

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL
THURSDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 2011

Present: Mr. R Hood – Chairman, Mrs. J Oliver, Mrs. D Charlesworth-Smith, Mrs. M Wortley, Mr. C Neville, Mr. C Marsland, Mr. D Masters, Mr. J Marriage, Mr. D Wortley.

Borough Cllr. Mr. M Storey

Borough Cllr. Mr. M Peake

6 members of the public

OPEN FORUM

- A heart defibrillator has been donated by Sudden Adult Death charity for use in the village. This is to be located on the wall of the Fire Station.
- A trip to Stanford Battle Area has been arranged by Methwold Community Action Group for April 12th.

PCSO Sophie Watson was in attendance for the start of the meeting and gave a report of incidents recently recorded in the parish. Five crimes have been committed and other incidents reported included noise nuisance, a domestic incident, a suspected bogus official in the area and a suspicious vehicle.

It was reported that lead has been stolen from the roof of St. George's Hall.

A query was raised regarding possible gun shots in the village. It is thought that the noise reported was caused by a bird scarer.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Mrs. B Horton

2. Declaration of Interest:

None stated

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 13/01/11 were agreed as a true record.

4. Matters arising from past minutes:

- Further discussion regarding work to be undertaken at the Pound will take place after a resolution to exclude the public.
- Moles are reported to have been cleared from the Cemetery.
- The Busy Bees have vacated the cupboard nearest the door to the hallway in the Fenton Room kitchen.
- Further communication has been received from UK Power Networks regarding the lease for the land on which the substation adjacent to the Recreation Ground stands. No record can be found that the lease has been renewed and terms will be discussed regarding a new lease. Legal advice will be sought from Norfolk Association of Local Councils.
- Defra has not yet responded to an enquiry regarding dead seagulls found in the parish.

The meeting was briefly suspended to ask Cllr. Storey if he had any further information on this matter. No more dead birds have been found but Mr. Storey could report nothing further. DEFRA will be contacted again.

- The owners of Hill House have been contacted regarding trimming back brambles from the property overhanging the pavement. Brambles are also overhanging the Churchyard wall. The shrubs in the Churchyard need to be trimmed and it will be checked whether the Parish Council is responsible for doing this as the Churchyard is a closed Churchyard.
- It was again reported that encroachment has taken place of the footpath around Rose Cottage. Discussion took place regarding this matter and what could be done. Norfolk County Council Rights of Way Officer will be contacted.
- Highways has confirmed that White Plot Road is a public highway up to the southern boundary of No. 55. Concern has been raised that vehicles are being parked on the road and the road is not wide enough for tractors to pass. A request was made to approach Highways to see if anything can be done. The Police are aware of the situation and Cllrs. Peake and Storey also offered to

speak to the Highways Department. Pot holes along Whiteplot Road will also be reported.

- 4.1 The Parish Council was presented with measurements and a picture of the mat storage roller the Bowls Club would like to keep in the foyer at St. George's Hall. It is proposed the device would fit by the stairs in the foyer if the present seat was removed. The Parish Council would not accept any responsibility for the roller.

The meeting was briefly suspended to allow Mr. Chris Stone to speak. Mr. Stone offered to go back to the Bowls Club to ask if the club would make the necessary alterations in the foyer to locate the roller. For added security it was suggested the roller could be locked to the bottom of the stairs.

5. Mr Phillip Ashman was co-opted as a new member of the Council.

Mr. Ashman duly signed his Acceptance of Office form and joined Councillors.

6. Reports:

6.1 Chairman's Report:

- Councillors had been presented with notes from the working party meeting held on 19/01/11 to discuss what maintenance work should be undertaken at St. George's Hall. It was agreed a further meeting will be held to compile specifications for maintenance work recommended. It was noted that the recent village survey had indicated that people found St. George's Hall unwelcoming. The working party had discussed this and experimented with the lighting available in the Fenton Room. It was agreed a notice could be displayed to inform users of the lights available as the room can look more inviting with appropriate lighting.

Names were suggested of two people who could possibly repair the PA system in the Hall.

- Door closures are still to be fixed to doors at St. George's Hall.
- The Chairman will ask a roofer to quote to replace the lead stolen from the roof of St. George's Hall.

6.2 Clerk's Report:

- Election packs for the Parish Council election on May 5th will be sent out during the month.
- A new tea urn for St. George's Hall has been ordered.
- Councillors were informed that the proposed Localism Bill could give local councils the opportunity to shape their community by creating neighbourhood plans and proposing neighbourhood development orders. The Borough Council planning Department has suggested however that Parish Councils can already have a say in shaping their community if they pass comment when the Local Development Framework Site Specific documents are released.

- Councillors were recommended to read the articles in Norfolk Link regarding the Localism Bill and Data Protection.
- Guttering has been fixed to the Pound. It was noted however, that a tile needs to be replaced on the Pound roof.
- The Hall caretaker has cleaned out the guttering at St. George's Hall.

7. Accounts for January were approved for payment.

7.1 It was agreed monthly accounts should be included in the minutes for publication.

Expenditure	Net	VAT	Gross
Staff			933.46
Pest control	25.00	5.00	30.00
Lighting maintenance	100.24	20.05	120.29
E.ON Energy (street lights)	51.02	2.55	53.57
Viking	58.66	11.73	70.39
Initial washrooms	30.00	6.00	36.00
BCKLWN – dog waste bin emptying	117.52	20.56	138.08
CGM – grounds maintenance	119.73	23.95	143.68

Income	Hall	Cem.	Other
Doctors	60.00		
PO	51.00		
Lettings	258.00		

8. Planning:

Applications received for comment:

8.1 Hazardous Substances Application: 7891 tonnes of petroleum products (gas oils) at Wissington Sugar Factory 11/00003/HZ

Supported

8.2 Change of use to create nature trail conservation at land South of Drift House, Severalls Road, Methwold Hythe

Supported

Mr. Ashman declared an interest in 8.2 (this item had not been specified on the agenda) and left the room while the decision to support was made.

9. Correspondence:

1. Letter regarding the Governments proposed sale of forestry land.
Information will be published in the Methwold Times and Councillors who wish to comment will do so as individuals.

In Folder to be passed to Councillors

1. WNVCA In Touch
2. Breckland LDF
3. Norfolk Link etc.
4. The Playing Field

10. Access across Lower Green.

A verbal request has been made to place slabs across Lower Green to form a path to one of the cottages. Some discussion took place regarding this and it was suggested the resident concerned should put any request in writing to the Parish Council for consideration. The Parish Council would then look at whether to enter into a Deed of Easement for access across the Green. It was noted that there was originally a path to the cottages which ran along the front wall of the cottages.

11. Parish Council responsibilities and commitments.

It was suggested it would be helpful for new councillors if an asset list and a schedule of contracts for maintenance work around the parish was compiled. The matter of land registration has been discussed previously and this will be considered again. It was noted that Humble Pit, Globe Street is owned by the Parish Council but this is not registered with Land Registry.

An asset list will be produced to be reviewed by Councillors.

12. Further reports/items for the next agenda:

12.1 It was reported that street light No. 26 on Hythe Road is not working.

12.2 Grave spaces in the Cemetery are allocated in numerical order, however it was noted there are vacant plots which have been reserved and not yet filled.

12.3 A request has been made to move the post box from outside the Old Post Office to by St. George's Hall. Royal Mail considers this a low priority job but a second request will be made. The Post Office will also be asked to approach Royal Mail again.

12.4 Methwold Primary School has verbally made a request to hold a fete on the Recreation Ground on June 2nd 2011. The Parish Council was happy in principal to grant this request but would need confirmation of the arrangements, including insurance

provision, in writing. This matter will be an agenda item for the March Parish Council meeting.

12.5 Methwold Community Action Group has offered to repair what are known as the “Jubilee seats” in the parish. The five seats are located at Methwold Hythe, Brookville, on the Recreation Ground (2) and at Fair Hill. The Parish Council was asked to make a contribution to the cost of the repair materials. This will be an agenda item for the March Parish Council meeting.

12.6 The Parish Council has previously discussed the old play area on the Recreation Ground becoming a wild flower area (to be managed by Methwold in Bloom). A request was made therefore to retain the fence between this area and the remainder of the Recreation Ground. A written request was asked for and this matter will then be put on the agenda.

12.7 Ms. Truss MP will be invited to attend a meeting of Methwold Parish Council.

12.8 It was suggested that during work to flatten the bumps in the road between Brookville and Whittington the ditches by the side of the road were deepened. Highways will be contacted regarding this.

12.8 Training for Councillors will be considered after the Parish Council elections in May.

12.9 Consideration will be given to purchasing chairs with arms for the Fenton Room at the next working party meeting.

12.10 Mrs. Oliver has complained to BT regarding the state of the telephone boxes and the box in Brookville has now been cleaned.

Resolution to exclude the public to discuss the following:

- 1. Further correspondence has been received regarding the memorial in the Cemetery which has been sited between graves. A request has been made for the stone to be relocated and a response is awaited. Parish Councillors are prepared to hold a site meeting with those concerned at the Cemetery, as requested, if a date can be set.*
- 2. Two quotes have been received for the grounds maintenance contract in the parish for the forthcoming season. It was agreed to remain with the present contractor.*
- 3. Two quotes have been received to level the entrance to Methwold Pound. However, Mr. Marriage has offered to undertake this work with the assistance of*

the village handyman and thus reduce the cost to the Parish Council. It is estimated 1.5 tonnes of gravel costing £69 will be needed. All were in favour of Mr. Marriage undertaking this work.