

**Minutes of Methwold Annual Parish Meeting 2012  
held at St. George's Hall on Wednesday March 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**Present:** Mr R Hood – Chairman of Methwold Parish Council, nine members of Methwold Parish Council and twenty seven members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence received from: Councillors Mr J Henry, Mrs B Bluck, Mr D Masters and Mr P Barnes.
2. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20/02/11 were signed as a true record of the meeting.
3. No matters from the 2011 Annual Parish Meeting were raised.
4. Chairman's Report – the Chairman noted that it was encouraging to see so many people at the meeting.
  - Notification given of correspondence received from Anglianwater regarding imminent hosepipe ban to take effect from April 5<sup>th</sup> 2012.
  - Following the Local Council Elections in May 2011 five new members were welcomed to Methwold Parish Council; Chris Stone, Suzanne Stones, Barbara Bluck, Jim Henry and Mo Truss. Robin Hood remained as Chairman of the Parish Council, with Colin Neville as Vice-Chairman and Beryl Horton as Deputy Vice-Chairman.
  - Since the election Parish Council Committees have been re-organised and the Parish Council has a Finance Committee and a Planning Committee and two Working Parties. The Open Spaces Working Party and Hall and General Purposes Working Party hold monthly meetings which supplement the Full Council meetings. Both Working Parties have projects under consideration and are working hard to research possible funding sources.
  - Robin Hood remained as Cemetery Superintendant with Marie Wortley as Assistant Cemetery Superintendant.
  - The Parish Council was approached by parents of pupils at Methwold Primary School regarding inconsiderate parking outside the Primary School. Issues remain regarding parking around both schools in the village and in the High Street on market days. The Chairman noted that there is parking available at the Village Hall and at the Rec. and thus dangerous situations caused by vehicle congestion could be alleviated if people, including parents collecting children from school, were willing to park sensibly.

Projects undertaken and other news:

- The seat in Brookville has been repaired thanks to Jim Marriage and other seats have been purchased to be located in the parish. One seat has been placed outside the Post Office.
- Following request the post box in Crown Street was relocated to outside the Post Office.
- Work has been undertaken on St. George's Hall including replacement windows, installation of insulation, fitting of a frost-stat, decoration of the Fenton Room and replacement of the door locks. Further decoration, a replacement kitchen and new curtains are now being considered.
- The football pitch at the Rec. is being used by Methwold United. The Club also make use of facilities at the Social Club.
- An ongoing matter relating to the Cemetery was eventually satisfactorily resolved and new Cemetery rules and regulations have been adopted.

- Methwold Community Action Group and the Parish Council have, for some time, been researching the provision of boards showing village footpaths. This is still being considered but there appears to be conflicting information regarding where some footpaths run.
- Thanks were voiced to Colin Marsland who provided the village website for so long. Methwold.net is now up and running. The Parish Council has pages on the website and it is hoped this facility will be expanded to provide further information from the Parish Council. It is possible bookings for St. George's Hall will be able to be made on line in future.
- New play equipment is being planned for the Rec. and a play area should soon be provided in Methwold Hythe.
- The Rec. has been registered as part of the "Fields in Trust" initiative and it is thus protected as an open space.
- A questionnaire was distributed regarding use of St. George's Hall to try to gauge what facilities may be wanted but only four responses were returned.
- Two dog waste bins have been installed in Methwold Hythe. Thanks to Phil Ashman for erecting the bins.
- A steel framed building is planned for the Rec. if funding is available. A planning application is to be submitted ready to apply for grants.
- Thanks to Jim Marriage for installing a tap in the New Cemetery.
- The Parish Council is looking to register land owned by the Council. This includes the land adjacent to the Churchyard on which the electrical sub-station stands. A revised wayleave payment is presently being negotiated for this piece of land.

#### 5. Financial Report

- The Parish Council has once again kept expenditure very much to budget. By using income from lettings of St. George's Hall works on the Village Hall will be financed without spending any reserve funding. Expenditure during 11/12 has used the precept and income for the year only and there is a predicted under spend of around £2000. Predicted income is £41802 (includes precept of £29527) and expenditure £40000.
- Expenditure on the hall has been nearly £13000 but this includes fitting of a frost-stat, loft insulation, door locks, windows and decoration. Some chairs have been sold and the money received put towards new chairs.
- Reserves of around £57000 will be carried forward and discussion took place at a Finance Committee meeting held on 26/03/12 regarding the amount of money that the Parish Council should hold in reserve and how funds should be allocated to help finance suggested projects. The Parish Council has already allocated £1400 towards the pavilion for the Rec. project and £1500 towards the provision of a play area in Methwold Hythe (providing land can be secured).
- Consideration is being given to the Parish Council's financial strategy for the forthcoming years and projects will be prioritised with reserve money to be allocated accordingly.

#### 6. Matters raised by parishioners

- It was reported that Methwold United have a sponsor who will supply kit, first-aid and players! It was noted that a feasibility study relating to the provision of a new pavilion at the Rec. is being undertaken and grants will be applied for. It is estimated a new pavilion will cost in the region of £40,000 and it is hoped some money will be raised by potential users.
- It is possible Quorn may be prepared to assist the village in the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.
- Some debate ensued regarding whether dogs are permitted on the Rec. There is confusion regarding the legality of dogs being walked around the Rec. It was suggested bigger signs stating "No dogs" on the Rec. may be needed. A footpath which runs adjacent to the Rec. is in

need of re-opening to encourage dog walkers away from the Rec. Concern was voiced regarding the amount of dog mess on footpaths generally and a comment was made that the dog waste bin sited in the Rec. car park should be re-located.

- Rubbish is being left in the Rec. car park and it was felt the village would benefit from a litter pick.
- The street sweeper visits the village each three months. The Borough Council will be asked to provide a schedule of street sweeping that can be published in the Methwold Times/on Methwold.net.
- Alcohol is said to be being consumed on the Rec. The Safer Neighbourhood Team will be made aware of this.
- A resident of Old Feltwell Road has concerns that the entrance to a driveway along Old Feltwell Road is being eroded as it is being used as a turning point. The Highway Department will be approached to determine where the responsibility for the Highway ends and whether the pot holes being formed can be repaired as they are becoming water traps.
- The traffic island at Cock Corner is looking untidy. Methwold in Bloom were asked to consider smartening the area but Highways have previously declined permission for any flower container to be sited on the island. The Parish Council could consider replacement of the old grit bin.
- It was also noted that the advertising signs at Cock Corner do not help to make the entrance to the village look inviting. A request was made for a possible sign to direct people to the centre of the village.
- A suggestion was made for a "SLOW" sign to be located by the Globe Street turning as traffic tends to travel too fast near this junction with the High Street.
- Drainage is a problem by Clough Farm. Owners of No. 1 Clough Farm have repaired the chalk wall of their property but they are concerned that the wall will deteriorate again if water is allowed to accumulate on the road by the wall. Rain water does not seem to drain away. There is a drain on the opposite side of the road but the water does not appear to reach it. It was noted the tarmac around the drain needs to be repaired. It was suggested members of the public should report Highway problems on the Norfolk County Council website.
- A member of the public voiced thanks to those responsible for the flowers in the village. Many were in agreement that the daffodils look nice.
- Concern was voiced regarding the planned planting of a Home Oak by the village sign at Cock Corner. It was felt further consideration should be given to the type of tree suggested as the tree may block light to nearby properties.
- It was noted the oil for St. George's Hall is purchased through the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) and this is probably the cheapest supplier available to the Parish Council.
- The Parish Council provides a BT telephone line to the Clerk's house as noted on financial statements.
- A suggestion was made that a security camera could be located at the Rec. to deter anti-social behaviour.