

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

Present: Mr R Hood – Chairman, Mr P Ashman, Mr D Masters, Mr C Stone, Ms S Stones, Mr D Wortley, Mr C Williams, Mr J Marriage, Mr J Henry, Mrs B Bluck

2 members of the public

OPEN FORUM

- **Mr C Stone was pleased to announce that the Parish Council is to receive a grant of £47885 from WREN towards new play equipment for Methwold Recreation Ground.** Mr Stone was thanked for all his efforts to secure this funding.

1. Apologies for Absence:

Mrs B Horton, Mrs M Wortley, Mr C Neville.

2. No Declarations of Interest made.

3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 08.11.12 were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

- It was agreed to move the discussion regarding the appointment of a new Clerk to follow item 4. on the agenda rather than discuss this matter after a resolution to exclude the public.

4. Matters arising from past minutes:

- Some discussion took place regarding the new curtains in the Fenton Room. It was agreed stoppers on the curtain tracks could help the curtains hang better so the windows would be completely covered. Mr Marriage and Mr Wortley offered to investigate what could be done to fit some type of stoppers and it was agreed if necessary 14 stoppers for the tracks would be purchased.

- **Recruitment of new Clerk**

Comment was made that the Finance Committee appears to have nominated itself to undertake recruitment of a new Clerk. This was felt to not be within the remit of the Committee and the matter had not been delegated to the Committee. Discussion ensued regarding who should sit on the interview panel.

It was agreed the panel would comprise of the Chairman plus two other members of the Council plus the present Clerk. Mrs Bluck and Mr Ashman offered to sit on the interview panel.

Discussion took place regarding the role of the present Working Parties and the Finance Committee and it was agreed a review would be undertaken once a new Clerk was in place.

08/11/12

Remuneration and hours of work for the Clerk were considered. The Clerk will be expected to work 12 hours per week and it is estimated pay will be in the region of £12 per hour. Pay will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. Pension provision will need to be considered as the Clerk will be employed on a contract based on that agreed by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks. It is likely a further £6000 will need to be allocated to the staffing budget for 2013. Other staff terms and conditions may also need to be reviewed. An advert for the Clerk vacancy has been placed on the Methwold.net website and on the NorfolkALC website. Copies will also be posted in the Village Notice Boards. It was felt the cost of placing an advert in the local newspapers was too great (£1000 had been quoted).

The Clerk will compile a job description for the role based on the National Association of Local Councils model.

The present Clerk is willing to continue to assist, as requested, until a replacement Clerk is appointed. Mr C Williams offered to help with management of the Cemetery as needed.

5. Reports:

5.1 Chairman's Report:

- A tree has been planted at the Cemetery to commemorate the Queens Diamond Jubilee. This was reported in the Eastern Daily Press on December 7th 2012. A second tree will be planted by the Village Sign as soon as the weather permits.
- There have been some ongoing issues regarding the booking of the hall via Methwold.net. It has been agreed that for the present time a booking form for the hall will be available to download so a signed hard copy can then be sent to the caretaker to ensure bookings are confirmed. The hall hiring contract will be reviewed in due course.
- It was noted that a lease is now ready to be signed for the village electrical sub-station. This will be signed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

5.2 Clerk's Report:

- Highways matters reported at the November meeting have been passed to the Highway Technician but it is unlikely any general maintenance to the roads will be undertaken until into the New Year.
- Signs for St. George's Hall are still to be ordered. The annual play equipment inspection report has been received and a recommendation of the report is that signage at the Rec. needs replacing. This will be undertaken as part of the planned play equipment improvements.
- Further investigation will be made regarding possible removal of the phone box at Herbert Drive.
- A letter has been received from Age UK Norfolk advising of the closure of the day service at Methwold Social Club in January 2013.

5.3 – Hall and General Purposes Working Party (notes of meeting of 06/12/12 accepted as part of the Full Council minutes).

The Hall and General Purposes Working Group made the following proposals to the full Parish Council:

- It was agreed to accept the verbal quote for repair of the flat roof at St. Georges Hall.
- It was agreed to accept the revised charges for hire of St. George's Hall as presented and the recommendations will be implemented from 01/01/13.
- It was agreed to purchase up to six toilet roll holders as needed for St. George's Hall.

Storage at St. Georges Hall continues to be debated as regular users continue to require space for storage of equipment. Space is also needed at the Hall for Parish Council documents. The storage container may need to be used more and storage space could be made available in the foyer.

5.4 Open Spaces Working Party (notes of November meeting accepted as part of the Full Council minutes).

The Open Spaces Working Group made the following proposals to the full Parish Council:

- Quotes have been received for the drawing work needed to apply for Building Regulations for the proposed new pavilion at the Rec. Following consideration it was agreed to proceed with this project and appoint the chosen contractor.
- The Parish Council agreed that David Thomas could be granted permission to use the Ordnance Survey licence obtained by the Parish Council for the sole purpose of creating a map of footpaths in the parish.

6. The following accounts were approved for payment:

Payee	Net	VAT	Gross
Initial Washrooms	59.01	11.80	70.81
Staff remuneration	748.10		748.10
K & M - Lighting maintenance x2	198.08	39.62	237.70
R.Hood	101.40		101.40
CGM x2	239.46	47.90	287.36
E.on - hall	468.97		468.97
P Ashman	30.00		30.00
E.on	74.54		74.54

Income

Post Office	£51.00
Doctors	£60.00
Other Hall income	£220.00
Other income (sale of wood form store)	£20.00

6.1 It was agreed the 2013 precept request should include a 7.5% increase on the 2012 request.

08/11/12

It was noted that the major expenses for the Council are salaries and the cost of running St. George's Hall. An increase was felt to be needed to cover an expected increase in staffing costs once a new clerk is appointed.

7. Planning: The following planning applications were approved.

7.1 Construction of chalet bungalow at land between 58 and 60 Hythe Road, Methwold 12/1810/O

Recommended approval

Notices of decisions:

7.2 To build a switch house and fit associated electrical equipment at Wissington Sugar Factory 12/01615/F

Permission granted

7.3 Replacement of existing evaporative cooling tower with a larger unit, adjacent to the existing position at Wissington Sugar Factory 12/01614/F

Permission granted

7.4 Demolition of existing porch and erection of new porch at 32 Globe Street, Methwold 12/01618/F

Permission granted

8. Correspondence

8.1 Gritting Route leaflet 2012/13

8.2 Norfolk Link etc.

9. Maintenance of the grass path from the corner of Fair Hill to the Cemetery path.

It was agreed not to consider expenditure on the path at the present time but the path will continue to be monitored to determine whether maintenance should be considered at a future date.

10. Further Reports /items for the next agenda:

10.1 To consider risk assessment relating to the Cemetery.

A resolution was made to exclude the public to consider the following:

After discussion it was agreed to accept the cheaper of the two quotes received to undertake surface repair to the car park at the Recreation Ground.