

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL
THURSDAY 11th JUNE 2015

Present: Mr J. Marriage Chairman, Mr P. Ashman, Mr C. Williams, Mrs B. Horton, Mrs S. Stones, Mr P. Crawley.
Mrs D. Charlesworth Smith, Mrs K. Plumridge, Mr D Thomas, Mr R Hood, Mr K Taylor

2 members of the public

Mr Marriage welcomed all to the meeting

OPEN FORUM:

Crossroads on the C41 Methwold to Mundford road the white lines need redoing, The white lines on the Methwold crossroads are not visible, this had already been reported previously - the Clerk will report both to Highways. White lining has been carried out in Methwold Hythe recently.

New resident to the village asked if a 20mph speed limit would be more appropriate near the primary school? The council have asked for double yellow lines and parking restrictions but received a poor response. Cllr Storey has been involved recently in discussions with Highways. A parking supervisor was seen in Methwold on 8th June. It was reported that the school is reminding parents about parking and regular letters are sent out.

It has been noticed that the cats eyes have been removed in Methwold, when this happened in Weeting the road was downgraded-Clerk to follow up with Highways.

1. To receive and consider accepting apologies for absence – Mr Welland Councillors Storey Cllr Peake.
2. Declaration of Interest - Councillors invited to declare any interest in any item on the agenda - none
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2015 as a true record of the meeting. The Chairman asked that the header to the 4th paragraph item 7 should be added 'NOTE FOLLOWING THE MEETING. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked for a change to the wording 'complaint' to 'concern' - members rejected the change - Mr Hood proposed to change the wording especially as in the previous paragraph the word 'complaint' wasn't used. Vote In favour of change - 2 Against - 6 Chairman abstained.
Mr Crawley proposed that the Draft Minutes for the meeting of 11th May were accepted. Voting Against – 1 Agree – 6 Abstained – 1. Minutes accepted.
4. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked for clarification regarding the white gates for Brookville and funding, the Clerk explained that 50% of the funding had been approved by Parish Partnership and Highways, the next step is for the council to complete the paperwork and to send this and a cheque for the remaining 50% (£500) to Highways and they will organise the gates, this needs to be done during the 2015/16 financial year. This will be on the next Agenda.
Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked if the colour had been decided for St George's Hall, The Chairman explained that it has not, the council is still waiting for quotes to be submitted.
Mrs Charlesworth-Smith is still unhappy that the Introduction Packs for the new council cost £75.65 [inc. Vat] to print and feels that this was not best value for money and that 3 quotes should have been obtained before this was done. The cost of the photocopying was itemised on the Invoice and Income list for the meeting in May 2015. The Chairman has offered to repay the money but has explained that there were 870 + pages which all had to be printed and then collated, the printer the PC has is old and inefficient for this amount of printing.
Mrs Charlesworth-Smith quoted from the Financial Regulations Clause 10 that requires three quotations for all goods and services to be obtained before making any purchase. This point was questioned by the chairman who referred to Clause 11.
5. Reports:
 - 5.1 Chairman's Report:- Following the council meeting on 14th May I have been involved with a number of issues including:
Suggested mal-practice of the acceptance of monies from Lightsource.
The signing of a Bribery Compliance Form

The contract for mole catching in the cemetery [further to the approval by the Council at the meeting in May to continue the contract]

Delivery of agendas, minutes etc to councillors including email

All of which has taken a lot of time [with numerous emails] including seeking advice from external agencies.

Was unable to attend the Open Spaces meeting but was able to attend the Hall and General Purposes meeting.

He has set up the first meeting of the Grants Group [to take place on 10th June].

He has had two wide ranging meetings with the clerk and vice chair and a meeting with two parishioners.

Received letters from the solicitor pertaining to the Registration of the Sandpit on Brandon Road and Humble Pit

5.2 Clerk's Report:-

- Fair Hill seat bases – 1 quote received, siting plan has been received and circulated to those who have paid for seats for approval and comments.
- Brickwork at St George's Hall – Written to Contractor asking of he is still able to take on the project, he is no longer building and has offered to pass the work onto a third party, have gone back to ask if the 3rd party has the correct insurance etc.
- 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. Clerk still chasing for quote.
- Decorating – sent out to 5 contractors asking them to quote for the decorating work in St George's Hall, waiting for quotes.
- Brookville-Traffic – Contacted Westcotek regarding flashing speed signs, costs etc.
- NORFOLK MINERALS SITE SPECIFIC ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD) - Single Issue Review of Silica Sand – Call for Silica Sand Extraction Sites – We have been informed that following the recent Initial Consultation on the Single Issue Review of Silica Sand, the next stage in the process is the "call for sites", when potential specific site allocations for silica sand extraction in the period up to 2026, can be proposed to Norfolk County Council. The deadline for landowners, mineral operators and their agents to submit sites to Norfolk County Council is 30 June 2015. [If anyone would like to follow this up the clerk can send out details].
- Finance – 2014/15 accounts are with the Internal Auditor. Meeting on 9th June with Internal Auditor.
- Emails- Discussion with NALC to confirm the legalities around email addresses, confirmed that it is up to the individual what e-mail address a councillor uses but confidentiality must be adhered to.
- Meadows Solar Farm – Due to questions from a new councillor time has been spent going through this file, talking to NALC for advice.
- Grit bin on Cock Corner on the grass area in front of the old people's bungalows, Highways have responded confirming they will fill the grit bin.
- Old Feltwell Road Sign – Still chasing
- Highways – reported potholes and road breaking up on Methwold Hythe to Feltwell stretch of road.
- Cemetery-collating information ready for the Cemetery working group meeting. Discussed Cemetery rules with NALC.
- Meeting with Chairman and Vice Chairman to discuss agenda items.
- Spoke to KLWNBC Planning Department-when are we likely to stop receiving planning applications via the post. KLWNBC have explained that they need to cut costs and therefore from July/August 2015 all planning applications will be received by email and the PC Planning Committee will have to view them online. Clerk explained that some Councillors do not have this facility but they need to implement this new way of working as soon as possible. The PC has to inform them when it has purchased a projector and screen.
- Training- Waiting for date for the playground inspection course to pass onto Mr Welland and Mrs Plumridge. Any training courses will be circulated to all councillors by email as when received by the clerk.
- Parking – Outside primary school and in Methwold on Market days – spoken, emailed Police, KLWNBC, Highways and Cllr Storey to explain the parking situation and to ask for help. Police and Highways have suggested that the Parish Council attends the SNAP meeting in Downham Market Town Hall on 1st July at 7pm.
- CGM – Grass cutting, contacted to ask when the cut which was due on the 25/5 will be done, also to tell CGM that the PC has received very good feedback about the job that the team who cut the Cemetery and Lower Green have done and to ask for same team to do all of the cutting in parish. Date on cutting schedule means the cut will take place during the week of not necessarily on that day.
- Wild Flower Meadow – confirmed this will be scheduled for cut in 1st week September as requested.
- Advert placed in Methwold Times, on noticeboards and on Parish Page to Co-opt another Parish Councillor - received one response so far

- Footpath – Asked to check on the whereabouts of the sign in Globe Street for the right of way up Hall Drive, it being an official public right of way that locals have been worried about crossing? DT has confirmed that the Parish Council agreed it existed as a footpath (not vehicular) but there was no signage to indicate this and the only sign in that area was where the other path crossed the drive from meadow to meadow. The council also discussed the County Council budget 2015/16 for footpath maintenance etc being that of £20,000 for the whole of the county so the chances of any new signs was rather limited.
 - Recreation Ground - Wicksteeds have completed their inspection of the play equipment, waiting for report and quote. The safety matting which was approved by the previous council has been ordered, awaiting delivery.
 - Correspondence-the majority of correspondence is now received electronically and will be circulated by email.
 - Hall emails and admin up to date, Cemetery admin up to date.
 - Minutes completed for meetings.
- 5.3 To accept the Report from the Open Spaces Working Party held on 28.05.15 and to consider recommendations made regarding –
- Cemetery working group – proposed this to be a separate group, Mr Hood was voted Cemetery Superintendent, confirmed happy to accept this role. A date for the first meeting is to be arranged. Vice Superintendent will be decided at this meeting.
 - Zip wire-quote to be discussed – item 11.
 - Trees on Rec. car park – The Chairman to discuss with local tree surgeon, had been unable to do this before due to wife's accident.
 - Parking in Methwold on market days and outside school-Parking Operative was in the village on 8th May and it has been noted that the Police have been seen driving around Methwold on Market days.
 - Safety Issues-new safety mat has arrived, need volunteers to install.
 - Fair Hill Seat – waiting for 1 person to respond to site plan, Clerk to follow up.
 - Stump Grinding-Mrs Stones has dug up a few shoots and more were reported to be coming through, Mrs Stones will continue to monitor.
 - Thank you to John Edwards - Taffy's Garden Services for the excellent job he has done clearing shrubs, cutting hedges and tidying up on Chapel Corner in Methwold Hythe, A group of volunteers from the Parish Council helped and an excellent job was done by all, thank you to everyone involved.
 - Storeys Meadow – Clerk to contact Mr Storey to ask for the footpath to be cut.
- 5.4 To accept the Report from the Hall and General Purposes Working Party held on 04.06.15 and to consider recommendations made regarding –
- Brickwork-re-tender-Contractor had been awarded the contract to replace the brickwork at St George's Hall now unable to do this, has offered to pass onto 3rd party, Clerk has asked for insurance details, HGPWP feels that the work should be re-tendered. Clerk to write to Contractor and ask for response within 7 days or work will be re-tendered. All agreed.
 - Fire Exit-the side door fire exit has been used by some hiring the hall as entrance/exit, this is not allowed as there is no right of way over the Social Club drive. Unable to use the main front door to St George's, to do this would mean railings would have to be installed on the kerbside to prevent anyone stepping out into traffic. Mr Ashman proposed a sign is put up restricting access, only for use in case of emergency.
 - The battery in the Emergency light needs replacing Mr Thomas asked for permission to purchase a new battery, Mrs Horton proposed Mrs Plumridge seconded. All Agreed.
 - Purchase of new traps for urinals- it was thought that replacements would be required but the Caretaker has reported that he has been able to clean the paint off of them and they are working again.
 - Refurbishment of ladies toilet – Fenton Room end of complex – these would benefit from refurbishment, it was reported that cracks have opened up again and need to be properly repaired. The Chairman reported that the external crack monitor has not moved in the past 3 years. To be passed onto the HGPWP
 - Lighting Bars-It would be beneficial for the lighting bars to be in place before St George's Hall is re-decorated. Discussion regarding funding for light bars but this is for Methwold Theatre Group to procure.
 - Storage-A number of items are not in the stillages, the Ladies Group have telephoned the Chairman to say that they are unable to access their cupboard. Discussions as to what to do with old chairs and tables. The small tables belong to Scamps and cannot be disposed of by the Council.
 - Kitchen Refurbishment- Item 11
6. Finances

- 6.1 Accounts Update – The accounts have to be sent to Mazaars by 3rd July, the Accounts have been returned by the Internal Auditor, there were no comments Mr Hood proposed that the Accounts are signed off Mr Ashman seconded. All agreed.
Mrs Horton asked that the money which is in the Account for the Scout Building and any grant money should be shown separately on the monthly statement.
- 6.2 Approval of payments-Mrs Charlesworth-Smith commented about Mr Ashman being paid £30 per month for mole catching in the Cemetery, the Rec. was done without charge. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith has asked to see the quotes for the mole catching but the Clerk has not been able to find electronic or hard copies on file except for minutes from August 2012 where quotes were discussed and approved by full council. Mr Hood remembered that there were quotes and the other contractors quotes were a lot higher. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith said she will ask Mrs Scarrott (previous Clerk) about the previous quotes and asked Mr Ashman what sort of traps he used and if he raked the area over? Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked if it doesn't eradicate the moles what is the point in catching them? Mr Ashman explained the process to the council. There was a heated debate and Mr Ashman resigned from mole catching in the Cemetery and Rec. with immediate effect, Mr Ashman wished it to be minuted that he only charged a minimal fee to catch the moles and however much extra it costs to employ the services of another mole catcher, the additional cost is due to Mrs Charlesworth-Smith's insistence that the parish council should not have awarded Mr Ashman the contract.
The Chairman will give the Clerk the specification for catching moles in the Cemetery and on the Rec. and the Clerk will send out for quotes.

Separate discussions are required with Barclays who have recommended electronic banking. Chairman to find out more.

7. To receive planning decisions –
15/00487/F Methwold 6 Brandon Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4RH - Refurbish the existing dwelling at No. 6 Brandon Road, construct a new semi detached dwelling linked to No. 6 and construct a new detached dwelling house with associated parking area and amenity space
Application Permitted 28 May 2015 Delegated Decision
- 7.1 To consider any planning applications:
15/00704/F Construction of log cabin within boundary for use as a hairdressing salon at Walnut House 50 Globe Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PQ - The Council support this application as it would be a benefit to the community. All agreed.
15/00584/F Installation of 10 2 tonne bunkered LPG vessels at Quorn Foods Brandon Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk-No objections. All agreed
- 7.2 To consider any planning applications received after the agenda was produced
15/00845/O Outline application for 2no detached 2/3 bedroom affordable housing dwellings at Land North East of 14 White Plot Road Methwold Hythe Norfolk. The council have no objections as long as the dwellings are affordable housing. All agreed.
8. Items received for Agenda
Batchcroft & School [Forum] Representatives required – Mr Thomas and Mrs Plumridge will represent the parish council at the community focus group at Icen Academy.
Clerk to contact Rev. Waters to ask who was on the Batchcroft Group and in what capacity?
Training for Councillors – Wereham parish council are organising a training session for councillors and clerks old and new, the Clerk is waiting for the details and costs to circulate to members to see who will attend.
Delivery of information to all parish councillors-The majority of information the Clerk receives and sends out is via email, the Chairman proposed that all information is emailed to councillors. Minutes and agendas are already being emailed and for those who do not have a computer these are printed and posted to them.
Mrs Charlesworth-Smith stated she has a problem with her computer and receiving files via email and asked the Clerk to hand deliver these to her. The Clerk explained to the council that she does not claim any mileage for the travelling she does around the villages and when doing the banking and would not be hand delivering any paperwork to those with computer facilities. The only mileage that is claimed by the Clerk is when attending training sessions. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith has been given the choice of receiving the paperwork via email or post. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith gave the Clerk a book of 12 x 1st class stamps so that the parish council does not incur costs for posting minutes and agendas to her and asked for hers to be posted together in the same envelope, the

Clerk explained that this will mean that the minutes and the agenda will arrive only a day or two before any meeting, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith acknowledged this.

Social media policy –All councillors received a copy in their Introduction pack - Mr Hood proposed the Social Media policy was accepted, Mr Ashman seconded voted 8 agreed 1 abstention Mrs Charlesworth-Smith said that she was unable to vote as she had not read the policy. Approved and accepted.

Development of the parish council web presence-Mr Thomas explained that most parish councils have their own websites and suggested a Methwold Parish Council website. Methwold.net is available but this would be a separate website where the Clerk could post documents as they were updated, the Clerk and an administrator would have control over the website.

There is already a Methwold Parish Facebook site which is very successful and it has been suggested that a Methwold Parish Council Facebook page where information could be made readily available would benefit the community by getting information out quickly, this would be set up so that it did not accept incoming comments. There would be no costs involved to set this up. This will be looked at and consider setting up in the future but no timescales have been decided.

Beavers – have asked to hire the Fenton Room again on Tuesday evening's during term time from October 2015 to Easter 2016 excluding school holidays. The hire fee was £3.75 per session. Mrs Horton proposed that they should be allowed to hire the hall at £3.75 per session, Mrs Plumridge seconded. All agreed. Mr Williams and the Clerk to confirm dates and update calendar.

To purchase projector and screen required to view Planning applications-to be received electronically by end of Summer 2015-KLWNBC want to send planning applications electronically, Mr Hood questioned do we need to purchase? History group has a projector could parish council hire this? Screen is fixed. Councillor without computer stated she is happy to go to the office when Clerk is there and look at the plans on the computer, however would prefer to spend the money on other improvements. There is a possibility that if purchased a projector and screen would be a benefit to some groups who hire the hall and that it could be used to show the financial spreadsheet and other documents which are sent electronically. Mr Thomas is to look at costs, defer for 3 months – Sept/Oct 2015

9. Correspondence – KLWNBC have confirmed that they are investigating the wall which has been demolished in Eldens Lane.

Fields in Trust – Impact Report

UEA-How easy is it to see your GP Survey- will ask for this to be put up in the Post Office

Election of members of the Norfolk Association of Local Councils Executive Committee

10. Any Further Reports

Chairman - Humble Pit/Sand Pit-Chairman reported that over the past 18 months the parish council have been working to have assets registered, in both cases there are no deeds to demonstrate title. Sand Pit – The solicitor said that Land Registry did not accept the council's claim to title and that the options were to Register an Interest [and revisit the process in 12 years] or to take no further action and relinquish any claim. The parish council voted to relinquish attempts to register title.

Humble Pit-There is a benefit to the parish, it being the point at which two main drainage systems meet. The Solicitor's letter was read to the meeting which indicated a possible positive outcome pending a reply from Land Registry

Chairman -A quad bike has been reported driving around on the Rec. It is thought that it gained access through the wild flower meadow and church yard. As a temporary measure it was suggested that a lock is purchased for the gate, CGM would need to be given a key or the code to gain access to mow the Church Yard.

The gate to the wild flower meadow/churchyard is already broken and there are concerns that to lock the gate would cause people to climb over it causing more damage or that the lock might be broken off. To be discussed in next Open Spaces meeting.

Mrs Charlesworth-Smith-who is responsible for the flower tubs? This is Methwold in Bloom/Methwold Community Action Group

Mr Ashman - A working party is required on the Rec. to install the safety mats – volunteers?

Mr Ashman - The streetlight outside 49a White Plot Road Methwold Hythe is still overgrown

Mr Hood - The bushes from the main road to the car park at the Cemetery is overgrown on the right hand side, Clerk to write a polite note to the Academy and House to ask for these to be cut back.

Mr Crawley - concerned that he hadn't got three quotes for the ply wood which he had purchased for the repairs to the staging, this had already been approved by the previous council and was for materials and not for labour.

Mr Crawley- Stated he has various materials which could be used when helping with jobs around the village an example of this is the new litter bins for Fair Hill which need new posts fixing to them before they are set in the ground, what is the remit if three quotes have to be obtained before these jobs can be done?

Mrs Horton – drains in Ventura Close, can the Clerk ask Highways to clear them?

11. To pass a resolution to exclude members of the public

Wicksteed quote for repairs to the play equipment – to repair the zip wire the cost excluding VAT is approx. £1550, this includes a new wire, to re-use the old wire cost is approx. £1100 but won't know if they can re-use the old wire until they have removed it, it frays when cut. Clerk to ask Friends of the Rec. if they will contribute £500 out of the £729 which the council has in the bank to the cost of the repair?

Kitchen refurbishment-The five quotes have been discussed by the HGPWP, since the quote was received last October the preferred company has become VAT registered and the cost of materials has increased therefore 20% for VAT and £200 for price increases have to be added to the total quote. The parish council has received a £8200 grant for the kitchen refurbishment from The Big Lottery Fund – Awards for All, the Parish Council have a further £3000 in reserves making a total of £11,200 the quote does not include decoration and there could be other additional costs once the original units are removed. The HGPWP made a recommendation to full council to accept the quote of £7906 from RCS Bespoke Renovations Wimbotsham. If the full amount is not spent the parish council will have to advise the Big Lottery Fund and we may have to repay any remaining money. Mr Hood proposed that the quote is accepted Mr Williams seconded All Agreed. Clerk to contact all who quoted and inform them of decision.

Meeting ended 10.15pm