

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL
THURSDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2012

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

3 members of the public

OPEN FORUM

It was asked if seats are to be provided at the Recreation Ground as at present there is nothing to sit on.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Mr R Hood

Mr M Storey – Borough Councillor

Mr M Peake – Borough Councillor

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. With the following amendments the Minutes of the meeting held on 11/01/12 were agreed as a true record of the meeting:

Item 6. - Correction to the payment amount to Eon.

Item 4 – Mr J Marriage has compiled a specification of work so quotes can be obtained to investigate the possible subsidence of St. George's Hall.

Item 9 – To clarify the decision made the following was noted; it was agreed that the Chairman of the Parish Council should chair any panel called to deal with complaints, grievances or disciplinary issues and the Vice-Chairman should chair any subsequent appeal panel.

11.8 – It was suggested Committees *and* Working Parties should be responsible for their own budgets.

4. Matters arising from past minutes:

- As suggested by a member of the public the Village Handyman will be asked to assist Mr Stone to cut branches from the Millennium Tree on Fair Hill.
- Further communication has been received from the family concerned regarding the memorial removed from the Cemetery by the Parish Council. A request has been made for the memorial to be delivered to the Cemetery when the replacement memorials are to be sited so it can be collected by the stone mason engaged by the family. The Chairman has been informed of this so hopefully arrangements will be made.
- Storage space at St. George's Hall has been considered by members of the Hall and General Purposes Working Party and this matter will be an agenda item for the March meeting of the Parish Council.

5. Reports:

5.1 Chairman's Report:

- The Chairman noted that one objection to item 5.3b from the February minutes should have been registered.
- An electrical firm has visited St. George's Hall in order to prepare a quote for work to restore the down lights in the Fenton Room to working order.

- Item 11.4 from the January minutes regarding liaison of contractors being delegated to Councillors will be further considered at the March meeting of the Parish Council.

5.2 Clerk's Report:

- A survey of trees which the Parish Council is responsible for has been booked as agreed at the January meeting.
- It was noted St. George's Hall has been booked for a party on March 24th 2012.
- The solicitors representing Eastern Power Networks PLC regarding the lease of the site for the village electrical sub-station adjacent to St George's Churchyard have requested a copy of the original lease dated 1940. It is hoped this may suffice to prove ownership of the land so a new lease can be compiled without the necessity to register ownership of the land (although the Parish Council will still continue to pursue land registration).
- Grills over the windows of the Fenton Room have been reported as being loose. This has been passed to the Village Hall Caretaker.
- Members of the Parish Council visited the bank to look inside the Parish Council storage box held there. As the bank is to remove this service the box has been relocated to alternative safe storage. A list of the contents of the box has been compiled and copies of the documents have been made and are filed.

5.3 Reports from Working Party meetings:

Copies of the notes from the Open Spaces meeting held on 26/01/12 had previously been presented to Councillors and are filed.

5.3a) Methwold Hythe Play area

The Parish Council is waiting for the solicitors acting for Mrs Waters, who has offered land for a play area in Methwold Hythe, to compile a contract for lease of the land.

5.3b) Methwold Recreation Ground

It was originally thought more assistance would be available through a play equipment supplier for sourcing grant funding than is actually the case. Therefore it is now planned to obtain three quotes for play equipment for the Recreation Ground before proceeding to research funding.

5.3c) Village seats

A request has been made to locate a seat on the Green along the Hythe Road. This area does not belong to the Parish Council and therefore investigation will be undertaken to ascertain ownership. Permission to locate the seat will then be sought.

In reply to the enquiry made during the Open Forum Mr Stone informed the meeting that a seat is to be placed on the Rec. in the spring. A donation has been offered to contribute towards half the cost of a seat and the remainder of the cost will be borne by the Parish Council. Further seats at the Rec. will be considered in conjunction with the possible provision of new play equipment.

5.3d) Gates between the Recreation Ground and the Churchyard

Discussion took place regarding closure of the gates between the Recreation Ground and the Churchyard and if there is any benefit to keeping the gates locked.

It was agreed by nine in favour (one abstention) that the Open Spaces Working Party should look into a means to adequately keep the gates closed.

Matters Considered by the Hall and General Purposes Working Party:

5.3e) Refurbishment of the Fenton Room kitchen

This matter will be an agenda item for the March Parish Council meeting by when it is hoped quotes for the work will have been received.

5.3f) Decoration of the Fenton Room

Decoration of the Fenton Room is underway. It was suggested that coving should be fitted while the builders are on site as this may stop further cracking of the plaster. It was agreed that although this

matter was not an agenda item it would represent best value if this work were undertaken at the same time as the present decoration. All were in favour of this proposal with a maximum spend set at £175.00.

It was noted insulation of the loft space at St. George's Hall has been completed.

5.3g) Curtains for the Fenton Room.

It was suggested the Fenton Room curtains should be cleaned as they have been taken down for decoration of the room. Some discussion took place regarding whether the curtains should be fire-proofed.

It was decided the Hall and General Purposes Working Party should research the cost of new curtains or blinds for the Fenton Room.

5.3h) Exterior decoration of St. George's Hall

Councillors had previously been presented with a report outlining suggested maintenance work for the exterior of St. George's Hall. It was stressed the gable end of the main building needs urgent attention as it appears coping stones overhanging the pavement may have been displaced. It was agreed to authorise inspection and any repair needed and the builder currently undertaking work at St. George's Hall will be asked to look at what work is necessary.

The exterior decoration of the hall will be an agenda item for the March meeting of the Parish Council.

6. Accounts for January were approved for payment.

Expenditure

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross
E.on Energy	71.98	3.60	75.58
Staff remuneration			1017.89
MHB- Lighting maintenance	105.12	21.02	126.14
WT Parker	208.85	41.77	250.62
BT	171.36	29.99	201.35
Initial Washrooms	31.47	6.29	37.76
Methwold High School	30.00	6.00	36.00
NALC (training)			5.00
Waste bags			2.08
NAVH subs			10.00
Pace Fuelcare	830.70	41.54	872.24
Rawlings - paint	52.16	10.43	62.59

Income

Post Office	£51.00
Doctors	£60.00
Other Hall lettings	£177.50

Councillors were presented with an up to date income and expenditure spreadsheet.

6.1 Two quotes having been received, it was agreed to engage Fenland Leisure to repair the play equipment at the Recreation Ground at a cost of £459.00 plus VAT.

6.2 It was agreed, with all in favour, to purchase four more keys for St. George's Hall.

7. Planning:

Application for consideration

Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of two storey extension to existing property at Garfield, Holders Lane, Brookville 11/01763/F

Support

8. Correspondence

8.1 News from NALC – Paths for Communities - Defra has asked Natural England to develop and run a new grant scheme called 'Paths for Communities'. Further details will be available later in the year.

8.2 Overview of West Norfolk Policing

It was noted burglaries have taken place in neighbouring villages recently and thus the Police are advising residents to be vigilant and to report any suspicious vehicles by phoning the non-emergency Police number of 101.

8.3 It was noted that dog waste is a problem in Brookville and that dog waste is being placed in the litter bin by the phone box in Brookville. Some discussion took place regarding whether the bin should be removed.

8.4 CPRE Neighbourhood Planning booklet.

8.5 WNVCA 'In Touch' magazine

8.6 Norfolk Link etc. including training dates. Councillors have been passed dates of various training sessions that are to be held. Mr J Marriage and Mrs M Truss will be booked to attend a planning training session to be held by the Borough Council on February 27th.

8.7 Willows Recycling Centre update.

8.8 Police 'Involving You' newsletter.

8.9 Norfolk Warm and Well Initiative.

8.10 Notification of modification of Public Right of Way RB11.

It was noted tenders for the grass cutting contract for 2012 have been received and this will be an agenda item for the March meeting of the Parish Council.

9. Methwold.net

It was resolved that: 'Mr J Marriage and Mrs M Truss will work on the development of the Parish Council pages on Methwold.net. To report to the Parish Council at each meeting as necessary.' This arrangement will be re-considered at each Annual Parish Council meeting.

10. Cross Hill yellow lines

Highway Engineer Andy Wallace has visited the village to assess whether Highways can help alleviate problems with vehicles parking around Cross Hill near Methwold Primary School particularly when children are dropped off or collected from school. At present there are no parking restrictions around the school but it is felt if restrictions were in place there would be more chance of a successful prosecution should an accident happen when vehicles were illegally parked. Double yellow lines could demonstrate that obstruction was occurring. However, the Highway Technician has stated that to put yellow lines in could cost in excess of £10000 and as Highways would not consider this location to be a priority the money would not be made available to implement the restrictions that have been suggested.

After considerable discussion regarding this matter it was unanimously agreed that the following proposal should be adopted:

'Methwold Parish Council is happy to support parents, the staff and the Governors of Methwold Primary School in their determination to minimize irresponsible parking close to the school. The Parish Council will lobby Norfolk County Council and the Borough Council to seek a Traffic Order as

necessary to install yellow lines as proposed and to ensure that the zigzag markings in front of the school are officially recognised.'

A press release will be made advertising this resolution.

11. Chairs for St. George's Hall

Councillors were presented with a report regarding the condition of the chairs at St. George's Hall. It is recognised that all chairs presently owned are needed but a suggestion has been made that some of the older tubular chairs should be sold to provide money towards new replacements. This matter will be considered further at the Parish Council meeting in March. In the mean time Mr Marriage will investigate the possible sale of the old chairs.

12. Date for Annual Parish meeting

A date for the Annual Parish meeting will be set at the March meeting of the Parish Council.

13. Further Reports /items for the next agenda:

13.1 It was reported that dog mess is a problem in the wild flower area at the Recreation Ground. It was agreed to purchase four 'Dogs on leads' signs to be located at the entrances to the Rec.

13.2 The surface of the road is deteriorating further at the junction of Ventura Close and Hythe Road.

13.3 It was noted that fourteen families have attended a Mother & Toddler session held recently at St. George's Hall.