**COBHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 2014/15 (NO 6)**

Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held in St Mary’s Church Room, Sole Street

on Monday 10th November 2014 at 7.30 pm

**PRESENT**

**COUNCILLORS:** CLLR R DYMOND (VICE-CHAIR)
CLLR ND HAIG
CLLR M HAIG
CLLR K SMITH
CLLR L ELLIS
MR B GLENISTER
MR S DYER

**IN ATTENDANCE:** MRS K LANE (CLERK)
CLLR A MOORE (GBC)
CLLR B SWEETLAND (KCC)
COMMUNITY WARDENS – STEVE GRAY & MANDY CASON

**PARISHIONERS:** 12

Vice-Chairman Cllr Rosemary Diamond opened the meeting at 7.30pm. She explained that the Chairman, Cllr Alan Rowe, was recovering from an operation and wished him a speedy recovery. She said he hoped to be back for the January 5th Parish Council meeting. Cllr Diamond went on to welcome the two Community Wardens who were attending the meeting to meet Councillors and Parishioners.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Alan Rowe and Cllr Julian Giles
2. **Minutes: to confirm and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8th September 2014.** All agreed and signedby Vice-Chair Cllr Rosemary Diamond. A request was made that the pages are in future numbered on the minutes.
3. **Declaration of Interest:** None
4. **Parishioners Comments**

Parishioner Jean Coulter asked about the private land notice at the end of the Station car park and plans to lock the gate.

Cllr Glenister explained that this was discussed at a recent Parish Council meeting. A similar thing was done 3 or 4 years ago and the gates were locked. At the same time a planning application was submitted to re-build the factory but this was refused. Cllr Glenister wondered whether the land owners were planning to submit another planning application, perhaps in light of the greenbelt review. He reminded parishioners that it was not a private footpath beyond the gate.

Parishioner William Blake mentioned the Mote development in Scratton Fields which he said was deteriorating rapidly. He reported that the woodwork is looking very shabby and was spoiling the look of the area. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Mote and request that this be looked into, although Mote have previously told a neighbour that as a charity they could not afford to carry out this maintenance. ***Clerk to action.***

Another Parishioner mentioned that a large number of horses have turned up in the paddock by the Gold Street/ Sole Street Junction. There are also two opposite the Railway in Sole Street. It was suggested that the resident of Bramble Cottage might know who the horses belong to. ***Clerk to investigate.***

Peter Brierley said that the bin at the top of Scratton Fields had disappeared. Cllr Moore said he would look into this.

Peter Brierley also mentioned that the gullies are blocked again with leaves. Cllr Moore said he would look at this too.

Cllr Rosemary Diamond said that the leaves on the pathway between the Church and the Meadow Rooms are very slippery and dangerous. Cllr Moore agreed to add this to his list.

One parishioner mentioned that the pavement that has been repaired in White post Lane has weeds poking through the asphalt already. Cllr Sweetland explained that contractors would have carried out the work and if it was felt this had not been done to the correct standard then KCC Highways could potentially call them back to re-do. ***Clerk to speak to KCC Highways.***

Parishioner Jean Coulter said that flooding had once again been a problem in Sole Street in recent weeks. Cllr Sweetland explained that there were two particularly bad flooding areas locally – one on the A227 and one in Meopham. In both areas the County Council are trying to create new soakaways. He said this probably needed to be done in Sole Street too and that KCC are aware of the issues and the need to re-bore soakaways but it is very costly. Short-term the tankers will need to continue to attend quickly when flooding occurs. Cllr Diamond reminded everyone that Sole Street is complicated from an engineering perspective because of the pond and high water levels.

One Parishioner asked if there was any update on the Leighton property. Cllr Glenister said it was still on-going and that the owners have now submitted another appeal.

***KCC***

Cllr Sweetland said that he would fund the ‘No HGVs’ sign at Gold Street from the Highways grant. A site meeting will be arranged soon to decide where precisely the sign will go.

Cllr Sweetland reported that there was a website outlining Broadband roll-out. This has now been circulated to Councillors but the link can be found on the KCC site.

A mobile speed camera had been deployed in Sole Street a week before.

Cllr Sweetland reported that the Neighbourhood Forum was scheduled for 18th November. There have been a number of burglaries in Meopham recently but these have been exaggerated on social networking sites. The meeting was to be divided into two halves: Inspector Chris Carter would be giving an update on crime levels in rural areas and what the police are doing to tackle issues. The Chairman of North Kent Neighbourhood Watch would also be there and encouraging people to join their local Neighbourhood watch. The second part of the meeting would be about KCC budgets. John Symonds, the KCC person responsible for Finance would be discussing the cuts that KCC have already made and will continue to have to make over the next few years. Cllr Sweetland also encouraged everyone to take part in the KCC budget consultation on the KCC website.

Bernard Glenister asked about the reports that the Parish Council used to receive re crime levels. Steve Gray, one of the Community Wardens explained that you could go on wwww.kentpolice.uk and type in postcode to get a breakdown of crime in your area. A link will go on the Parish Council website. ***Clerk to action.***

Cllr Sweetland said that road traffic accident stats could be found on the KCC Highways website.

Cllr Sweetland explained that the Warden consultation had just finished. There are currently 79 wardens who are in their posts but expecting that number to reduce. In our area we currently have three and although the out-come could not be pre-judged he was hopeful that our area would keep its three. The KCC were trying to make the roles of the wardens more flexible ie perhaps by covering a wider area.

**GBC**

Cllr Moore reported on the Manor Road parking issues. The proposal that the Parish Council put forward to GBC was now out for consultation. As yet, GBC had received no objections but it was expected that there would be some objections. If none, then the proposal could be implemented within weeks. If there are objections then it could go to the Joint Transportation Board on 10th Dec for them to make a decision. Nick Brown said he would keep Cllr Moore updated with progress.

With regard to planning issues, Cllr Moore explained that the application for Cranbourne Farm and the Equestrian centre had been ‘called-in’. This is a large development within the greenbelt. In brief, there had been a large number of objections from local residents and the Council – not so much against the development itself but more about where it is to be situated. Cllr Moore is hopeful that the regulatory board will recommend that it is situated at a different site where it will largely be hidden from view by the house. Cllr Moore also said that there were concerns about traffic that the equestrian centre may generate. A condition was therefore put in that says only people with horses at the centre would be able to use the facilities.

One resident raised his concern about Copthall Road towards Ifield and the effect increased traffic might have on the road. Alex Moore made the point again that there should not be any increase in traffic. The argument is that there should be less traffic if horses are kept on-site.

Cllr Moore also reported that number 6 Manor Rd Certificate for Permitted Development had been ‘called-in’. Cllr Robin Theobald and Cllr Moore had argued against the approval of the Certificate and recommended a site visit but the majority of the Board disagreed. In the end the Planning Board granted the Certificate. The Board judge a case on the issues presented before them and not on planning matters.

Cllr Moore reported on the Heritage Quarter planning application to re-develop two quarters of the town centre which is awaiting a High Court decision. He also reported on the public toilets in Gravesend town centre and possible plans to demolish them and give the land to the Highways.

Steve Gray, Community Warden introduced himself as the warden for the area. He said he would be in the area on a regular basis. He said that he had been to the village shop and spoken to Gay Grimes who is leading the Speedwatch scheme and he would be helping them over the coming weeks. He said he was keen to help with the petition to stop people speeding and mounting the pavements through The Street. He urged people to complete the petition. He reported that a resident had recently been hit by a car wing mirror whilst walking along the pavement. ***Add Steve Gray’s contact details to website.***

Cllr Moore mentioned that the Paramount Consultations had started and that he was disappointed that the consultations were during the day as it limited the amount of people at GBC who could attend. He said that they were hoping to start building in 2016, to be finished in 2019, ready to open in 2020.

Cllr Margaret Haig thanked GBC for cleaning the war memorial prior to the memorial service.

**Playing Fields**

Cllr Dyer reported that the gate closers are now child-friendly. We now pass the GBC checks that are carried out.

The Clerk reported that wheelie bins have been requested for the playing fields to try to tackle the problem of foxes attacking the bins.

**Footpaths**

Cllr Diamond reported that the trees alongside Owletts are still over-hanging despite the fact that the National Trust have responded to say that this has been dealt with. ***Clerk to follow-up.***

**Transport**

Nothing to report.

**Planning**

**GBC Decisions**

**20140812 6 Manor Road Sole Street Cobham**

Application for Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed use of the existing outbuilding from a games room/gym to residential accommodation ancillary to the main dwelling. Certificate Granted.

**20140183 Broadfield White Post Lane Meopham**

Retention of the existing mobile home on land for use as an agricultural workers dwelling.

Cobham Parish Council objects to the retention of the mobile home other than for a very short period. Refused

**CPC Comments**

**20140977 4 Jeskyns Cottages Jeskyns Road Cobham.**

Erection of a part two storey and part single storey rear extension to form dining room on ground floor level and bedroom at first floor level.

**Cobham Parish Council has no objection.**

**20140922 48 The Street Cobham**

Erection of a single storey rear extension to form enlarged kitchen/diner and internal alterations.

**Cobham Parish Council has no objection.**

**Updates from GBC**

**20140578** 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.

**Legal Services has been instructed to pursue litigation for the continuing offence with the enforcement notice.**

You will perhaps be aware that the owners submitted a further application under our reference 20140578 which was refused on the 11 August 2014. I understand that on the 3 November the owners submitted an appeal to the Inspectorate however we are currently waiting verification of that from the Inspectorate.

**20140805 White Post Farm White Post Lane Sole Street.**

Retention of the caravan used for security purposes.

**20140584 White Post Farm White Post Lane Sole Street.**

Retention of a Pigeon Loft

**NB. This site is in Meopham Parish close to the Cobham Parish Boundary.**

Cobham Parish Council asked GBC for an update on the situation at Whitepost Farm as The Planning Inspectorate had granted permission for the siting of a caravan or motor home within the barn area for security purposes for a period of 1 year that is due to expire on 10th January 2015. GBC are fully aware that the expiry date is approaching and will keep us updated. GBC also confirmed that there is an on-going situation with the pigeon loft that has been erected on the site, which is currently subject to an appeal.

NB. This application was not sent to CPC by GBC for comment

Once again the Certificate of Lawful Development being permitted at the property in Manor Rd was raised. The Councillors questioned how it could be permitted even though the original application was refused. Cllr Glenister said he needed time to consider next steps.

**Meadow Rooms**

Cllr Diamond reported that a Committee meeting was scheduled for that week. Some felt that what was being asked of local organisations was too demanding.

**Neighbourhood Forum**

Cllr Smith said that the Parish Council should consider whether there is anything that the Parish Council would like to apply for a community grant for. The flashing speed sign in Sole Street was suggested, as was a bench on the verge opposite the pond. Councillors were told to send suggestions to the Clerk so they could be considered for the next round of applications.

**Jeskyns**

Cllr Smith expressed her disappointment at the recent event at Jeskyns to encourage people to sample the apples from the Orchards and also sample local produce/have some fun with the family. Cllr Smith felt that it was poorly advertised and as a result, visitor numbers were very low.

**Parking**

Other than the Manor Road parking issue that was discussed earlier in the meeting, no other concerns were raised.

**Speeding**

The voluntary speedwatch team have reported that the last speedwatch found 57 people to be doing 25+mph and 1 person was recorded at a speed of 44mph. A total of 193 drivers have been caught doing 25mph or more since the team started. Letters have been sent to local residents asking them to sign a petition to tackle speeding problems as well as work to stop drivers mounting the pavement along The Street. The Parish Council discussed the issues generally. An oil tanker and bus have reportedly caused problems recently and some noted that at times it is unavoidable to mount the kerb. The speedwatch scheme is helping but there are still issues that need to be addressed.

**Sweepshole pond**

Peter Baylis were asked to provide a quote for removing some of the reeds from the roots as it was decided at the last Parish Council meeting that the reeds were too dense and the pond could not be seen from the road. The quote of £175 had been received. Cllr Nigel Haig proposed and Cllr Glenister seconded the expenditure. ***Clerk to ask Baylis to carry out work.***

**KALC** – Nothing to report.

**Correspondence**

Cllr Diamond reported that a meeting was due to be held on 12th November regarding the revitalisation of Gravesend. Cllr Smith said she would attend. Cllr Diamond said she would like to see the Canal basin area re-developed as it’s an attractive space and ideal for development.

**Councillor Comments**

Cllr Smith said that lots of rubbish had been left by workers at the Station. ***Clerk to send letter of complaint***

Cllr Haig said that residents had been asking about the seemingly erratic delivery about black sacks and clear bags. A Parishioner said that they had been asking GBC for dates but continually being told that “they are coming.” ***Clerk to ask GBC if they can provide fixed dates***.

Cllr Haig mentioned the white post opposite the war memorial that needs replacing. ***Clerk to get quote for replacing.***

Cllr Glenister mentioned the cobble stones that have been damaged again at the end of Lodge Lane. The Clerk explained that KCC Highways say this is a private road and therefore they are not responsible for repairs (although they did the last work as a gesture of goodwill). ***Clerk to follow-up with Cllr Sweetland***. A long-term solution needs to be found as these continue to be damaged each time they are repaired.

Cllr Diamond said that the Parish Council had received a request for a dog bin in The Street. This was briefly discussed but those present felt that it was not needed at present.

**Finance**

On the proposal of Cllr Dyer, seconded by Cllr M Haig, the following cheques were signed and ratified**:**

22/10/14 Royal British Legion remembrance

donation and wreath £50.00

22/10/14 Meadow Rooms Hire (Oct) £36.25

10/11/14 Navigus Planning Ltd

(Planning magazine subscription) £50.00

10/11/14 Clerk’s Salary (November) £250.00

10/11/14 Maintenance Salary £104.00

10/11/14 Baylis Landscape Contractors Ltd £234.00

Total £724.25

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

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