

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT ST. GEORGES HALL
THURSDAY 11TH AUGUST 2011

Present Mr R Hood – Chairman, Mr P Ashman, Mrs B Bluck, Mr J Henry, Mr J Marriage, Mr D Masters, Mr D Wortley, Mr C Stone, Ms S Stones, Mrs M Truss, Mrs M Wortley, Mr C Neville, Mrs B Horton

6 members of the public

OPEN FORUM

- It was noted that hedges are hanging over the footpath outside 3 Crown Street and 28 Hythe Road.
- It was reported that a tree had fallen across the footpath to the Cemetery but this was cleared away very quickly.
- A letter had been received before the July Parish Council meeting from the owners of land in Brookville which stated that the owners would like to know the views of residents of Brookville before they submit a planning application on their land.
- It was queried where the responsibilities of the Parish Council lie and whether there is overlap between what is undertaken by the Parish Council and Methwold Community Action Group. It was asked what the intentions of Methwold Community Action Group are and, in light of item 6.2 on the agenda for the meeting, whether the group asks for any donations from the Parish Council.
- Residents of Methwold Hythe were present to request the provision of a play area in Methwold Hythe. Mr Ashman offered to contact a local land owner regarding the availability of land in the Hythe. If land can be obtained the Open Spaces Working Party could be tasked with incorporating the provision of play equipment for Methwold Hythe into plans for future funding. This matter will be further considered when it is known if land is available.
- The footpath between Methwold Hythe and Methwold village is scheduled to be cleared by Highways in September. It was noted that Whiteplot Road and Severalls Road, Methwold Hythe have already been cleared and swept by the Highway Ranges.

1. Apologies for Absence:

M Peake – Borough Councillor
Safer Neighbourhood Team

2. Declarations of Interest made:

As members of Methwold Community Action Group, Mrs M Truss, Mr J Marriage, Mr P Ashman, Mr C Stone and Ms S Stones declared an interest in item 6.2. Methwold Action Group is assisting to fund the new Methwold Village website in its first year, Mrs M Truss and Mr J Marriage are administrators of the website. Mr C Stone also declared an interest in item 6.1. Mr R Hood and Mr D Worley declared an interest in item 7.1

1613/09/2011

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 14/07/11 were agreed as a true record of the meeting with the following amendments:

- The wording of item 4.5 was altered to: Councillors had all been presented with copies of the current rules relating to Methwold Cemetery. The rules which include regulations relating to headstones/memorials were adopted.
- It was noted that during item 5.3 the suggestion was made to lower the hatch in the Fenton Room kitchen, to repair a down pipe at St. George's Hall and to consider the purchase of profile keys and locks for St. George's Hall.
- Under item 4.4 it was proposed, but not agreed, that all fees relating to the memorial for Mr and Mrs Depledge, which has been positioned in the walkway at the Cemetery and is to be removed by the Parish Council, should be waived.

In future all proposals will be minuted as stated and all decisions, including those which are not accepted, will be recorded by the number of votes for and against.

4. Matters arising from past minutes:

- The Parish Council has submitted a request for a payment of £400pa for rent of the land on which the village sub-station is located. The Wayleave Surveyor for UK Power Networks has been waiting to hear whether the plant needs updating before replying but a value of £10 a square metre has been agreed with a local council for substation rent. According to the Wayleave Surveyor the Methwold site is approximately 20 square metres and therefore rent of £200 pa is being offered.
It was proposed and agreed by a majority to accept the offer of £10 a square metre. Mr C Neville and Mr J Henry offered to check the area of the site.
The question of back rent for the site was discussed and it was noted that the Council had previously decided not to employ the services of a land agent to investigate the possibility of receiving a higher rent and back pay as it was thought the cost to do this would outweigh the gain. However, it may be that UK Power Networks would be obliged to bear the costs. Mr Neville offered to speak to a land agent again about this matter and it will be an agenda item for the September Parish Council meeting to propose a land agent is engaged to investigate claiming increased back rent.
- Some discussion took place regarding whether further rules should be set for the Cemetery. The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk provides both a booklet of statutory rules and guidelines for management of its cemeteries. It was suggested these should be studied and this matter will be an agenda item for the September Parish Council meeting with a view to adopting similar guidelines/rules.
- It was noted the training session held for Councillors on July 26th was basic but contacts were made with neighbouring Councils and suggestions made for the smooth running of meetings will be adopted. In future all decisions taken at a Parish Council meeting will be recorded by the number of those voting for or against a proposal. Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Policies will also be reviewed.

- The post box in Crown Street has still not been moved to outside the Post Office as was agreed with Royal Mail. This matter will be raised again at the September meeting of the Parish Council.
- It was agreed in 2009 that boards would be erected to show footpaths around the parish. It is extremely difficult to publish where the paths are as footpaths exist which are not shown on the Definitive Map produced by Norfolk County Council. The Definitive Map cannot be changed without a Public Path Order. The procedure to obtain a Public Path Order is currently being revised and it may be that legal assistance would be required if any application to change the Definitive Map was made. The registered routes as recognised on the Definitive Map are legally accepted but there may be unregistered Public Rights of Way that are not on the Definitive Map. It was suggested that the footpath board should show both the definitive paths and the used routes but that it should be stated that the map is not a legal Definitive Map.

5. Reports:

5.1 Chairman's Report:

- A frame and crate has been professionally made to hold the memorial to Mr and Mrs Depledge once it has been removed from the Cemetery as agreed at the July Parish Council meeting. The memorial will be securely stored by the Parish Council temporarily and the Depledge family will be given thirty days to collect the memorial.
- It was noted that the roads around the parish are in need of sweeping.

5.2 Clerk's Report:

- The Clerk has attended a Play Equipment Inspection Course and the need to undertake regular inspections of the equipment located at the Recreation Ground was reiterated. The equipment is inspected by ROSPA annually and Mr Ashman offered to undertake a visual check monthly.
- A copy of the book "The Parish Councillors Guide" has been purchased.
- The Government has produced a template for use by communities to create a Community Resilience Plan. Norfolk County Council is currently proposing amendments to the plan and it is suggested Parish Councils should consider adopting a Community Resilience Plan.

5.3 Reports from Working Party meetings:

- Terms of Reference were considered for both the Open Spaces Working Group and the Hall and General Purposes Working Group. The draft Terms of Reference for both groups were considered acceptable and it was agreed, with one abstention, to adopt the Terms of Reference as presented. There are no Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee or the Finance Committee and this matter will be considered when Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are reviewed.
- Replacement of the concrete posts at Fair Hill
Discussion took place regarding the replacement of the concrete posts on Fair Hill. It has been suggested wooden posts would look better but would not necessarily stop vehicles being driven on to the grass. Depending on the size and type of wood, posts would cost up to £160 plus VAT. There would also be the cost of removing the concrete posts and erecting wooden.

Debate took place regarding the pros and cons of concrete versus wooden posts and whether residents around Fair Hill should be consulted before any decision was made.

A vote was taken and it was agreed by 6 votes to 5, with two abstentions, that the concrete posts should remain at present.

- Reports were accepted from the Open Spaces Working Party meeting held on July 28th 2011 and the Hall and General Purposes Working Party held on August 4th 2011. The Open Spaces Working Group will undertake a feasibility study before consulting with the public regarding whether there is support for the provision of changing facilities at Methwold Recreation Ground.

The Hall and General Working Group are to prepare a questionnaire whereby members of the public will be consulted regarding the level of refurbishment of the kitchen at St. George's Hall. The draft questionnaire will be presented to Councillors at the September meeting of the Parish Council. It was suggested a public meeting could be held to discuss possible proposals for the Recreation Ground and the facilities at St. George's Hall. It was agreed that a Finance Committee meeting will be held on August 31st to begin preparing the budget for 2012.

- Following the suggestion made at the July Parish Council meeting it was agreed by all that the hatchway at the Fenton Room should be lowered. This will be undertaken by volunteers at no cost to the Parish Council.
- It was proposed and agreed, with one abstention, to change the locks at St. George's Hall to profile locks. It was proposed and agreed, with two abstentions to purchase six keys for new locks for the Hall and decisions will need to be made as to who will hold the new keys.
- The Bowls Club has asked the Hall Caretaker to invoice the Club monthly.

6. Accounts for July were approved for payment.

Expenditure

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross
E.on Energy	71.98	3.60	75.58
Staff remuneration			831.10
MHB- Lighting maintenance	100.24	20.05	120.29
Viking	97.21	19.44	116.65
SLCC - book			15.95
CGM	119.73	23.95	143.68
Initial Washrooms	30.00	6.00	36.00
BT			216.10

Income

Post Office	£51.00
Doctors	£60.00
Other hall lettings	£1225.50

The Parish Council total bank balance will stand at £77853.04 once the above payments have been deducted.

6.1 Grass cutting of area by 1 Globe Street

It will be checked whether the small area of grass by 1 Globe Street is included in the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contract. If necessary this area will be added to the grass cutting contract.

6.2 Purchase and management of a page on Methwold.net

Methwold.net has been established by an independent group following Mr Colin Marslands decision to no longer manage the Methwold website.

It was noted that Methwold Community Action Group is guaranteeing £82.00 to meet running costs of the new Methwold.net website in its first year. It is the intention that Methwold.net will repay MC AG and that the website will be self supporting. There is no plan to make money from the site. The Parish Council has been approached to purchase space on the site where minutes from the Parish Council meetings and other information can be posted. It was agreed by six votes to three (Mr J Marriage and Mrs M Truss abstained from voting due to a close link to this project) to accept the proposal to purchase space at a cost of £7.50 for the year.

Items to be posted by the Parish Council will be submitted via the Clerk.

7. Planning:

Applications:

Ref. No: 11/00969/F

Details: Construction of a timber stable building at Holmebrink Farm, Methwold
Permission recommended

Mr R Hood and Mr D Wortley declared an interest in the above application

Notice of Decisions

Ref. No. 11/00920/F

Details: Provision of a clad steel framed building to enclose improved beet sample washing/cleaning and random sampling system at Wissington Sugar Factory.

Permission granted

8. Correspondence :

In Folder to be passed to Councillors

1. Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The LDF Core Strategy has been found to be "sound" and was adopted by the Borough Council in July 2011. This document sets out the way in which the borough will grow, taking into account the needs and aspirations of local communities.
The Core Strategy will be followed by the development of site specific allocations which will set out how specific parcels of land may be developed in the light of Core Strategy policies.
2. WNVCA Lite Touch

Poster to display giving notification of the Register of Electors – Annual Canvass.

5613/09/2011

It was noted that a letter had been submitted by Mr J Marriage regarding the content of past minutes.

9. Further reports/items for the next agenda :

9.1 Discussion has been ongoing regarding progression of the Parish Council's Asset Register. The Parish Council should ensure land it owns is registered and thus it was agreed to proceed with investigation into land registration. It was proposed and agreed, with two abstentions, that an initial budget of £200 should be allocated for land registration.

9.2 The purchase of dog waste bins for Methwold Hythe will be an agenda item for the September Parish Council meeting.

9.3 A request will be made to Highways regarding a "Slow, Children Playing" sign for Methwold Hythe.

9.3 Enquiries will be made regarding maintenance of the area at the end of New Road, Methwold Hythe.

9.4 Weeds need clearing from the footpath between Ventura Close and Trent VC Close.

9.5 The salt bin in Globe Street is in need of painting.

9.6 Purchase of mapping software from Pear Technology will be considered at the September Parish Council meeting.

A resolution was passed to exclude the public to consider quotes for the repair of the broken window at St. George's Hall.

Four quotes have been received to install PVC windows to match the existing at the front of St. George's Hall. The quotes were considered and it was agreed by all to accept the quote from The Home Improvement Specialists for the sum of £1969 plus VAT.