by Councillor Haig.  
Cllr Rosemary Dymond then proposed that Mr Nichols be co-opted as he is a resident of Sole Street, this was seconded by Cllr Gabbitas.  
A vote was undertaken by the Clerk which supported Mr Pryor, by 4 votes to 2, being co-opted. Councillors Elliott and Pryor signed the declaration of acceptance of office and joined the parish council.
5. (21) Matters arising from the previous meeting.

**Housing waste recycling** – from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June charges will apply for the disposal of non-household waste materials at Kent Household waste recycling centres:

Soil, rubble, hardcore £4 per bag/item limit of 5 bags per day

Plasterboard -£6 a sheet or bag

Tyres - £2.50 per tyre limit of 5 tyres a day.

Cllr Tony Rice explained that the cost for GBC of dealing with household waste costs £1.6 million at a cost of 74p on everyone's council tax. It is hoped that the charges will raise over 4 million pound which GBC will re-invest into environmental work. Cllr Dyer attended the GBC parish chairman's meeting where this was discussed. The fear of additional fly-tipping was raised, however KCC has allocated additional funds £250,000 to assist with this.

**ACTION** – Clerk to place a link to the minutes of the Chairman's meeting minutes to be added to the CPC Website.

**Parish Councillor's tour of Cobham Woods Tree trail** – Cllr Gabbitas spoke with the National Trust manager at Cobham woods to arrange a tour. The tour would commence at 7pm and would take place on either a Monday, Tuesday or Thursday.

**ACTION** – Clerk will canvass the councillors to find out the most suitable day for the tour.

**Britain in Bloom/Front of House** – Cllr Dymond explained that she had already heard from 6 people wishing to take part in the parish front of house competition which will be judged by local expert who is also a national judge. The best kept village (part of Britain in Bloom competition) will be judged by SE England judges on the 4<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Dymond said that volunteer litter pickers had been arranged. The matter of the hedge around the school was raised and it would be good if it could be trimmed before the judging took place. Cllr Dyer a school governor will refer this to the head mistress as she will be able to say whether this work can be carried out. It is hoped that a list of litter pickers will be published by the resident of Sole Street who organises the picks.

GBC Councillor, Tony Rice raised the matter of the gardens in front of Owletts cottages, they were beginning to become untidy and overgrown, he contacted the National Trust who came and removed weeds and tidied the gardens. Cllr Dymond had also been concerned with the state for the cottage gardens and will ensure that they are kept neat by following up with the National Trust.

Cllr Smith mentioned a broken post on the corner of Greenlands and Sole Street, it previously held a neighbourhood watch sign.

**ACTION** – Clerk to report to Kent Highways.

**Cobham Telephone Box** – The clerk reported the untidy and overgrown telephone box to British Telecom; they came and cleared the overgrowth and tidied around it. Cllr Dymond said that although BT had carried out the work there was still some graffiti present on the box.

**ACTION**- clerk to report to BT again.

**Jeskyns Parking** – The Chairman explained that a meeting had taken place with staff from Jeskyns/Forestry commission to discuss the impact of visitors to Jeskyns has on the parish.

**It was agreed that the matter would be monitored.** And the result was as follows  
- As agreed staff visited the village car park at weekends to assess the situation for the last 7 weeks they visited on a total of 14 occasions at different times on Saturdays and Sundays, sitting for a total of 30minutes each time, counting those cars that arrive not for sports facilities but to access the wider countryside instead. On each visit they have counted very few if any cars arriving for countryside access only, typically none, but occasionally up to 2. Some of these entered Jeskyns directly across the Rec ground, but others turned right into Scripps orchard and some headed back out the car park into the village on foot.

It was not disputed that some visitors use the car park to access Jeskyns – as discussed, but it seems that it is very few. It appears that visitors are legitimately using this public car park to access the wider countryside surrounding Cobham (including Jeskyns) and as such there are no reasonable grounds to stop them doing so.

The concerns raised by residents and Jeskyns/Forestry Commission will be working with the Parish Council to try and resolve the matter if possible. Jeskyns will be posting some notices at their entrances and on their social media pages asking any Jeskyns visitors who park outside of the main car park to avoid causing obstruction or congestion on local roads and local facilities. The Parish Council had also raised the matter of dog fouling- especially on the football pitch and they have provided some “dog fouling way marker discs”.

**ACTION** - Cllr Dymond to collect the discs.

## 6. (22) **Composition of the new Working Groups and Committees.**

The Chairman spoke about the setting up of the new committees and working groups. He had met with the Vice Chairman and the clerk to determine how the groups might work going forward.

### **Planning Group**

Cllr Jessica Elliott(lead) Cllr Haig, Cllr Dyer, Cllr Dymond & Cllr Booth

### **Footpaths, Bridleways & Byways Group**

Cllr Dymond (lead),Cllr Haig, Cllr Gabbitas, Cllr Pryor

### **Cobham Playing Fields Group**

Cllr Booth (Lead), Cllr Dyer, Cllr Smith

### **Cobham Facilities working Group**

Cllr Booth (Lead), Cllr Dymond, Cllr Haig, Cllr Smith, Cllr Dyer, Cllr Pryor,

### **Sole Street Facilities working Group**

Cllr Dyer (Lead), Cllr Booth, Cllr Smith, Cllr Haig, Cllr Dymond

### **Local Traffic Working Group**

Cllr Mason (lead), Cllr Booth, Cllr Dyer, Cllr Smith, Cllr Pryor. GBC Cllr Rice.

## 7. (23) **Reports –**

### **Chairman's Group – Cllr Dyer**

The matter of fly-tipping was raised and it was clear that it is a problem experienced by all rural parishes. There had been 2,200 incidents in the Gravesham area and the cost to GBC was £146,000. Cllr Dyer explained to parishioners how you can report fly-tipping by using the GBC website, Country eye or via Gov.UK.

The matter of parking in the rural parishes was also raised especially those with country parks in their areas. Camer Park (GBC) does not charge, but Jeskyns (forestry commission) does have a yearly pass scheme at £36. Shorne Country Park (KCC) also charges. As discussed earlier there is a concern that people trying to park without paying is having an impact on villages.

Planning and the use of the Greenbelt was discussed as the 8,000 homes have not been developed and there is a concern that there will not be enough brown field sites to accommodate the number of new homes. Cllr Rice confirmed that there were several brown field sites being considered but could not confirm that a new brown field site had been discovered, as suggested by Cllr Dymond, which could accommodate 5000 houses. When discussing the development of the old hospital site, Cllr Haig that it had been wrong to close the hospital in the first place as it impacts on the community and has a knock-on effect on other hospitals.

Cllr Mason asked if the only brown field site in our parish was the old Norbond site as it might be possible for 10 small starter or downsizer homes.

**KALC-** There has not been a meeting of the Gravesham branch of the Kent Association Kent Council; Cllr Dymond would like to continue to be the representative for Cobham.

**Rural Parishes Forum –** Cllr Dymond attended a meeting of the forum which included attendees from the Access forum to discuss the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) scheme. The scheme has not been fixed yet. There were 29,000 responses to the consultation with 300,000 issues raised, these will be divided and dealt with by smaller groups. The application for outline permission has been submitted and LTC will be going out to tender in 2020 and they hope

the tunnel will be opened in 2027, however the landscaping and work around the tunnel is unlikely to be completed until 2041.

Other matters Cllr Dymond highlighted: a new road will be going under Thong Lane, the National Cycle Route is to be moved to the other side of the river, there are some concerns about the encroachment of land to the south, the service station on the A2 will be demolished, there will be 3 green bridges across the road, these will be covered with hedges and are for the use of cycles, walkers etc. there will be larger green bridges for heavier traffic, motor vehicles, which will be lined with trees. Cllr Dymond suggested people visit the LTC website for further information <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/lower-thames-crossing-home/>. It is hoped that another meeting will take place between Cobham and LTC. Cllr Dymond read from her meeting notes attached to these minutes.

**KCC** – nothing to report.

**GBC**- Cllr Rice gave a report: He had received contact from a parishioner regarding the lack of parking in their area, Cllr Rice asked them to get a consensus from their community as to whether parking permits would be useful. He will then have the area included in the review of rural parking permits GBC are going to undertake.

A Parishioner had raised the matter of hedges and bushes encroaching on the highway at the top of White Post Lane, he has discussed the matter with County Councillor, Bryan Sweetland who has contacted his Kent Highway's lead to review the situation. Cllr Rice will keep the Clerk in the loop as she is also aware of the issue.

There is to be a meeting with Michael Payne the Deputy Cabinet member for Transport and Highways on the 18<sup>th</sup> June, the Chairman will be looking to attend or send a representative.

Parishioners then made Cllr Rice aware of the potholes and noises caused by the recent resurfacing within Cobham Village. It was also stated that the resurfacing of Wrotham Road may have been financed by LTC, Cllr Rice to enquire with Cllr Sweetland.

Community Warden- Paul Hassel raised the issue of the various scams that are on the increase (9<sup>th</sup> the clerk posts info about these on the PC Website). He also reported that he had recently spoken to people in Sole Street whose dog had fouled the footpath.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is due to hold a meeting at Higham Library 14 June 2019. He also highlighted that any parking on the pavement needs to be reported to the police.

Cllr Mason told of the recent thefts he had experienced from his own outbuildings and the lack of police interest. There had been nine thefts from outbuilding and break-ins during the month of April.

A brief discussion about the bikes off road bikes and quad bikes speeding around the area. The clerk had already reported it to the local PCSO, and the Community Warden took a note to forward to police colleagues. There will not be a surgery on the 7<sup>th</sup> June.

### **PLANNING**

Cllr Dyer red out the most recent planning report, further details can be found on the GBC website <https://plan.gravesham.gov.uk/online-applications/>

20190371 Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension.

LOCATION 5 Greenlands, Cobham, Gravesend, Kent DA12 3AT

**NO OBJECTION**

20190294 Installation of an artificial bowls surface and floodlighting.

Cobham Bowls Club, Recreation Ground, The Street, Cobham Gravesend

**NO OBJECTION**

20190439 Erection of a single storey rear extension to form a study and family room.2 Chapelwood Place, Cobham, Gravesend, Kent DA13 9AG

**NO OBJECTION**

20190299

Erection of a triple garage. Rest Harrow, Round Street, Cobham, Gravesend Kent

**OBJECTION**

20180750 AMENDED DESCRIPTION AND REVISED PLANS\*\*

Alterations to the roof involving a 1 metre increase in overall ridge height, the hip to gable roof enlargement, the construction of dormer extensions in the front slope and a first floor rear extension to facilitate the conversion of the roof space into habitable rooms, and the creation of a front entrance porch. Hayes Meadow, 2 Sarsens Close, Cobham, Gravesend Kent

**NO OBJECTION**

20190438 Removal of 3 no. antennas on existing mast and installation of 6 no. antennas and 3 no.

**NO OBJECTIONS**

20190470 Erection of a conservatory 7 Battle Street, Cobham, Gravesend, Kent DA12 3DB

**NO OBJECTIONS**

The Chairman, Cllr Booth asked why the planning office at Gravesham took so long dealing with planning applications; it appears to be a lack of staff. It was agreed that with the current hosing situation the planning process is too slow, overall. Gravesham and Medway planning offices have linked to try and alleviate the problem.

## **8. (24) Correspondence**

The Clerk had received contacts from Parishioners about difficulties with footpaths, these were reported to the Kent Rights of Way officer. The matter of encroachment of the bushes on to White Post Lane, as raised earlier, had also been brought to the Clerk's attention. Additionally, an email had been received regarding the heavy traffic around the new Vineyard, the Chairman took this forward and had visited the manager who were apologetic about the issue and were working hard to finish the project and prevent any further disruption. The Clerk also read out the list of crimes reported during April.

The Citizens advice centre in Gravesham had requested a donation to assist them with their service, the clerk will circulate the letter.

The Clerk had also received a communication about the village providing an Electric charging point for vehicles.

## **9. (25) Finance**

CPRE Subscription - £36.00

Clerk's Salary May - £338.77

Re-issue of cheque to Clerk for April Salary, previous cheque incorrectly dated and rejected - £338.77

KALC Training course for Cllr Booth and Councillor Dymond - £120.00

Primary Care Supplies for Defibrillator Pads for 2 units -(local gov't act 72 s226)- £132.00

Maintenance Man April and May invoice @ £120 & £125 - £245.00

Fastnet Prof hosting (addition of new emails) - £14.83 (local gov't act 1972 s142)

Total - £1225.37

Acceptance of the Finance report proposed by Cllr Dyer and seconded by Cllr Haig

### **10. (26) Items raised by Councillors**

Motorbike night - The matter of the Motorbike issue had been raised by Cllr Smith and had been discussed earlier.

MollyFest - Issues relating to the parking problems, due to this very worthwhile event, were raised. Unfortunately, the event was also marred by an act of violence which led to an ambulance being called and the police attendance. Three people were arrested within 24hours. The Parish Council would like to get a better handle on all the local events taking place to ensure security and parking facilities are considered before-hand. Councillors to consider the best way to do this.

Maintenance Man – it was agreed by the Council to increase, further, the hourly rate paid to our maintenance man and to re-visit his job description.

Parish Council Emails – The Clerk has started the process, working with Fastnet, on setting up a generic email address for each Parish Councillor. It is hoped that this will be up and running in the next few weeks.

### **PARISHIONERS COMMENTS**

The Chairman suspended the meeting for Parishioners Comments.

A parishioner announced that a local landowner had sadly passed away and that there was an agent trying to establish the amount of land included in the estate. The matter of some very tall poplar trees would also need to be looked at.

Another parishioner said that their vision was impaired whilst driving along Sole Street towards Owletts. Clerk to report to Highways.

The Chairman re-convened the meeting for any further comments from parish Councillors. Cllr Elliott asked whether we could budget for new notice boards in the next budget. Clerk to find some costs.

The Chairman closed the meeting 9.30 pm

The next meeting will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 in the Meadow Rooms, Cobham.