

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL

THURSDAY 14th May 2015

Present: Mr J. Marriage Vice Chairman, Mr P. Ashman, Mr C. Williams, Mrs B. Horton, Ms S. Stones, Mrs D. Charlesworth Smith, Mrs K. Plumridge, Mr B. Welland, Mr P. Crawley.

1 member of the public

Mr Marriage welcomed all to the meeting

OPEN FORUM: None

1. Election of Chairman

Mrs Horton proposed Mr Hood, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith seconded

Mr Ashman proposed Mr Marriage, Mrs Plumridge seconded.

This was put to a secret ballot and the results were as follows:

Mr Hood – 4 votes

Mr Marriage – 5 votes

Mr Marriage is elected as Chairman

2. Chairman to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Signed and dated by Chairman and Clerk

3. Election of Vice Chairman

Mrs Charlesworth-Smith proposed Mr Hood, Mrs Horton seconded.

Mr Crawley proposed Mr Thomas, Mr Ashman seconded.

This was put to a secret ballot and the results were as follows:

Mr Hood – 4 votes

Mr Thomas – 5 votes

Mr Thomas is elected as Vice Chairman.

Mr Marriage thanked Mr Hood for all of his work and efforts after many years as Chairman.

4. To receive and consider accepting apologies for absence: Mr R. Hood, Mr D. Thomas, Mr K. Taylor.

5. Declarations of Interest made – Councillors invited to declare any interest in any item on the agenda: to review the Declaration of Interests, to consider dispensations:

5.1 To review declarations of interest; none

5.2 Dispensations: none

6. The Minutes of the meeting held on 9.04.2015 were agreed and signed as a true record of the Meeting: Minutes approved, proposed by Mr P Ashman, seconded by Mrs B Horton, all Councillors agreed.

7. Matters arising from past minutes-

50/50 Parish Partnership funding for village gates at Brookville - Mrs Charlesworth-Smith questioned what the village gates are made from and how much the Parish Council had been given from the Parish Partnership towards the white village gates at Brookville and how much will the Parish Council pay towards these.

The Clerk reported that the gates are wooden and total cost for the gates and installation would be approximately £1000, the Parish Partnership had agreed to fund 50% of this, therefore the contribution from MPC would be £500 but nothing has been paid or received yet, the forms need to be signed and the MPC contribution sent to the Parish Partnership.

Lightsource – Meadow Solar Farm – Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked where this solar farm is situated, when was the planning application put through for this site and did it go through the correct process with full

consultation of residents local to the site? What was the £18000 grant that had been received from Lightsource? Mrs Charlesworth-Smith has questioned the legality of this and asked for a copy of the file.

It was explained to Mrs Charlesworth-Smith that the location of the site was at True Hill on the south side of the main road. The application was made some two years previously and that the Council had objected to the application on the grounds of it being on good agricultural land. Full details of the application are available on KLWNBC's Planning website. The £18000 was given towards the cost of solar panel, to the Parish who had agreed after consideration to pass this sum to the Scout Hut Redevelopment for installation of solar panels on the proposed new facility. It was explained that the Council had signed a Bribery Act Compliance form where on Mrs Charlesworth-Smith was concerned that this could be construed as a bribe. The Clerk agreed to look out the paperwork.

NOTE FOLLOWING THE MEETING

The planning application ref number was 13/00796/FM. Any information regarding this application was clearly documented in the Parish Council minutes on at least 8 separate occasions and on the KLWNBC website. It is clearly stated that the Parish Council did not support the application and that they sought advice with regard to giving any money received when production of electricity started to a third party- this will be the new scout hut for installation of solar panels. Any interested person can make an appointment to visit the parish office to read through the information which is on file. The Clerk will seek advice from NALC as to how to proceed with this complaint.

8. Reports:

8.1 Chairman's Report:

I have attended various meeting and discussions during the previous 5 weeks, some have been standard meetings, i.e. open spaces and hall, others have been one off's with the clerk and vice chair Jim Marriage.

The topics which you will hear about are, a social media protocol, Reserves explanation for the accounts, bank contact to enable clerk to liaise directly with our bank.

As some of you already know railings at the recreation ground were stolen some time ago, for a number of weeks I was puzzled why this Crime did not show up on the weekly crime report from the police.

Further investigation by myself and the local police has revealed that not all crimes in the area are listed weekly. Some one in the police Service determines what crimes are shown on the list. A question Needs to be asked of the PCSO's when they next attend one of our meetings.

At the present time our local PCSO Clair Law is off for approx 3 weeks.

Every email to the clerk is seen by myself and if needed acted upon, these are on various topics and range from information

On courses, meetings from various organizations and reports.

I know that the previous groups within the council worked very hard and achieved a great deal for the community, we can not achieve all we would like to on day one but trust all will work together for the better benefit of the community at large.

8.2 Clerk's Report:

Quotes – Fair Hill seat bases from 4 contractors asked to supply quotes 1 has responded saying they are too busy to quote, 1 has tendered a quote and 2 have not responded.

Brickwork at St George's Hall – Contractor has been asked via email and phone when he can start this work but no response has been received so still chasing.

Standpipe for the Rec – Contractor has confirmed this will be done within the next 4 weeks.

Contractor who has been chosen to do the hedge and trees in Cemetery has been informed and I am waiting for start dates from them. They have already confirmed that the hedges will be done in August/September as requested.

Kitchen Quotes – I have contacted by email all of the Contractors who have supplied quotes to ask if the cost has increased since the quote was submitted, only 2 have replied, there will be a small increase in cost of materials for both of these.

St George's Hall – Gable end roof – still waiting for the quote to repair, have chased several times but Contractor is waiting for his 'roof' man to have a look at it before he can submit a quote.

Dog bin & post has been ordered, delivery 11th May.

Seats on Fair Hill – 4th person has asked to have seat on Fair Hill, Mr Stone was to collect the donation but due to a bereavement in the 4th person's family this has not been progressed. I have spoken to Elliots and if we need an additional seat they can make it but I won't place the order until the money has been banked. Waiting for a site plan and then I can write to the three people who have made donations to get their approval for the siting of their seat. I have received a phone call from one family asking when the seat will be in place as they are waiting to come and see it.

Finance – Preparing the final 2014/15 accounts ready to be taken to the Internal Auditor.

PC Elections – I received official posters from the Electoral Services Manager for the election which I have put up on the noticeboards in Methwold, Methwold Hythe and Brookville.

New Councillors – Introduction pack prepared for the new Parish Council, thank you to Mr Marriage who distributed these. Updated contact list has been distributed to all.

Cemetery – Attended a burial to see procedure for green slip. OBSERVATION - Anyone attending a funeral as a representative of the parish council needs to be very aware of the occasion and remain as inconspicuous as possible until the family have moved away from the graveside.

EON – St George's Hall electricity bill is now on direct debit.

Meadows Solar Farm – Bribery Compliance Act form has been signed by the Chairman and returned.

Invoice has been sent for the payment to MPC under terms of the Community Benefit Deed with Lightsource SPV Ltd, payment has been received.

Reported to Highways – The white lines on the road at Cock Corner Methwold are disintegrating making the junction very difficult to see. The pot hole on Cock Corner has not been repaired, I have reported this several times.

A replacement 'METHWOLD' sign is required as you approach the village from the Mundford/Cranwich Road, this has been reported.

As discussed previously with Highways, the Parish Council are going to replace the grit bin on Cock Corner and put it on the grass area in front of the old people's bungalows, Highways verbally agreed to fill this but how far from the edge of the highway this can be sited for you to be able to fill it easily? Waiting for response from Highways.

Methwold Hythe to Feltwell Road – the road is breaking up at the edges and there are some huge potholes along here.

Old Feltwell Road Sign being passed back and forth between Highways and Borough Council, I have emailed and phoned both so they are aware of the problem with the sign. Have chased again but not had any reply.

Police – Discussions with PCSO's regarding several youths and anti-social behaviour in the village. The youths seem to have moved from the back of the social club to Colin Neville's meadow and are congregating in the dip at the far left hand side of the meadow, I have received complaints about the noise and rubbish and have explained that any problems need to be called into the Police on the 101 number. I spoke to Mr Neville about this and he has also reported it to the Police.

An incident with a keg of beer was reported to me, I passed this onto the local PCSO but any incident needs to be reported on the 101 number by the person who witnessed it. This has been discussed with The George and they are dealing with this.

Streetlight – Outside 38a Hythe Road has been reported as not working to Contractor.

Hall emails and admin up to date, Cemetery admin up to date.

Minutes completed for PC, Hall and OS meetings and hand delivered to those without email.

After receiving new Councillors preferences I met with the Chairman and Vice Chair to look at the setup of the working groups.

Planning meeting took place.

Annual Parish Meeting minutes are almost ready to be circulated to Council.

8.3 Report from Open Spaces Working Party to include recommendations made at the meeting on 23.04.2015 Ms Stone reported: - **New dog bin** at Herbert Drive end of village, proposal to purchase 2 bags of rapid set cement Mrs Horton proposed so long as the cost was no more than £15 seconded Ms Stones. – Mr Crawley, Mr Marriage, Mr Ashman and Mr Thomas to meet on site and decide on siting, needs to be place where it won't interfere with grass cutting.
Brookville Village gates – Mr Hood had asked the Clerk to find out how the gates and flashing signs in Crimplesham had been funded, the Clerk is waiting for a response.
Waste Bins- two were found in the upstairs cupboard when decorating, these both need posts fixing to them, as a new bin is required on Fair Hill Mr Ashman proposed to take them to Bonnetts and get posts welded to them so they can be sited, this was agreed by the council.
Fair Hill Seats-plan required showing siting of seats, this will be shown to the people who donated to the cost for approval.

8.4 Report from the Hall and General Party Working Group to include recommendations made at the meeting on 7.05/2015: Staging platform- four of these need repair – it was reported that these are useful because they are slightly lower than the staging used by the Theatre Group. It is thought that the cost to repair these would be in the region of £70 proposed by Mr Ashman seconded by Mr Williams.
Decoration of St George's Hall - £3500 had been set aside in reserves for this, there are several functions including a wedding reception in the Hall this summer and the Hall needs repainting, a spec has been provided, Mr Ashman proposed that the Clerk send out to Contractors for quotes seconded by Mrs Horton. All agreed.

8.5 Report from the Finance Committee to consider recommendations made at the Finance Committee Meeting on the 7th April 2015.

Mr Marriage and the Clerk attended a finance course run by NALC and were advised that there are increasing requirements for transparency from the Auditor. It was suggested that a well as the current Financial Standing Orders there is a summary sheet of the Financial Standing Orders, Responsible Financial Officers role, Risk Assessment, Reserves Policy Document, and that and Internal Control is set up and documented, this is already happening but using the NALC documents will give a paper trail if ever one is required. All Councillors have had copies of these policies in their induction packs and were asked to approve their adoption. All agreed. Mr Marriage will have the completed Reserves Policy ready to present to the Finance meeting on 7th July 2015 ready for approval by the full parish council at the following meeting in August.

Lightsource – Meadows Solar Park – Mr Marriage stated that the previous Parish Council had refused to accept the grant for the solar panels and had proposed that any funds received would be used for solar panels on the new scout hut in Brookville when it is built. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked to see the file.

Mr Hood has spoken to Barclays to see if the Parish Council's Tracker Account can be used for grants so as to keep any grant funding separate from the Current Account, this is possible and funds will be transferred into this Account.

The Clerk is to sign another Bank Mandate form to be able to access information, this will **not** give the Clerk authority to sign cheques or withdraw funds. In the past the Bank has refused to speak to the Clerk even when requesting they send out envelopes for banking.

5. Accounts to be considered for approval of payment: May 2014

The Clerk went through the payments, the invoices and cheques were checked by Mrs Horton. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith voiced concern that two Parish Councillors were listed on the Income & Invoice list - Mr Marriage – this was for the induction packs which were printed by a company in Kings Lynn, Mr Marriage paid for these so this was a reimbursement, the Clerk would have printed in the office but the printer is not efficient enough to do this volume of printing and would still have had to purchase the paper, ink and envelopes.

Mr Ashman is paid £30 per month to catch the moles in the Cemetery, he also catches the moles on the Rec but he does not charge for this. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith stated she was not comfortable with this arrangement. It was explained that some two years ago quotations were sought for mole catching in the cemetery. When the received tenders were discussed the quotation submitted by Mr Ashman of £30/month was significantly cheaper than any of the other quotes. Mr Ashman was chosen by the parish council at the time because his quote was significantly cheaper than anyone else's.

Mr Ashman offered to resign from doing the moles as he did not want to be put in a position where he upset fellow Councillors. Mrs Horton proposed that if Mr Ashman was happy to continue catching the moles then he should carry on; Mr Crawley seconded this, it was agreed by all but 1 councillor that Mr Ashman should continue.

Payments were approved, proposed by Mrs Horton, seconded by Mr, all Councillors agreed.

9. Council Organisation

- 9.1 Mr Hood and Mr Marriage took the decision prior to the meeting to continue the appointment of Graham Lodge as the Internal Auditor, to allow time for the accounts to be approved before they are returned to the Parish Council for approval at the next meeting and to be sent to Mazaars before the 3rd July deadline.

The Chairman gave a brief explanation of the workings of the Committees and Working Groups. It was agreed to leave the terms of reference for each as they are. All Parish Councillors have got the dates for all meetings in 2015.

It was agreed by the previous Council that the Clerk attends all meetings and takes notes/minutes. All working groups are open to the public to attend.

Planning - applications – received by the clerk however it is our understanding that the plans will soon have to be accessed via the internet and no hard copies will be sent out.

Grants – This is a new committee which has been set up because Mr Stone previously used to deal with all grants. Mr Stone would identify which grants the council could apply for, he was then responsible for the application and any liaising required, the completion of the forms and obtaining signatures, copying in the Clerk on all correspondence. This process is to be continued with the Grants Group taking responsibility for applications.

9.2 Election of Committees:

The Clerk had previously asked each Councillor which groups they would be willing to be on, the groups were made up from the replies received. These can be changed but the Chairman asked that it is given 6 months before changes are made. It was agreed that the Committees/Working Groups will be as follows: The Chairman and Vice Chair are to attend meetings.

Finance Committee - Mr Marriage, Mrs Horton, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith, Mr Welland, Mr Thomas, Mr Ashman.

Hall & General Purposes Working Group – Mr Thomas, Mr Ashman, Mrs Plumridge, Mr Crawley, Mr Marriage, Mr Welland, Mrs Horton – Mr Thomas was proposed as Co-ordinator by Mr Ashman, Seconded by Mr Welland.

Open Spaces – Mr Ashman, Mr Thomas, Ms Stones, Mr Marriage, Mr Hood, Mr Williams, Mr Taylor – Ms Stones had been the Coordinator for the past six months but no longer wished to continue, Mr Ashman proposed himself Ms Stones seconded.

Planning – Mr Hood, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith, Mr Ashman, Mr Crawley, Mr Taylor.

Grants- Mr Marriage, Mr Welland, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith

Cemetery - Mr Hood, Mr Marriage, Mr Williams, Ms Stones

It was agreed that Mr Hood continues as Cemetery Superintendent, proposed by Mr Williams, seconded by Mr Ashman, all agreed. A Deputy Superintendent is required and will be decided at the next Cemetery meeting.

Standing Orders – Mr Marriage explained that everyone on the Council has received a copy of the current Standing Orders which is dated 2012, these will need to be reviewed within the next 3 months and then annually. This was agreed and will be on the Agenda for the August meeting.

Representatives of Batchcroft Trust and the School Liaison Committee will be decided at the June Parish Council meeting.

Social Media Policy (draft)– Increased use of different methods of communication, as a Parish Council we need to get more involved, to ensure the protection of the Parish Council and the Councillors a Social Media Policy is required. Mr Ashman proposed to accept for discussion as an Agenda item in the June meeting, seconded by Mr Crawley.

Councillors were reminded that when using social media they have to make it very clear that the opinions they may be expressing are theirs and not that of the Parish Council.

Code of Conduct – All Councillors have received a copy of the Code of Conduct

Mrs Horton asked the position on recording of meetings- the Clerk is to clarify this - Please see attached document.

9.3 Co-option of 13th Parish Councillor - as it was and uncontested election there are 12 Councillors, Mrs Horton proposed that the Council need to advertise for another Councillor in the Methwold Times and on the Methwold Parish Page to fill this space Proposed Mrs Horton Seconded Mr Ashman.

10. To consider the following planning applications: None received

10.1 To consider any planning decisions and applications received after the agenda was produced:
15/00468/CM Methwold Farm Warren Road Methwold Norfolk - County Matters Application for an underground gas pipeline and associated compound/structures (additional works in conjunction with approved anerobic digestion plant) NO OBJECTION TO NCC APP 28 April 2015 Delegated Decision

11. To receive and consider correspondence:

The Clerk has received a thank you card from the Beavers Group for allowing them to hire the Fenton Room for the winter. This will be put on the board in the Parish Office.

12. Any Further Reports/for information only:

Clerk Has submitted another VAT refund and this payment has been received.

Planning- it is likely that future planning applications will be received via email, therefore to view these a projector and screen will be required. Clerk to clarify this with planning dept.

JM Any Councillor who is raising a question on behalf of a parishioner the parishioner's name must be given.

PC What is happening about the drainage work on Petch Corner, when will this start?

Parking outside the Primary School, on the pavement and on bends?

Clerk is to write to Police and Borough Council to ask if they can come and see the problem for themselves, Can we have a Traffic Warden? Would they be willing to attend a meeting to try and resolve this issue?

PA Play Area inspections – need 2 more Councillors to go on a course so they can do the inspections. Mrs Plumridge and Mr Welland have offered to do this, Clerk to find out date for course. Cost is approximately £60 per person Proposed by Mr Ashman seconded by Mr Crawley.

DCS Asked for a grass cutting schedule, the Parish Council is only responsible for the grass in the Cemetery, the Rec, Fair Hill and Lower Green. The Clerk is waiting for the grass cutting schedule from CGM for these areas. All other areas are the responsibility of the Borough Council.

CW There have been a couple of funerals all in the Old Cemetery, the sunken graves which were topped up with spoil are now sprouting grass.

BH There is still a lot of dog mess about the village particularly outside the newsagents, in Crown Street, Ventura Close and on the Rec. near the wall. The Clerk reported that a reminder notice had been sent to the Methwold Times about this.

Meeting closed 9.25pm.