**COBHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 2014/15 (NO 5)**

Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in The Meadow Rooms, Cobham

on Monday 6th October 2014 at 7.30 pm

**PRESENT:**

**COUNCILLORS** MR AHG ROWE (CHAIRMAN)
MRS R DYMOND (VICE-CHAIRMAN)
DR ND HAIG
MRS L ELLIS
MR B GLENISTER
MR S DYER
MR J GILES

**IN ATTENDANCE** MRS K LANE (CLERK)
MR A MOORE (GBC)
MR B SWEETLAND (KCC)
PCSO DIL GOSAL & COLLEAGUE

**PARISHIONERS** 10

Chairman Cllr Alan Rowe opened the meeting at 7.30pm. He welcomed the two local PCSOs who attended the meeting to meet Councillors and Parishioners and answer their questions/hear their concerns.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr M Haig and Cllr K Smith
2. **Minutes: to confirm and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8th September 2014.** All agreed and signedby Chairman Cllr Alan Rowe.
3. **Declaration of Interest:**

Cllr Glenister registered an interest in Planning application 20140725 - 37 Manor Road as the applicant lives closeby – the application is still pending.

1. **Parishioners Comments**

Over-hanging trees by the War Memorial were reported, as well as overgrown shrubs opposite The Ship. Overhanging trees by Owletts have still not been dealt with. ***Clerk to action***.

One Parishioner reported that three manhole covers between Owletts and The Street appeared to be sinking. ***Clerk to action.***

Blocked gullies were reported in Manor Road, outside the Forge and outside the old Post Office. ***Clerk to report to KCC***.

One Parishioner spoke about the issue of turning into Manor Road from Sole Street. The corner is particularly tight and he suggested that the corner of the pavement could be cut-off thus making turning left into Manor Road much easier. He has measured it and the minimum 1.7m radius can still be maintained even with rounding off the edge.

Cllr Glenister said we had requested this previously and the request was turned down. However, during recent consultations re Manor Rd parking problems generally KCC had voiced concerns about any parking solution that would potentially compromise the safety of the Manor Rd/Sole Street junction. In light of this, perhaps they would now consider the request more favourably. ***Clerk to contact KCC Highways.***

Cllr Ellis reminded everyone that the Parish Council had fought hard for the footpath when it was originally put in and that safety was the paramount concern when considering any changes.

The issue of drivers speeding through the village and mounting the pavements was mentioned again.

1. **Meeting PCSO Dil Gosall and her colleague.**

PCSO Dil Gosall introduced herself and Cllr Alan Rowe welcomed her and her colleague to the meeting.

The Clerk sent PCSO Dil Gosal some questions/concerns raised by Councillors prior to the meeting so she began by reporting on these.

* **Concerns over the safety of the Henhurst Road/Jeskyns Road corner**. PCSO Gosal reported that she could not find any reports of road traffic accidents on the bend.
* **Concerns over motorbikes etc on private land, riders without helmets etc** –PCSO Gosal said they were aware of issues in Shorne but no other issues reported recently.
* **Is the 20mph speed limit enforced in the same way as a 30mph speed limit?**  - PCSO Gosal explained that in her experience she believed the two were enforced in the same way. With regard to the 20mph close to the school, the team go out to enforce this and they work closely with the Headteacher to address concerns.

Cllr Rowe mentioned the issue of cars mounting the pavements and PCSO Gosal explained that she had spoken to the Headteacher about this recently and letters had been sent to parents reminding them to take care. PCSO Gosal also said she would try to come out as much as possible so that people see a PCSO presence.

One Parishioner asked about a recent incident where two people were seen in the gardens of a local residence. PCSO Gosal said that the intruders were not caught but the residents were given general crime prevention advice.

Cllr Dyer asked about a recent party that took place in Manor Road. The party reportedly got out of hand and the tyres of some local residents’ cars were slashed. PCSO Gosal said she would look at the crime report when she was back in the office and report back on the outcome.

Cllr Ellis asked about the joy riding problems on the outskirts of the village, close to the golf course. PCSO Gosal explained that they were fully aware of the problems and steps had been taken to resolve the problem. Recently six offenders had been served S59s and she hoped this would be a good deterrent.

One Parishioner questioned whether anyone had been fined for parking outside the Church.

Cllr Sweetland spoke at this point and said that drop kerbs with tactiles were illegal to park on and said that wardens could be/have been asked to come out a few times to ticket offenders.

Another Parishioner said that parking illegally was as much of an issue outside the Church Room in Manor Road and outside the Little Shoppe in Sole Street.

Cllr Ellis asked whether the PCSOs had been called to Jeskyns recently. PCSO Gosal reported that they had attended issues with the alarm system and also the recent dog poisoning rumours.

PCSO Gosal concluded and welcomed parishioners to contact her with any questions and/or concerns. ***Clerk to circulate contact details to Councillors and make sure website is updated.***

At this point PCSO Dil Gosal and her colleague left the meeting and Cllr Sweetland went on to explain that KCC were looking at budget setting and one area that was being considered was the warden service. One thing being considered was whether they could perhaps be more flexible with the areas they cover and also the possibility of giving them more powers. A consultation is currently taking place and he encouraged Councillors to go onto the website, read the documents and take part in the consultation. He explained that KCC need to save £90m in 2015 so it needs to find ways of delivering services in a smarter and more focussed way.

Cllr Glenister made the observation that he had not seen the Cobham warden for 2-3 years. Cllr Sweetland said that he would feed this comment back as they should be visible in all areas, even those where crime levels were deemed low as people like the reassurance.

1. **GBC Matters**

Cllr Moore reported that two planning applications had been ‘called-in’.

With regard to the Manor Road parking issues, Cllr Moore said that he had spoken to Nick Brown from GBC who had thanked Cllr Rowe and Cllr Glenister for their work on the parking re-design proposal. He said that if the proposal does not meet with any objections then it could come into force sooner rather than later.

Cllr Moore explained that at a recent full Council meeting, the issue of KCC’s street lighting policy in urban areas of Gravesend was high on the agenda. Many residents were not happy that street lighting in some areas was being switched off between midnight and 5.30am.

Cllr Sweetland explained the huge financial savings being made by turning the lights off, along with reduced carbon emissions etc. He also explained that KCC would of course be in favour of turning lights back on in areas where there was increased criminality, safety concerns etc but crime rates have actually reduced since the lights were switched off. With so many residents opposed to the lights off policy however, this debate is ongoing.

Cllr Moore spoke about the recent trip to Florida by GBC representatives on the ‘fact finding trip’ for Paramount Park UK. At the recent full Council meeting it was announced that Paramount had covered the cost of the trip. Although he felt that GBC should not have paid for the trip, he also felt that the developers should not have funded it either. Cllr Sweetland agreed. Cllr Sweetland also said that there were 10 people on the Urban Development Committee Board who were not democratically elected – which he would have liked to have seen.

Cllr Moore said that the Urban Development Corporation covers the Paramount and Ebbsfleet developments and that we would soon be asked if we would like to send a representative to the meetings. He felt that Cobham Parish Council should send someone to find out how rural areas could benefit from the development and also keep up to speed on any potential road development plans etc.

Cllr Moore explained that the Local Plan Core Strategy had finally been passed.

To conclude, Cllr Moore announced his intention to not stand for re-election in May 2015. He explained that family commitments were behind his decision.

Cllr Rowe thanked Cllr Moore for his support and wished him luck for the future.

1. **Matters Arising From previous Minutes**

Cllr Rowe explained that he had recently attended the Parish Chair meeting. The following issues were discussed:

* Adoption of the Local Plan Core Strategy
* Awaiting outcome of the greenbelt review. Although some felt that limited development might be suggested within some villages, Cllr Rowe felt it was unlikely to be the case in Cobham.
* Joint Transportation Board (GBC & KCC) – No voting rights for Parish Council. KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) had requested voting rights, KCC had agreed but GBC disagreed.
* Black sacks – Black sacks will be delivered to every house in Gravesham on a 13 week cycle. White sacks would be delivered to those houses that could not have wheelie bins. The small bags for food waste bins would have to be bought by householders.
* Draft Parish Charter – agreed by all.
* Manor Road parking – GBC have agreed the plan which has now been sent to KCC for consideration. If KCC agree then it goes to public consultation. If there are objections, it would cause further delay and in December it would go to the Joint Transportation Board for a decision. If no objections, the scheme could be adopted fairly quickly.

Cllr Glenister made the point that there still may be people against this new proposal as it would be impossible to please everyone.

Other Matters Arising

**Station approach parking spaces** – Cllr Rowe said that GBC had responded by saying they would not lease the spaces again. Residents could talk to the railway authority directly if they wished.

Cllr Glenister suggested asking GBC if all the garages in Scratton Fields are in use. ***Clerk to action.***

Cllr Glenister also suggested that there may be space for two other cars to be parked if the trees and shrubs in the area are cleared.

Cllr Ellis asked whether the Parish Council would consider leasing the land from the Railway authority as parking was such an issue. It was explained that the cost of leasing was too high, which is why GBC stopped the lease in the first place, and residents had not been prepared to pay either. ***Cllr Rowe to find out cost.***

**Fly-tipping** – The pond by Dabbs Place Farm has been cleared.

**Request for HGV sign at Gold Street** – KCC had turned down the request. Cllr Sweetland offered to look into this further.

**Block paving by Lodge Lane entrance** – work completed by KCC but not to a satisfactory standard.

**Playground** – Cllr Dyer explained that he was working on fixing the closing mechanisms on the gates.

Cllr Rowe to speak to Jon Jackson about the possibility of having wheelie bins on the playing fields to stop the rubbish being blown out of the bins/bins being attacked by foxes.

**Planning application for caravan in Whitepost Lane** – Cllr Glenister had investigated this issue and found that the appeal decision was limited to one year from 10 January 2014 so Cobham Parish Council could ask them to enforce the decision in January 2015. It was suggested that the Clerk write to the Planning team at GBC and ask about the procedure to enforce the decision. ***Clerk to action.***

**Japanese knotweed** – The Clerk has found a contact at GBC with responsibility for knotweed issues. ***Clerk to pass on details to Cllr Rowe to follow-up***.

**Logs at Jeskyns** – Denise Bird, the Ranger responded to the Parish Council’s email re the possibility of logs on the verge by the entrance to Jeskyns by saying that they would have to wait to see what effect car parking charges have on parking issues before making a decision.

Cllr Rowe explained that he had spoken to police about yellow lines by a verge and confirmed that a parking fine is enforceable if a vehicle is parked between the boundary of the park and the yellow lines.

**High-speed broadband roll-out** – Cllr Sweetland explained that the plans can be found on KCC’s website. ***Clerk to circulate the link.***

**Speed tubes in Sole Street and possibility of moving them further along the road** – Cllr Sweetland was asked about this and he explained that he had paid for the speed survey out of the Highway Fund. He did not feel that another survey further along the road when provide significantly different results ie the outcome and suggestions for possible improvements would be the same. He said that there was not enough reason to enforce a 20mph speed limit but that he had questioned why there are speed camera signs but no cameras. He was told that there were once mobile speed cameras, and the fact that the signs are still up makes it relatively easy to re-establish.

Cllr Giles suggested that a good place to have a mobile speed camera would be in the lay-by opposite Sweepshole Pond.

Cllr Rowe asked whether it would be possible to have another flashing speed indicator sign. Cllr Sweetland explained that they are very costly (approx. £7,000 each). At Shorne where one was recently been installed, KCC paid for half and the Parish Council paid for half. If Cobham wanted another one the Parish Council would have to pay half too. He went on to say that other options included having more 30mph signs painted on the road, or speed restriction gates.

Cllr Rowe said this would be discussed at the December budget meeting.

**Corporate Volunteering** – the Parish Council had received an email regarding corporate volunteering. This was forward to the Meadow Rooms Committee and the Headteacher at Cobham Primary School.

1. **Ongoing items**

**Playing Fields**

The gates and frames have been fixed and welded.

**Footpaths**

Cllr Ellis reported that Richard Dadd path is overgrown. Cllr Dymond to report to GBC contact.

**Transport**

Nothing to report.

**Planning**

**GBC Decisions**

20140696 48 The Street Cobham. Erection of a single storey rear extension to form enlarged kitchen/diner and additional internal alterations.

*Cobham Parish Council has no objection.* Refused

20140756 10 Scratton Fields Sole Street Cobham. Erection of a detached, two storey, two bedroom dwelling in the side garden.

*Cobham Parish Council objects to this proposal to insert another house in this very small area. It would be out of character with and detrimental to, nearby properties. If permitted, it would create a precedent for further “garden grabbing” proposals.* Refused

20140660 Burleigh Sole Street Cobham. Construction of pitched roof over existing flat roofed side extension incorporating 3 velux windows in the roof slope.

*Cobham Parish Council has no objection.* Permitted

20140725 37 Manor Road Sole Street. Demolition of existing garage and erection of a detached, two bedroom bungalow in the rear garden and creation of a new access drive and parking area.

*Cobham Parish Council is not happy with the narrow access for emergency vehicles between Nos 37 and 39 Manor Road. The proposed bungalow is also a tight fit, otherwise we do not strongly object.* Permitted

**CPC Comments**

20140812 Cllr Haig drew my attention to an application for a “Lawful Development Certificate” (LDC) in respect of a bungalow in the rear garden of 6 Manor Road. Applications for LDCs are not usually sent to the Parish Council for comment. However, I sent the following objection to the Borough Council and copied to Cllrs Alex Moore and Robin Theobald.

Cobham Parish Council objects strongly to this retrospective application for a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) in respect of the conversion of the building in the rear garden of this property into living accommodation. The conversion has been carried out contrary to the refusal of planning permission for application 20100870, submitted in September 2010.

The Council is aware that the building was converted to living accommodation by the addition of a bathroom at some time subsequent to its construction as a playroom / gym. Access for emergency vehicles is obstructed by a detached garage and the current obstruction of the road fronting the dwelling by parked vehicles opposite, following the construction of 3 footway cross-overs at the frontage of the property. A dwelling in this location is detrimental to and out of character with the area and is in close proximity to the listed Yeoman’s House.

The Council urges the refusal of a LDC if there are grounds to do so.

The response of the Case Officer dealing with the application was “I am the case officer dealing with application reference 20140812 regarding 6 Manor Road, Cobham. I wanted to thank you for the additional information regarding the application site.

Unfortunately I have not managed to have a detailed look at the case. As Clive Gilbert has confirmed in some correspondence, a LDC application has to be determined on the facts and legislation therefore this additional information is gratefully received. I will look to make a site visit shortly and will begin an analysis of the facts of the proposals against the planning history of the site and the permitted development criteria. Once an assessment has been made I will inform Cllrs Theobald and Moore of the outcome, which should allow them to refer the case to the Regulatory Board if this is appropriate.

If you have any questions or queries in the meantime please let me know. I would be happy to assist you.

20140183 Broadfield White Post Lane Meopham. Retention of the existing mobile home on land for use as an agricultural workers dwelling. You may recall that I reported on this application, which is in Meopham Parish, in March. The application is still pending a decision by the Borough Council’s Enforcement Officer. It was brought to the Council’s attention, by a local resident, that the caravan had been replaced by a larger mobile home. I informed the Enforcement Officer of the presence of the mobile home and he is investigating.

The CPC comment at the time was, CPC objects to the retention of the caravan other than for a very short period. The barn and caravan are very visible from a public footpath.

**Meadow Rooms**

Nothing to report.

**Neighbourhood Forum Report**

Nothing to report

**Jeskyns**

Nothing to report.

**Parking**

Construction of new parking spaces in Scratton Fields due to start on 3rd November 2014. GBC were first asked by the Parish Council in June 2010.

**Sweeps Hole pond**

Cllr Rowe reported that the work to cut back the reeds had been completed but he felt not to a satisfactory standard. Many feel that it is a shame not to be able to see the water. Cllr Rowe said he would speak to Peter Baylis about removing some of the reeds as perhaps they do not need to be so dense at the front. ***Clerk to follow up with a letter.***

1. **KCC Matters**

Cllr Sweetland mentioned that there were two other consultations taking place within KCC – one re the budget and one concerning Libraries. He explained that KCC were considering putting libraries into a charitable trust, as had been done by other Councils.

Cllr Sweetland also explained that he is responsible for Trading Standards within KCC. KCC and checkatrade.com have joined forces so KCC are effectively endorsing the website and its approved tradesmen.

Cllr Sweetland concluded by saying that he had arranged a trip to the Crayford Recycling Centre on 7th November. Cllr Glenister would be attending. Cllr Rowe requested that he also be added to the list.

1. **KALC matters**

Nothing to report

1. **Correspondence**

Nothing to report

1. **Matters raised by Parish Councillors**

Cllr Glenister reported a pothole at the end of Manor Road at the junction with Sole Street – approximately 6inches deep. ***Clerk to action.***

Cllr Giles asked whether there was any news on the Orangery at the Leighton property. Cllr Glenister said he had not heard of any update but we should ask again**. *Clerk to action.***

Cllr N Haig reported that a new wooden white post is needed near Lodge Lane. ***Clerk to action.***

Cllr Rowe said we should send a representative to the Urban Development Committee meetings but we would wait to receive the official invitation.

KCC is having a Highways seminar on Monday 17th November at 9am. Cllr Glenister offered to attend as the Cobham Parish Council representative.

Cllr Rowe explained that next year is election year. ***Clerk to organise the printing and displaying of posters.***

**Cllr Rowe reminded everyone that the War Memorial Remembrance Service would be on Sunday 9th November at 10am. Cllr Dymond and Cllr Ellis gave their apologies in advance.**

1. **Finance**

On the proposal of Cllr Glenister, seconded by Cllr Dymond, the following cheques were signed and ratified**:**

**14/09/14 Parish Council Insurance Renewal £1,157.79**

**14/09/14 St Mary’s Church Room Hire £80.00**

**26/09/14 Southern Water £1,792.41**

**06/10/14 Clerk’s Salary (October) £250.00**

**06/10/14 Maintenance Salary £104.00**

**06/10/14 PKF Littlejohn Auditors £120.00**

**Total £3504.20**

**As there was no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35pm.**

Chairman.........................................................................................................................

**The next meeting is on Monday 10th November at 7.30pm in St Mary’s Church Room, Sole Street.**