

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL
THURSDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2012

Present: –Mr C Neville – Vice-Chairman, Mr P Ashman, Mr J Marriage, Mr D Masters, Mr C Stone, Mr D Wortley, Mrs B Horton, Mrs M Wortley.

Mr M Storey – Borough Councillor
9 members of the public

OPEN FORUM

- Comment was raised that a letter of thanks had been sent to a Councillor who had recently resigned. This has not been the usual practise in the past and it was queried whether all Councillors would now be sent a letter of thanks on leaving the Council.
- The litter bin located by the former shop in Brookville is in need of repair.
- It was reported that the weeds need clearing from the footpath between Brookville and Methwold. *This will reported to Highways.*
- Four members of Methwold Football Club were present at the meeting to voice matters that have arisen regarding use of Methwold Recreation Ground. The footballers present felt that if the Parish Council expects a fee of £11.00 per game for use of the football pitch at the Rec. then more should be done by the Parish Council to maintain the ground. Complaints were voiced regarding grass clippings not being collected when the Rec. is mown, dog mess on the Rec., mole hills which can create a dangerous playing surface and chafer bug infestation. It was noted that the Football Club are expected to undertake a litter pick after they have used the Rec. but it is often the case that the Club need to clear the pitch of litter before they use it. Since the football pitch at the Rec. has been turned (it now runs north/south) complaints have been received that balls are landing in gardens along Globe Street which back on to the Rec. This is causing a nuisance to some residents. The Football Club is reluctant to turn the pitch again as has been requested as it is felt that it would be hazardous to re-use the former worn goal mouths and this course of action would result in numerous white lines on the grass. The Football Association inspect pitches and there is concern that the former position of the pitch would no longer be acceptable due to the condition of the ground. Some discussion took place regarding whether the pitch could be moved away from the dwellings at the end of the pitch but there may not be sufficient room to alter the position due to the location of the play equipment at the Rec. A suggestion was made that parties concerned should meet to try to resolve concerns.
- The Borough Council Conservation Team has been contacted regarding concern that bricks have been used to repair a chalk wall in the High Street. The Conservation Team are willing to accept this repair as the wall is adjacent to the road and could suffer potential water damage when splashed by vehicles. A chalk repair could thus soon deteriorate. Comment was made that this decision may suggest other maintenance work in the village conservation area could also be undertaken which would not be in keeping with the original.
- It was noted the Methwold Community Action Group has helped to keep the village tidy but the centre of the village could be improved and a letter will be sent to the landlord of the George to request that the area around the pub be weeded.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Mr R Hood, Mr J Henry, Mrs B Bluck, Ms S Stones.
Mr M Peake – Borough Councillor

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 09/08/12 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from past minutes:

- Comment was made regarding the general lack of maintenance undertaken by the Highway Department. The Highway Engineer visited the village some time ago when it was suggested that timber posts could be erected by Brumble Barn but this has not happened nor has any drainage work been undertaken as was discussed at the time. Pot holes do not seem to be repaired and a dip in the pavement by the Post Office, although reported some time ago, is still awaiting maintenance. It was suggested concerns raised should be passed to County Councillor Mr Tony White.
- Parking on Monday Market Days remains a problem and the Borough Council will be contacted again about this.

5. Co-option of new Councillor

Two volunteers having submitted interest in becoming a member of Methwold Parish Council a vote was taken which resulted in Mr Colin Williams being co-opted to the Council. Mr Williams duly signed his Acceptance of Office forms and completed a Register of Interest from before joining the Council table.

6. Reports:

6.1 Chairman's Report:

Mr C Neville was acting as Chairman at short notice and had no report to make other than to say a chain saw had been stolen when left unattended at the side of the Hythe Road. The Police were notified.

6.2 Clerk's Report:

- A plumber should be repairing the leak in the Doctors room in the next week.
- The Safer Neighbourhood Team is advising diligence when oil tanks have been filled as oil theft has been occurring following delivery.
- New Standing Orders are expected following implementation of the new Code of Conduct for Councils.
- The Clerk is still researching the possibility of locating a textile recycling bank at the Village Hall car park. Enquiries are being made regarding the company used by Breckland Council to supply recycling banks as waste companies must be approved by Norfolk County Council to enable recycling credits to be claimed.
- The 2012 Audit has been completed by Mazars, the External Auditors. The precept received in the year was £29257 and this figure needs to be amended on the Annual Return form as the figure entered wrongly included a Cemetery income of £65.00.
The External Auditor was asked to comment on how the value of assets should be recorded and advice is that assets should be valued at their purchase cost. If this is not known a proxy cost should be substituted (e.g. insurance value). Whatever valuation basis is adopted, this should be applied consistently and the 'book' value should usually stay constant until disposal. Where the insurance value has been used as a proxy, it should not be adjusted for any inflation increases.
- The left hand oven of the cooker in the Fenton Room is not working properly. Repair has been arranged to be undertaken before the cooker is needed by the Busy Bees for the Clubs anniversary dinner on 15/09/12.

6.3 The Report from the Hall and General Working Party meeting held on 06/09/12 was considered and accepted as part of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting. The report is attached as appendix A.

6.4 The Report from the Open Spaces Working Party meeting held on 23/08/12 was considered and accepted as part of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting. The report is attached as appendix B.

- A grant application of £47, 885 has been made to WREN for extra play equipment for the Recreation Ground. A decision will be made by WREN during the first week in December and Mr C Stone is liaising with Sarah Gosling from WREN to ensure all aspects of the grant application have been covered.
- A reply has been received from the Queen Elizabeth II Fields in Trust Challenge and this matter will be an agenda item for the October meeting of the Parish Council when two Councillors will be nominated to sign the relevant deed forms on behalf of the Parish Council. A decision will need to be made as to whether the deed will be charitable or non-charitable.
- Planning permission has been given for a new pavilion at the Recreation Ground. The first part of the feasibility study is therefore complete and the second part, to consider building regulations will now be undertaken. Norfolk County Council has recently released information relating to a community construction fund to help build community buildings. Local builders must be employed to undertake the work in an attempt to generate business in the county. The Parish Council would be eligible to apply for a grant but applications for the first round of funding must be submitted by October 2nd. A public consultation exercise would need to be undertaken before submission and it was agreed the Methwold Times would be used to do this if possible. Mr C Stone was asked to compile a statement for the Times which would suffice to obtain an answer either in support or against the proposed pavilion project.

6.4a) Complaints received regarding use of the Recreation Ground.

Letters of complaint regarding the use of the Recreation Ground have been submitted to the Parish Council. Thus, as discussed during the Open Session, it was agreed to convene a meeting between the residents, members of the Parish Council and representatives of Methwold Football Club to try to resolve matters. Those who have written to the Parish Council will be invited to attend the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee to be held on September 27th at 7.30pm.

6.5 WREN grant application update
Report given under 6.4

7. Accounts for August were approved for payment.

Expenditure

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross
Staff remuneration			770.50
Rentokil	31.47	6.29	37.76
CGM	119.73	23.95	143.68
Viridor	206.62	43.32	249.94
Initial Washrooms	31.47	6.29	37.76
Viking	96.99	19.40	116.39
Lighting maintenance	99.04	19.81	118.85
Eon Energy – street lighting electric	145.68	7.34	153.02
ESPO - kettle	32.00	6.40	38.40
Bonnetts	45.00	9.00	54.00

Eon Energy – hall electric	348.85	17.44	366.29
Mr J Marriage - guttering	66.27	13.26	79.53
Mr P Ashman – pest control			30.00
Mrs B Bluck - curtains			750.00

Income

Post Office	£51.00
Doctors	£60.00
Other hall income	£197.50

Councillors were presented with an up to date expenditure spreadsheet.

7.1 Proposed Registration of land

Discussion took place regarding whether the Parish Council should engage solicitor Mr N Hancox to attempt to register land in the Parish which is thought to be owned by the Parish Council or whether, as a cheaper alternative, cautions against registration should be placed on the areas of land identified. It was agreed to engage Mr Hancox to register the land that could easily be claimed by the Parish Council and to apply cautions against registration on areas that the Parish Council has no proof of ownership.

7.2 Purchase of gravel for the alleyway leading off Globe Street and for the Cemetery

It was agreed that Mr J Marriage should arrange delivery of 5 tons of 14mm gravel to be laid by volunteers in the alleyway leading off Globe Street and in the Cemetery.

7.3 Quotes received for work at St. George's Hall

- The Clerk has received one quote for further investigation of the possible subsidence thought to be occurring at the end of the Fenton Room extension at St. George's Hall. Mr J Marriage has also received a quote and this matter will be an agenda item for the October meeting of the Parish Council.
- Two quotes having been received for further replacement of windows at St. George's Hall some debate took place before it was agreed to accept the quote of £2684.00 from Economy Windows Ltd.

7.4 Quotes received for grounds work in the village.

- Two quotes having been received to fix seats in agreed locations in the parish it was agreed to accept the quote of £620 to secure five seats in place. Seats are to be located either side of the Avenue at Brookville, at the Globe Street end of the Rec., on the green along the Hythe Road and at the Cemetery.
- Some discussion took place regarding the tree survey which had been undertaken earlier in the year. Only one company has submitted a quote to undertake the recommended work. Further attempts will be made to seek other quotes but consideration will be given to undertaking the work thought to be of higher priority and Country Grounds Maintenance will be approached again regarding this.

8. Planning:

No applications for consideration received.

9. Correspondence

9.1 Norfolk Link etc. – 'Paths for Communities' pages copied for Councillors

- 9.2 Copy of briefing note 'Public Rights of Way' copied to Councillors
- 9.3 Active Norfolk poster to display
- 9.4 Suffolk Preservation Society Annual Conference 2012
- 9.5 NPFA Autumn Newsletter
- 9.6 Feltwell C872 Southery Road is to be resurfaced on 31st October 2012 for 7 days. The road will be closed for the duration of the operations and a diversion route will be in place.
- 9.7 WNVCA Funding News Extra newsletter
- 9.8 Notification received that Mazars LLP has been appointed as external auditor to audit the annual return for Methwold Parish Council for five years from 2012/13.

10. Further Reports /items for the next agenda:

- 10.1 The Clerk has attended a training session in the use of the Norfolk County Council website. Much information regarding the area we live in can be found by entering your post code at 'Where I live' on www.norfolk.gov.uk.
- 10.2 Students of Methwold High School are being collected/dropped off at Fair Hill who then walk through the path at the corner of Globe Street to and from school. The path across the grass to the gravelled footpath can become muddy and it was felt a hard path should be created. This matter will be an agenda item for the October meeting of the Parish Council.
- 10.3 It was noted the High School has been approached to ask students not to cycle along the walled section of the footpath leading from the corner of Fair Hill to the school.
- 10.4 It was agreed a notice should be placed in the Methwold Times informing members of the public of the dates of all meetings of the Parish Council. Meetings of the Hall and General Purposes Working Party take place on the first Thursday of each month, the monthly Parish Council meeting takes place on the second Thursday of each month and the Open Spaces Working Party meeting takes place on the fourth Thursday of the month. All meetings are held in the Fenton Room, St. George's Hall and start at 7.30pm. Members of the public are invited to attend any meeting of the Parish Council.
- 10.5 It was noted 15 moles have been caught on the Recreation Ground and 6 in the Cemetery during the past month. Comment was made that the grass cutting has improved at the Cemetery but chafer bugs at the Recreation Ground may cause a problem if not treated.
- 10.6 It is hoped lettering of the War Memorial will be re-engraved if a grant can be obtained. The Parish Council is waiting to hear from a stone mason willing to undertake the work.
- 10.7 New Councillor Mr Williams offered to join both the Open Spaces Working Party and the Hall and General Purposes Working Party.
- 10.8 Councillors were asked to report any problems with street lights to the Clerk.
- 10.9 Greenery from private properties was reported as overhanging the footway in the High Street and at Petch Corner.
- 10.10 Training in the use of the defibrillator held at the Fire Station will be held on October 5th.
- 10.11 Concern was voiced regarding how the Borough Council fails to collect all Council Tax owing. Borough Councillor Mr M Storey suggested letters of concern should be addressed to David Tate at the Treasury Department of King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Council.