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

Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in St Mary’s Church Room, Sole Street on Monday 8th September 2014 at 7.30 pm

**PRESENT:**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE** MRS K LANE (CLERK)
MR A MOORE (GBC)
MR N BROWN (GBC)
MR D KILLIAN (GBC)

**PARISHIONERS** 15+

Chairman Cllr Alan Rowe opened the meeting at 7.30pm. He welcomed the two Officers present from Gravesham Borough Council - Nick Brown (Director, Finance & Environment) and Daniel Killian (Parking Manager).

Cllr Rowe went on to thank Jill Beety, the previous Parish Clerk for eight years of loyal service. He took the opportunity to present Jill with a thank you gift. Jill thanked Alan for his words and gift, and also Nigel and Margaret Haig for their support during her time as Parish clerk.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** None
2. **Minutes: to confirm and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14th July 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. He reported that Cllr N Haig therefore dealt with the application on behalf of the Parish Council.

Cllr Haig registered an interest in Planning application 20140756 - 10 Scratton Fields as he rings bells with the applicant.

1. **Manor Road Parking**

Nick Brown began by apologising for the amount of time it had so far taken to deal with the parking issue in Manor Road. He explained that the previous Parking Manager, Paul Gibbons, had put together a new plan which had taken into account comments received during the first round of consultations with residents in Manor Road, Greenlands etc. He went on to explain that Paul Gibbons had now left GBC, and he took the opportunity to introduce Paul’s successor, Daniel Killian.

Nick explained that he hoped to push the new planned scheme ahead asap. It would be advertised for 21 days and if there were no objections then the next stage would be for it to go through the traffic order process which takes approximately 5 weeks. At this stage GBC work with KCC to finalise the details. If however there are objections then the proposal goes to the Joint Transportation Board (which next meets in Dec). This obviously delays the process considerably.

Daniel Killian then proceeded to explain the plan and proposals for tackling parking issues in Manor Road. He showed everyone present a plan of the road with markings proposing where double yellow lines would be etc.

One Parishioner again raised the issue of the one house that has three drop kerbs and explained his view that this was what has caused all the problems with parking in the road.

Daniel Killian explained that GBC were not responsible for the drop kerb decisions, and that KCC grants approval for drop kerbs. Many Parishioners felt that KCC should reverse this decision but Mr Killian and Cllr Moore explained that the decision cannot be reversed and that KCC cannot legally remove planning permission after it has been granted.

Cllr Glenister said that he had looked into this before and that residents do not require planning permission for drop kerbs in an unclassified road providing the owner is prepared to pay for the cost of constructing them.

Cllr Moore emphasised the point that there is nothing that can now be done about the drop kerbs so we should be focussed on what can be done.

The resident of 16 Manor Rd said that the proposed plans would move the problem further up Manor Road. He believes that when people are unable to park at one end, they will simply be pushed down and the likelihood is that there will be more parking across driveways.

Cllr Rowe agreed with this view and said that he felt that the whole of Manor Road needed to be looked at.

The resident of 2 Manor Road felt that the proposal was unfair as it had taken all parking away at one end which would mean no parking outside his property.

Nick Brown went on to say that they could put the proposal forward but it was already clear that it would meet with objections and then it would be down to the Joint Transportation Board to make the final decision. The other option he explained would be to adapt the existing plan.

The resident of 41 Manor Road made the observation that three cars had been parked on double yellow lines all of that day. He said that not one traffic warden had been along the road.

Daniel Killian explained that the whole point of consulting with residents in this way was to try to reach a satisfactory proposal. He said that it would be hard to please everyone but together the aim was to please the majority.

Nick Brown backed these comments by saying that it was not GBC’s intention to impose a proposal on people that no-one wanted. He said that if this plan is not going to work for most people then we would have to look at what might be feasible.

Cllr Rowe raised the problem with emergency vehicles and dust carts not being able to get along the road when cars are parked along both sides. He also explained to Officers that there have been problems with cars parking across driveways/parking too close so that they can’t see approaching traffic.

Cllr Glenister said that one way to overcome the issue of people parking over driveways/too close to the edge of driveways would be to have white lines marked across driveways. This indicates to people that there should be no parking in a much clearer way. He explained that Paul Gibbons had agreed to incorporate this into the new plan but had not, and he felt that there was not much difference between this plan and the original one.

Cllr Glenister also explained that KCC were concerned with any proposal that might compromise the safety of the Sole Street/Manor Road junction. It was his view that the Parish Council needed time to consider what was now being proposed to come up with something that would please the majority.

Nick Brown agreed that this was a sensible suggestion as it was clear that there were a number of different views. He warned that there was a limit to what could be achieved.

One Parishioner reported speeding problems in Manor Road generally. He also felt that more road safety was needed on the bridge, and that parking opposite driveways causes the biggest problems because residents are unable to get off their driveways safely.

Cllr Glenister asked whether GBC could draw up a plan once the Parish Council had prepared their suggestions.

Daniel Killian confirmed that they could.

Nick Brown said that providing it does not cause a problem from KCC Highways perspective with emergency vehicles then this approach would be favourable. Once the new proposal has been prepared then the 21 days consultation can take place before being formalised.

Parishioner Mrs Hargrove commented that the chicane effect of cars parked on both sided of the road does nothing to slow traffic as cars accelerate as soon as they pass Manor Court. She reminded everyone that local residents used to be able to use the spaces opposite the Station but no longer could. Mrs Hargrove felt that if Bridge Cottage residents were once again able to use the spaces opposite the Station then this would free up space in Manor Road for Manor Road residents.

Cllr Rowe explained that the Station approach spaces were rented by GBC from the Railway company but GBC did not continue with the lease.

One Parishioner suggested zoned parking and not giving parking permits to anyone who did not live in Manor Road.

Daniel Killian said that people outside of Manor Road would be able to apply for a permit (this is how it works elsewhere) ie it is not restricted to residents-only. He said the suggestion could however be put forward.

Nick Brown concluded by once again saying that the challenge would be to find the best-fit proposal.

Cllr Rowe said that the Parish Council were, as always, very happy to listen to all the comments put forward. He said that the Parish Council would look at both plans and hopefully come up with a solution that would please the majority of residents.

Cllr Moore thanked Nick Brown and Daniel Killian. He went on to explain the issue with the spaces opposite the station. Residents had been asked to pay the fees that the Railway company were asking for them but had refused. Cllr Moore did however ask Nick to look into this again.

Cllr Dyer explained that there are seven spaces there and he recalls that the Railway wanted £3,000 for the seven bays for the year. Residents declined to pay so it went back to the Railway company.

Cllr Rowe thanked the Officers once again for attending.

Cllr Glenister took the opportunity to ask the GBC Officers about Jeskyns and parking on the verge. The Forestry Commission will soon be charging car park fees and the fear is that this will cause more problems with parking on the verges. He explained that there is a by-law enacted in Meopham, with notices up – words to the effect of ‘No parking on verge or footway’. He suggested that something similar could be put up outside Jeskyns to deter people further.

Daniel Killian explained that by-laws are the responsibility of KCC. Notices have to go through a traffic regulation order. He also explained though that double yellow lines on the road can be enforced right up to the boundary which would include the verge too. Daniel said he would look into this.

1. **GBC matters**

Cllr Moore began by thanking the residents of Manor Road too. He said that an informal consultation should now take place and that the Parish Council could draft some drawings. He said he was hopeful that if there were no objections to the new proposal then implementation could happen relatively quickly.

Cllr Rowe said that he and Cllr Glenister would look at plans and bring suggestions to the next meeting.

Cllr Moore then reported on the Scratton Fields development that has been approved and said this was good news for wider parking issues in Sole Street. He said that works should start very soon. Cllr Moore thanked Cllr Rowe and Cllr Glenister for their work on making this happen. He explained that the plan involves using a plot of land to create six spaces for residents. These would be allocated on a first come first served basis for residents in the road who do not have off road parking.

1. **Matters arising from Previous Minutes**

**KCC feedback**

Bryan Sweetland was not present so Cllr Rowe said he would follow-up with KCC about the speed tubes in Sole Street and moving them further along the road.

**Dog bin**

It was reported that a dog bin had now been placed in Manor Road.

**Litter bin in The Street**

It was reported that this has now been replaced.

**High-speed broadband**

Cllr Moore said he still needs to speak to KCC about high-speed broadband roll-out.

**Cars mounting pavement in The Street**

Cllr Dyer spoke to the headmistress at Cobham Primary School who said she regularly speaks to police about this issue.

**Playground**

Cllr Dyer reported that the gate posts in the playground had now been welded back into place. The Clerk reported that the gates still need adjusting and she is waiting for the person who fitted them to send her the adjustor.

**Knotweed**

Cllr Rowe reported that he had spoken to Jon Jackson who said that the knotweed had been controlled to an extent. He sprayed it three times but has noticed that it is present on the other side of the footpath in private residence. Jon Jackson said he would speak to the new owners.

Cllr M Haig reported that it is also present just past the Ship and that despite being cut back it keeps coming back.

Cllr Ellis said that a co-ordinated approach was needed.

One Parishioner with vast experience in this area gave his own views and explained the process of spraying, digging it up and burying it to rid of it for good. To be discussed further at next meeting.

**The Ship**

Paint splashed on the pavement outside. The Clerk sent a letter to the Manager last month. Some of the paint seems to have been removed/worn off so no further action needed.

**Lawrence Drive**

Marks on the pavement that were reported have gone.

**Weeds by the water pump**

The maintenance man has now cleared this area.

**Sweepshole pond**

Cllr Rowe explained that Bayliss did not do the work immediately as the Pond Warden had asked them not to at that particular time as it would interfere with wildlife too much.

Cllr Dyer said peoples’ safety was a far greater concern.

Cllr Rowe agreed and said that Bayliss were scheduled to do the work at 8am the following morning.

**Branches along Station road**

The Clerk reported the issue but has so far received no response. One Parishioner also said that she had spoken to station staff and that they had explained this was only done once a year (in February).

**Recyclable bags**

Cllr Ellis felt that it would not be unreasonable to request for the Council to supply small bags that go inside the food waste containers. She felt that the £1 shop bags probably do not conform to recycling regulations. People are also not receiving the black sacks.

Cllr Rowe agreed that we should contact GBC regarding the small food waste bags.

**Bottle bank**

Cobham now has a bottle bank which is situated by the Sports pavilion. It was reported that despite being for mixed bottles, the sign says green bottles only. ***Clerk to follow up and ask if/when a mixed sign will appear/new bin.***

1. **Ongoing items**

**Playing fields Committee Report**

Cllr M Haig said that there was still an issue with litter on the playing fields as the bins are attacked by foxes. She felt that wheelie bins would be more useful. Cllr Rowe to speak to Jon Jackson about it. It was also reported that dog mess is still an issue but the bins are in place so little else can be done.

**Footpaths Committee Report**

Cllr Dymond asked whether the steps by the bridge in Sole Street were still an issue but nothing was reported.

**Transport Committee Report**

Nothing to report

**Planning Committee Report**

**GBC Decisions**

20140460 The Old Carpenters Shop Lodge Lane Cobham. Outline application for the erection of a detached dwelling.

Cobham Parish Council objects to this proposed development in the MGB outside the Cobham village envelope. Refused.

20140555 Netherfield Round Street Erection of part two storey and part single storey extension on the eastern side elevation, incorporating dormer windows in the proposed side and rear roof slopes to form garage, family room and shower room with two ensuite bathrooms and walk-in wardrobes at first floor level and two bedrooms in the roof space, and a single storey rear extension to form new kitchen.

Cobham Parish Council has no objection. Permitted.

NB *The following applications have not previously been reported to the Council since they have been decided by GBC since the July meeting of this Council.*

20140602 “Oldlands" Gold Street Luddesdowne. Conversion of vacant agricultural Building to Single Residential Dwelling and Garden/curtilage.The proposal utilises an existing semi-derelict agricultural building.

Cobham Parish Council does not object. Permitted

20140557 Parsonage Barn, Parsonage Farm, The Street, Cobham. Conversion of existing barn into one 3 bedroom and one, one bedroomed dwelling incorporating the erection of single storey extension to the west elevation and alterations to the existing lean-to on the east elevation to provide carport with associated parking and amenity space.

Cobham Parish Council has long been concerned at the continuing deterioration of the unused barn, which is an important feature within the conservation area. The Council supports this application, which, while providing needed rented accommodation will preserve and restore the barn for the future. Permitted.

20140578 Leighton Sole Street. Retention of a single storey rear extension incorporating removal of the two lantern windows on the roof of the extension and replacement with two roof lights.
Cobham Parish Council continues to object strongly to this extension to Leighton, which was erected without planning permission. The Council agrees fully with the decision of Gravesham Borough Council in refusing retrospective planning permission and the decision of the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State in dismissing the appeal. The Council has always considered the property to be an inappropriate intrusion into the Metropolitan Green Belt and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The property is visible across open countryside particularly from the Weald Way footpath, especially in winter time. Refused

20140650 Dabbs Place Farm Jeskyns Road Cobham
Application for determination as to whether prior approval is required for the proposed change of use of an agricultural building for the storage of agricultural vehicles to a one bedroom single dwelling house.

Cobham Parish Council will not object to the conversion as the area and height of the building will be unchanged. Prior Approval Refused

CPC Comments

20140519 56 The Street Cobham. Application for Listed Building Consent for completion of structural remediation works to western elevation of 56 The Street, to include replacement of defective timber wall members, closure of existing fireplace and reinstatement of external lime render/internal lime plaster finishes. Opening up of fireplace to eastern elevation to include remedial works to existing brickwork and timber panelling.

Cobham Parish Council has no objection.

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.

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.

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.

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.

**Meadow Room Committee Report**

It was reported that a usergroup meeting was scheduled for the following day.

**Neighbourhood Forum Report**

Councillors were reminded that 30th Sep was the deadline for a new batch of funding if anyone wanted to put anything forward. Cllr Smith has been confirmed as the appointed Parish Council representative.

**Jeskyns**

Cllr Ellis reported that she had tried to contact Denise the Ranger re parking charges but had not received a reply.

Cllr Rowe said he had also tried to contact them re building a trench but Denise the Ranger was away so he spoke to someone at Shorne who reminded him that there are trenches all around the site to prevent Travellers gaining access. The only area where there are not any is by the entrance. The Forestry Commission are opposed to planting trees or shrubs there as it could obstruct the sight line.

Cllr Rowe asked the clerk to follow-up and see whether they would consider logs or similar.

**Parking problems**

Cllr Rowe explained that the speed tubes in Sole Street are not in the correct place as they should not be by the parked cars but be between Scratton Fields and Sweepshole Pond where people tend to pick up speed. He said that the Parish Council should be continuing to pursue a 20mph speed limit through Sole Street.

**KALC**

Gravesham Borough Council’s proposed Parish Charter was discussed. Everyone agreed that they were happy with the proposed Charter and that there was nothing in it that the Parish Council were not already doing. The Clerk explained that the new website that she is working on would allow for more feedback mechanisms etc. ***Clerk to let Peter Harlow know that we have no objections.***

1. **Correspondence**

**None**

1. **Matters raised by Parish Councillors**

Cllr M Haig requested that the Clerk ask Kent Highways to check signs throughout the village as some are not clearly visible where trees are overgrown etc. ***Clerk to action***

Cllr N Haig asked the Clerk to speak to KCC Highways about the block paving by Lodge Lane entrance. ***Clerk to action***

Cllr Dyer reported that the large pothole on The Street had been fixed.

Cllr Dymond reported that trees are still overhanging footpath alongside Owletts. ***Clerk to contact Jonathan Ireland.***

Cllr Ellis said that KALC are trying to get a vote on the Joint Transportation Committee as they feel they should have representation and say. She also reported some fly-tipping in the pond past Dabbs Place. ***Clerk to report.***

Cllr Rowe said that there was a Parish Chairmans meeting scheduled for Wed 1st October. He asked Councillors if there were any issues to be raised. Suggestions put forward were:

New Manor Road proposal

Black sacks

Station parking issue

To ask what problems other people have with narrow roads and how they deal with it etc.

***Clerk to complete the items for agenda form and return it to the organisers.***

Cllr Rowe told Parishioners about an email that the Parish Council had received from the son-in-law of a man who used to run the village shop, a gentleman called Jimmy Purfield who left for the war in 1914. The son-in-law has used his diary and other records to put together his story, which he now presents as a talk. Cllr Rowe thought that it would be of interest to many people in the village so he will see if he can arrange a talk in the Spring.

1. **Any other business**

One Parishioner reported an issue that he has noticed in the village. HGVs have been driving through Sole Street and Gold Street, trying to get to the clothes business at the end of Lodge Lane. It seems that the HGVs are coming off the A2 at Gravesend (E) and turning right before the 6’6 sign in the village, so they end up driving along Sole Street before turning left into Gold Street. He said that one HGV recently damaged the bridge. The Parishioner asked whether it would be possible to request an ‘Unsuitable for Heavy Goods Vehicles’ sign to be put up at the Sole Street/Gold Street junction. ***Clerk to write to KCC Highways***

The same Parishioner asked about the house in Whitepost Lane with a caravan on the land that the resident had applied for planning permission for. Cllr Glenister explained that the land comes under Meopham but Cobham Parish Council were asked to comment because it was so close. Cobham Parish Council disagreed with the application, as did Meopham Parish Council. Gravesham Borough Council turned down the application. However, it was granted on appeal.

Cllr Rowe said that a six foot fence had also been erected along the roadside but this had now been removed following complaints. The posts however remain.

Cllr Glenister said that Cobham Parish Council could write to the Enforcement Officer about it. Cllr Rowe said we would need to tell Meopham Parish Council that this was what we were planning to do. Cllr Glenister said he would look into the appeal decision to see whether it was a one year decision.

Another Parishioners asked about the Cranbourne planning application. Cllr Glenister explained that it is still pending, as is Broadfield.

1. **Finance**

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

**21.07.14 Cllr Glenister Clerk laptop reimbursement 459.90**

**16.08.14 Clerk salary (August) 250.00**

**16.08.14 Cllr Glenister Clerk printer reimbursement 49.99**

**16.08.14 M Lisney maintenance (August) 130.00**

**07.09.14 M Lisney maintenance (Sep) 104.00**

**07.09.14 Clerk salary (September) 250.00**

**07.09.14 GBC – Swing seats plus fitting 130.00**

**07.09.14 All Seasons Projects –**

 **War memorial hedge and**

 **Playground gates/fence 175.00**

**07.09.14 Fastnet Internet providers 180.00**

**07.09.14 EDF Energy (June-Aug) 631.75**

**Total £ 2360.64**

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

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

**The next meeting is on Monday 6th October at 7.30pm in The Meadow Rooms, Cobham**