

Cobham Annual Parish Meeting.
Monday 4th May 2020 at 7.30pm
A virtual meeting held on zoom due to the coronavirus lockdown

Present

**Cllr Mike Booth, Cllr Steve Dyer, Cllr Rosemary Dymond,
Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas, Cllr Margaret Haig, Cllr Matt Mason,
Cllr Rob Pryor, Cllr Ben Smith**

In attendance

**Cllr Tony Rice (GBC), Mr Matthew Peterson-Pearce
Mrs Tina Sampson (clerk)**

Apologies for Absence – none received

- 1. Election of Officers** - Cllr Mike Booth is to continue in the role of Chairman and Cllr Steve Dyer is to continue as Vice Chairman.
The positions were agreed and proposed by Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas and seconded by Cllr Rosemary Dymond

The following positions were proposed and it was agreed that there were would not be any changes from the previous year.

Lead Councillor for Cobham Village	Rosemary Dymond
Lead Councillor for Sole Street	Steve Dyer

Working Groups

Lead Councillor for Traffic group	Matt Mason
<i>Matt Mason, Tony Rice Ben Smith, Rob Pryor, Russ Nichols</i>	
Lead Councillor for Planning	Steve Dyer
<i>Steve Dyer, Mike Booth, Margaret Haig, Rosemary Dymond.</i>	
Lead Councillor for Playing Fields	Mike Booth
<i>Mike Booth, Steve Dyer, Ben Smith.</i>	

For the Zoom meeting it was agreed that Cllr Dyer would take the lead and act as chairman.

- 2. Co-opting of a parish councillor to the Sole Street ward.**

It was agreed that Matthew Peterson-Pearce would be co-opted on to the parish council. The declaration of acceptance was signed in view of all parish council members.

- 3. Minutes of the March meeting.**

Cllr Gabbitas had noticed an error in the minutes about the ownership of the reservoir and pump in Cobham village, ACTION – Clerk to correct.

- 4. Matters Arising since the last meeting -**

Web Site – We are proposing to appoint Hugo Fox as our new web site designer to give us a more compliant web site and to bring us in line with new accessibility laws. Hugo Fox were recommended by KALC and the cost for their silver package is £19.99 per month. Agreed.

PCSO – a better relationship and more two way information would be useful, the majority of the advice received in response to reports is to dial 101

Waste Disposal Skip –

Due to the current closure of Pepper Hill recycling centre and the increase in fly tipping it was considered whether a skip was required for the village, it could be placed in the car park to the sports ground. As the Pepper Hill site is due to open soon it was agreed that a skip would not be needed and could cause additional dumping of rubbish on the site.

War Memorial Cleaning

We have had an approach from Aqua Blasters Ltd offering a FOC deep clean and restoration. They have been thanked for the offer and the PC will revisit this when we are over the current Covid 19 crisis.

War Memorial - adding names. Cllr Dymond has checked whether there is room for an additional name to be added and there is, however there are still questions about the need to have a link to the village. Cllr Dymond has asked that we await the publication of a book which will give details of the names on the memorial as this will provide guidance and prevent a precedent being set.

ACTION- Cllr Dymond to find out how much it will cost to get a name added.

War Memorial – Yew trees being trimmed back, the original start date was to be the 7th April. Approval has been given by GBC, but the work will be postponed for now due to the current lockdown.

Bonham Hayes – We have nominated 4 names to GBC. The clerk has contacted GBC for the criteria, there is a historical criteria which is that the original Will of Bonham Hayes stated the funds should be distributed to ‘the poor widows dwelling in and being Parishioners of the said Parish of Cobham’. A committee, which includes the Mayor, will make the decision on the final recipients.

Direction Sign - for the Playing Fields. KCC have agreed to revisit the matter of a new sign to be positioned on the pole opposite the Landway facing east. We recently supplied KCC with a photo to help move this on

Grass Cutting- We have confirmed that **KCC** are responsible for

- a) The small patch at the top of Cobhambury Hill opposite the War Memorial
- b) The area opposite the school on the eastern corner of Lawrence Drive and in front of the old police houses.
- c) On Sole Street in front of Scratton Fields and opposite Sole Street house on both corners Also along Sole Street towards Gold Street and on the corner of Gold Street in front of Trotts Ash.
- d) Also Manor Court off of Manor Road.

We have also confirmed that **GBC** are responsible for

- a) The Cobham Playing Fields
- b) The small area opposite The Landway in front of The Exchange
- c) The Churchyard on a monthly cut.
- d) The Graveyard on a scheduled 4 cuts per year.
- e) The daffodil area opposite the war memorial
- f) Dadds footpath along the edge of Halfpence Lane – on a scheduled 2 cuts per year.
- g) GBC are also responsible for the area around the war memorial but a village volunteer has agreed to do this and GBC have been told their involvement in this area is not required.

Some homeowners cut their own grass in front of their homes, but the areas are still on KCC's list

The large gate to the Lime Avenue and the hedge either side have been straightened up courtesy of Cobham Hall gardeners.

Toilet Business Tax – At this stage we are still going to be due to pay Business Rates to GBC for the Cobham Public Toilets. It was suggested that the bill isn't paid, the clerk explained that she had been in contact with GBC regarding a discount due to their closure during the lockdown. The matter of a rate reduction for small businesses was also raised.

ACTION- Clerk to follow up with GBC.

Defibrillator for Sole Street – We currently have 3 Defibrillators in Cobham and only one in Sole Street at the Church Rooms. We need to find a site for a second one and the Chairman suggested that the old telephone box be moved from Cobham to house it in a convenient spot in Sole Street - but it needs a power source. Any suggestions for a site? Councillors suggested a couple of possible sites.

ACTION – ideas to be submitted before the next meeting by Cllrs Mason, Dyer and Peterson-Pearce.

Landway to the Playing Fields – We have had a quote to repair and lay 30mm depth of new tarmac – 385 sq mts. Cost £9677.85 plus VAT. This item has not been included in this year's budget. Last time the repairs were made KCC paid 50% and the other 50% was paid by Parish Council.

ACTION – the Chairman will contact Cllr Bryan Sweetland (KCC) to request the same support

Planters – We had to gain approval from KCC Streetworks West Team to place the planters on the highway which was obtained on the 6th April. The details have been recorded on the KCC mayrise system under the Knowledge base. The Clerk has also added the planters to the parish council's Insurance cover and the list of parish assets.

Village Pump - Repairs to tablet inscription and wall behind pump.

The chairman has spoken with the contractor and is happy with how he intends to carry out the work. (high-lighted in the report dated 29th Feb 2020). It is understood this will be done on a largely voluntary basis for the cost of materials only. Cllr Dymond also suggested that the reservoir be made a community asset, however the chairman feels that this should be considered at a later date.

Children's Corner – quotes for new equipment are being sought to include a list of items for funding from the LTC legacy fund. Cllr Tony Rice explained that Gravesham Borough Council are undertaking work on all of their playgrounds and there may be an opportunity to piggy back on their work. The chairman has received one quote for the refurb of the whole playground of £40,000.

ACTION- the clerk to send a copy of the quote to Cllr Rice for his information.

Poplars behind Meadow House – There has not been any action regarding these old and dangerous trees.

ACTION The clerk to speak to the tree preservation officer at GBC for suggestion on how we might move forward.

Dickens Anniversary (Cllr Gabbitas) – Postponed. To be reviewed in June

VE Day Celebration (Cllr Dymond) – local events have been cancelled – however Cllr Dymond highlighted the National Commemorations which people can take part in.

11am- Two Minutes Silence

3pm- Churchill's speech on the BBC (picnics in the garden)

6pm- Raise a glass to your neighbours

9pm—Sing along with the Royal British Legion 'We'll meet again' following the Queen's address.

Parish Notice Board – Postponed BF to June agenda.

Water Leak in Sole Street. – Postponed BF to June agenda.

5. Coronavirus Report –

The Clerk fed back how well the community was supporting each other with volunteers ready to assist anyone needing shopping or medicines collected. Certain roads had set up their own networks to click and collect shopping for neighbours.

Cllr Haig said she was aware of a couple of cases in the parish, Cllr Rice said that he, too, was aware of a case, no further detail was given so as to protect the individual's privacy.

Cobham – Lead Councillor. Rosemary Dymond

Report on Coronavirus in Cobham, Cllr Dymond confirmed that neighbours in various areas were supporting each other.

Sole Street - Lead Councillor. Steve Dyer

Report on Coronavirus in Sole Street – again neighbours were really supporting those that needed it.

It was also highlighted how well the 'Little Shop' in Sole Street and the Community Store in Cobham had been supporting the community, with their well-stocked shelves and their fantastically helpful deliveries. It was agreed that the Parish Council should support and help promote these wonderful facilities to ensure the footfall doesn't drop after the lockdown. It was also considered whether the Community Store could be registered as a community asset.

CLERK – to obtain details on what making a property a community asset entails.

The Chairman also asked whether local businesses/farmers were managing OK for staff etc. The general consensus was that all was OK.

6. Working Group Reports

Planning – Steve Dyer

The application for 22 Manor Road was objected to and referred to the regulatory board but then withdrawn, due to a lack of argument against GBCs planning criteria.

Neighbourhood Plan – producing a Neighbourhood Plan is still very much on the agenda for 2020 but we are still seeking an appointment with GBC, but this on hold due to Covid 19.

20200223 Conversion and alteration of existing stables to six holiday lets with associated car parking

Knights Place Farm, Watling Street, Cobham, Gravesend Kent

OBJECTION

20200172 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Retention of barn and storage shed. LOCATION Millfield Shaw, Round Street, Cobham, Gravesend Kent
OBJECTION

20200337 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT Application for the removal of conditions 3 and 5 attached to planning permission reference number 20060439 for the erection of a two storey two bedroom detached dwelling with integral garage and vehicular access on to The Beeches. LOCATION Beech House, The Beeches, Sole Street, Cobham Gravesend
OBJECTION

Playing Fields – Mike Booth

Children’s Corner & Tennis Courts closed.

The Chairman explained that the bar & clubhouse is shut down for the foreseeable future and so the Sports Association had applied via GBC for financial support from the Small Business Grant Fund for Retail & Hospitality & Leisure. The Sports Association is almost entirely reliant on income from the bar for upkeep & maintenance of the facilities. The grant has been given.

Bowls Club – The work will start after the lockdown is raised.

Local Traffic – Cllr Matt Mason & Cllr Tony Rice

RGP Traffic Survey. Progress report. The report has been seen by all parish councillors now and they considered how best to bring it to the attention of the parishioners. Following much discussion it was agreed that Cllr Rice will draft a flyer which could be made public and provide a link to the website where the report can be inspected and parishioners can leave a comment.

ACTION- Clerk to work with Cllr Rice on taking this forward.

Lower Thames Crossing – Tony Rice

A Conference Call, organised by Cllr Tony Rice, to discuss KCC’s response to the recent LTC Supplementary Consultation had taken place. The meeting involved Simon Jones (head of Kent Highways), Joe Ratcliffe (KCC), Bob Lane (GBC & Shorne PC), plus other parish chairs from Meopham, Luddesdowne & Higham.

We are going to be required to write a letter to send to the Secretary of State to gain support for new regulations for HGV’s and other vehicles in the area pre & post construction of the new LTC.

It is now expected that there will be 3rd supplementary consultation before the end of the year and before they go for the DCO. KCC are not confident in the modelling undertaken by LTC and are looking to do their own modelling.

LTC Legacy Funding – we have been invited to join various workshops run for LTC Stakeholders to discuss Legacy & Benefits for the local area. There are 5 potential workshop groups which our own parish council working groups will need to get involved with. Transport, Environment, Community, Heritage & Non-Motorised User

7. Other Reports

KCC Matters – Bryan Sweetland. No report received.

Sole Street resurfacing. A meeting was planned for 18th March and subsequently cancelled due to Covid 19.

GBC Matters – Tony Rice – GBC said that some business has been on hold due to the lockdown. Cllr Rice spoke of motorbikes using The Street late at night and causing a nuisance, the clerk had also received a report of anti-social behaviour- see correspondence

item. Cllr Rice stated that CCTV might be the answer for dealing with such problem. He had been in contact with the local PCSO, however better to report via 101 and report on the local traffic website.

Kent Association of Local Councils – Rosemary Dymond.

Regular email updates are received from KALC which are circulated by the Parish Clerk. Cllr Dymond highlighted the KALC lobbying about the route of HGVs, which will be made public additionally they are seeking a reduction in the number of housing developments needed.

8. Correspondence

The Clerk had been approached about a voluntary litter pick, however it was suggested that it would not be appropriate for the parish council to encourage one during the current lock down.

The Clerk had also been contacted by a parishioner concerned about motorbikes and quad bikes riding around Cozendon Woods late in to the evening and early morning, he also reported other elements of anti-social behaviour. The rural police, the community warden and the PCSO have already been made aware. The clerk has also followed up with the PCSO.

Cllr Rice had also highlighted that quad bikes had been causing a problem in Cobham Village earlier in the meeting.

9. Other Village Matters & Items raised by Councillors

Meadow Rooms – Cllr Gabriella Gabbitas – The Meadow Rooms has been having a spruce up and the curtains have been cleaned and fireproofed. Any one that has had to cancel an event has received a no quibble refund and the option to re-book at a later date.

Footpaths – Cllr Rosemary Dymond and Cllr Haig have been checking through the footpaths; they are looking quite tidy due to the number of people using them. Cllr Dymond also said that she had given details of the Parish badges to those pupils still attending Cobham Primary school and Cobham hall to help with the design of a new parish logo. It was suggested the project might be good for home schooling.

Church & Church Rooms – Cllr Margaret Haig Stated that both the Church and the Church room had been closed since the Coronavirus lockdown.

Jeskyns & Ifield Church Road – Cllr Ben Smith. It has been busy around Jeskyns and traffic wardens have been seen in the area giving out tickets. Some earth has been placed along one side of Church Road so people are parking on the footpath which means they are more likely to receive a ticket. Cllr Haig also raised the matter of inconsiderate parking in the village recently.

10. Finance / Cheques

Cheques signed since March Meeting.

Book keeping Services	£60.00
Virus blocker and keyboard	£18.87
Clerk March salary	£238.77
Singlewell printing	£36.00
Kalc subscription	£629.23
Computer repair	£80.00
Traffic Study –RGP	£3,888.00
Grass cutting	£30.00

Maintenance Man (2 months)	£250.56
HMRC	£254.00
Fastnet Domain renewal	£12.00
May 2019 Election Costs	£722.31
Clerk April Salary	£338.77

Business rates for the toilets are being discussed with a view to a reduction because off the toilets being closed. Invoice awaiting payment.

The Clerk has been working with the Chairman regarding the end of year audit, the Parish Council were also provided with a copy of the cash-flow sheet together with a copy of the end of year reconciliation document. It was agreed for the clerk to take the audit forward and pass all the relevant documents to internal auditor.

The meeting concluded at 9.30pm