

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL
THURSDAY 9th JULY 2015

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

Councillor M Storey
8 members of the public

Mr Marriage welcomed all to the meeting

Presentation – Mr Hood presented Mr D Wortley, Mrs M Wortley and Mr C Neville with long service awards and thanked them for their many years of service. Previous Parish Councillors all donated to fund the awards.

Mr C Stone was also thanked for his contribution to the Parish Council, his work is much appreciated about the village.

1. Co-Option of Parish Councillor-Chairman gave an explanation of the process.

Mr Thomas and Mr Ashman declared an interest and left the room.

There were three candidates, two gave a short presentation and the Chairman read out a statement from the third person as they were unable to attend due to another engagement.

1.1The Parish Council voted and elected Mrs Teresa Thomas to Methwold Parish Council. Mrs Thomas signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form and took her seat on the Council.

OPEN FORUM:

PCSO Law sent an email-apologies for not being able to attend, SNAP meeting date to be advised soon.

Advised that Police have put a marker on the village that will ensure any ASB reported should ensure officers gets names of any individuals concerned and they will be referred to our Operational Partnership Team to enable us to deal with them further. Colleagues have been asked to patrol the village whenever they can.

2. To receive and consider accepting apologies for absence – Councillor Peake, PCSO Law
3. Declaration of Interest - Councillors invited to declare any interest in any item on the agenda - none
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2015 as a true record of the meeting. Chairman had previously asked that the header to the 4th paragraph item 7 should be added 'NOTE FOLLOWING THE MEETING. This was intended as an explanation but after discussion with NALC this is not allowed, the Chairman proposed that this will be struck from the record and updated, seconded by Mr Ashman, agreed. Accounts-Income & Invoice list for May failed to record proposer and seconder, Approval of Mays Income & Invoice list was proposed by Mrs Horton and Seconded by Mr Welland - All agreed.
5. **Matters arising from past minutes: Moles**-Mr Ashman voluntarily stepped down from catching the moles, the Chairman explained that there was never any attempt for the Parish Council to mislead, the original tendering process in August 2012 received only 2 tenders for catching the moles the tender for £30 per month was accepted. The Clerk and Chairman have looked for files/paperwork for this but none are available only the minutes from 9th August 2012. The Parish Council acted in good faith and until Mrs Charlesworth-Smith raised the matter were not aware that employment of a Councillor is not allowed, the Parish Council were not advised of this at the time or by previous Clerks. Mr Hood explained that it doesn't stop a Councillor doing work for the Parish Council if they need materials these can be paid for services are done voluntarily. Mr Ashman was asked if he would do the moles voluntarily but he declined, the £30 he used to get for doing the moles didn't even cover his diesel costs each week. Several of the previous Councillors remembered there being 2 quotes for moles and the £30 quote being accepted. The Chairman said the matter is now closed. New quotes have been received for the mole catching.

Mrs Charlesworth-Smith questioned if the Chairman still involved with the methwold.net website? The Chairman replied that he thought he might still be involved

Typo – in 5.3 should be ‘driving’ not diving.

Mr Crawley questioned the Clerk printing out documents for the Councillors who have email and printers, the Chairman asked the Council to consider if a ream of paper should be given out to all once a year? Postage of papers to councillor has been covered by them giving Clerk stamps. An option would be for those who need copies to let the Clerk know, she will print them out and these can be collected when the Clerk is in the office.

6. Reports:

6.1 Chairman’s Report

- Preparing a specification for mole catching in the Cemetery and Recreation Ground.
- Meeting with a parish councillor to discuss issues about which he is concerned.
- Attended the Finance meeting.
- Attended the Cemetery meeting.
- Meetings with the clerk to keep up to date with council matters.
- Contacting external advisors [NALC] relating to queries over the Minutes of Meetings and the terminated mole contract.

I was unable to attend the Open Spaces meeting and the Hall and General Purposes meeting.

Attended the evening working party at the Rec car park cutting back overhead foliage.

Listened to parishioners’ concerns over litter on the Rec.

Received the letter relating to the conclusion of the council’s request to register the ownership of Humble Pit.

I would note that above has all involved over 330 emails [received and sent] and excludes telephone calls

6.2 Clerk’s Report:-

- Quotes – Fair Hill seat bases – All who donated have approved siting of seats, bases need to be put in, invitations to tender have been sent out but only 1 response, since quote received this Contractor has informed Clerk that he is no longer in business doing building work but could put job out the 3rd party, Clerk has asked for copy of 3rd party’s Public Liability Insurance Document - no response.
- Brickwork at St George’s Hall – No response from Contractor, waited 7 days then invited another 3 Contractors to quote.
- St George’s Hall – Gable end roof – Tried contacting builder but no response.
- Decorating – have received 3 quotes, Agenda item for July PC mtg.
- Brookville – Flashing signs, was asked by previous Chair to find out about Crimphesham’s gates and flashing signs, take information to Open Spaces meeting for discussion, was asked to contact the Grants Group to investigate possible funding for 3 flashing speed signs. No decision made this is just to see if funding would be available before deciding whether to take to full PC for discussion.
- Finance – 2014/15 accounts have been sent to External Auditor.
- Old Feltwell Road Sign – Spoken to Highways and NCC again.
- Highways – reported - white lining required on crossroad in Methwold, missing and broken signs, drains that need clearing. Ranger gangs will be visiting the parish of Methwold during the week commencing 20 July 2015, have sent list
- Response received from Highways – cats eyes have been removed in Methwold for surface dressing, Highways have confirmed that at this moment in time they have no intention to downgrade the road.
- Discussions with NALC to clarify procedure for Co-Option and Policies.
- Training-Playground inspection course on Wednesday 19th August - 2 places have been booked for BW & KP to attend.
- We have been allocated 4 places on the Introductory Training for Councillors and Clerks at Wereham Village Hall on Tuesday 28th July 6.45pm to 9pm, BH, KP, PC & BW have been allocated these places.
- Chairmanship Training – JM and DT booked to attend.
- Parking – Waiting for date for SNAP meeting, PCSO had given Clerk date of 1st July but this meeting did not happen. Will circulate the date once known.
- Grass cutting- Resident emailed Clerk to ask when Lower Green was going to be cut as they felt it hadn’t been cut for some time, discussion with Contractor and cutting is being monitored.
- Contacted Highways, NCC & KLNWBC to ask when they would be cutting the grass in the Parish, dates received and circulated to all on email.
- Co-option of 1 Parish Councillor. Received three responses, on Agenda for July 9th meeting.

- Recreation Ground – Quote received for repair to zip wire, Contacted Friends of Rec to ask for permission to use £500 of the funds could be used towards repairs, received response by text, yes ok to use £500.
 - The safety matting has been delivered and is in the pound.
 - Rural Rate Relief Review Form received from KLWNBC – this enables them to calculate the rate relief for 2016/2017, discussion with Chairman, form completed and returned.
 - Kitchen-Contractor acknowledged acceptance letter and has given provisional start date of 21st September 2015, he will contact me nearer to the time to confirm this date.
 - Following June’s meeting Spec and map received from Chairman for Mole Catching, invited 5 companies to quote for contract.
 - Mr Storey contacted to ask if it would be possible for the footpath which runs across Storeys meadow to be cut because it is overgrown.
 - Received emails from previous Councillor regarding recycling weights, have started correspondence with company to claim amount due.
 - Update on Sand Pit and Humble Pit received from Solicitor – passed onto Chairman.
 - Cemetery – preparation for meeting on 6th July.
 - Fields in Trust goodie box delivered to organiser of Charity Football Match.
 - Correspondence-the majority of correspondence is now received electronically and will be circulated by email.
 - Meeting with Chairman to discuss agenda items.
 - Hall emails and admin up to date, Cemetery admin up to date.
 - Minutes completed for PC meeting, notes completed for Hall and OS meeting. Finance and Cemetery to follow.
- 6.3 To accept the Report from the Open Spaces Working Party held on 25.06.15 and to consider recommendations made regarding –Zip wire on Rec. – Friends of the Rec have agreed to contribute £500 towards the cost of the repairs.
- 6.4 To accept the Report from the Hall and General Purposes Working Party held on 02.07.15 and to consider recommendations made regarding – **Drinks facility in St George’s Hall**-could there be a door/arch put through at the base of the stairs into the Caretakers cupboard to enable a sink to be installed for drinks to be made and a sink for the Caretaker? A specification will be required if the Council is to consider this. If this facility was made available would the fees be increased? There hasn’t been an increase for 18 months. Mr Hood proposed a specification is drawn up to see if the project is feasible and to find out costs and if there are any grants available, Mrs Plumridge seconded – Agreed.
- Refurbishment of Toilets**-Toilets are very dated and in need of total refurbishment, Mrs Horton proposed that the Hall Group find out what the cost would be for refurbishment, are there any grants available Mr Welland seconded - Agreed
- Storage**-discussion regarding the room which the Surgery use to give out medication, the Parish Council don’t want the Surgery to remove this facility as it is very valuable to the Community so this will not be pursued.
- Age UK** –for information only-Mr Thomas has had an email from Age UK who are hoping to bring their information bus to St George’s Car Park 2 x month date and day to be confirmed but they are looking at Mondays because the village is busy on this day, there were a few concerns over car parking but the Council thought this was an excellent idea.
- 6.5 To accept the Report from the Cemetery Group meeting held on 06.07.15 and to consider recommendations made regarding: **Charges** – Mr Hood presented the increases to the current charges to the Council. Mr Ashman proposed approval for increased charges to full Parish Council, Mr Welland seconded All in favour.
- Single grave digger**-a lot of Cemeteries have a single grave digger, this is the preferred option, graves could be kept neater and tidier, in straight lines, a single grave digger would top up the graves when any sink. Mr Hood to talk to the Funeral Directors to see what their opinion is to a single grave digger in Methwold Cemetery, put to Parish Council to have specification and tender drawn up to send out for tender proposed by Mr Ashman seconded by Mrs Plumridge – Agreed.
- 6.6 To accept the Report from the Finance Committee meeting held on 07.07.15 and to consider recommendations made regarding: The Chairman explained the background to the Reserves Policy. No recommendations made.
- NALC Financial Regulations 2014**-There are many updates/changes from the 2012 version, a copy of the new regs will be given to all on the Finance Committee to assess. One change which as discussed was reference to the limit

which have to obtain 3 quotes for work, in 2012 this was £1k 2014 raises this to £3k, a Councillor pointed out that this should be relevant to the precept received.

This will be discussed at the next Finance meeting on 30th September 2015.

7. Finances

7.1 Accounts Update – The reserves are now being shown on the Bank Rec. so that it is clear where all monies are allocated.

7.2 Approval of payments-There was discussion regarding Membership of Community Action Norfolk (CAN) – 2 Councillors are booked to go on a Play Inspection Course, cost is £60 each total £120 but if the Council join CAN as a bronze member for £20 this amount decreases to £40 per person total £100, discussion around benefits of being a member, membership of CAN also entitles discount on further training and funding opportunities. Mr Ashman proposed that membership is paid for this year then reviewed to see if it is good value for money Mr Welland seconded-Agreed.

£500 payment to NCC Parish Partnership for the white gates in Brookville was queried, this is half the amount of the installation of the gates, Highways will install these. When the gates have been installed any remaining money out of the half paid will be refunded. Chairman signed document Clerk witnessed.

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

8. To receive planning decisions –

8.1 To consider any planning applications: **UPDATE:** 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 had no objections as long as the dwellings are affordable housing.

Letter received stating that application has changed, houses were now to be 'OPEN MARKET' comments had to be received by 9th July, this was circulated to the Council, several replies were received over the removal of 'affordable housing' and change to 'OPEN MARKET' housing. The Chairman asked the Clerk to inform KLWNBC Planning Dept. this would not be supported by the Parish Council.

Mr Storey explained that 'Open market'– built to be sold on and 'affordable housing' – built to be rented out.

Mr Storey explained that the recent meeting to approve the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan Policies will now be considered in November, this is due to several objections regarding the RSPB, Habitat and flood risk assessment. If anyone is unhappy with planning applications policies change please contact Site Allocations Planning Department at KLWNBC.

8.2 To consider any planning applications received after the agenda was produced: None

9. Items received for Agenda

White Gates Brookville- already discussed

Humble Pit-Solicitor has advised that Humble Pit has been registered in Parish Council's name, Highways have claimed the grass verge but Humble Pit boundary now has clear definition.

Batchcroft Trust-Mr Hood already represents the Parish Council, two more councillors Mrs Stones and Mrs Horton volunteered to attend. Clerk to inform Rev. Ken Waters of Parish Council representatives.

Chairman extended the meeting to 9.45pm

Litter-has increased significantly over the past few weeks on the Rec. this may be due to longer evenings, better weather etc. some of this is due to people dropping their litter rather than using the bins. Question - Do we need more/bigger bins? It was felt that there are enough bins, they need emptying more often. The dirty nappies and half eaten food in pizza boxes will be an attraction to rats. At present handyman take the rubbish bags to the skip in the Cemetery but this is not acceptable especially when dirty nappies and food are in the bags. This could also be seen as a hazard to the skip company and we could be charged more for emptying the skip and disposal. Two ladies have been seen collecting rubbish and taking the rubbish home with them.

There has also been glass and rubbish left around the play equipment. It has been suggested a lockable skip could be put in the car park at the Rec. so as the handyman can put the rubbish in here but this could cause another problem of people dumping rubbish by the skip. Mr Hood proposed that a lockable skip is put in the car park on a 3 month trial, Mr Ashman seconded, there is a £500 limit to have this done as soon as possible, Clerk to find out costs and to discuss with Chairman/Vice Chairman.

Projector and screen-Mr Thomas has costed a projector approx. £400 and has a screen which he would donate to the Hall if the projector is purchased.

For Information Only-The standpipe on the Rec. will be installed on the 20th July weather permitting.

Footpath-White Plot Road and the Trod between Methwold and Methwold Hythe children are now walking on the road rather than the path because the grass is too long.

Mole hills on Rec.-Now causing a trip hazard.

Grass Cutting-Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked when the grass will be cut-Highways and KLBC will cut the grass as soon as they can get to this area, reported that they were cutting in Hockwold today. Map of grass areas and responsibilities has been requested, Clerk to look for this and circulate so as Councillors can see what pieces of grass the Parish Council is responsible for.

Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked that thanks be given to Mr Williams for his work on the Parish Council.

Cock Corner- Mrs Horton has received complaints regarding the grass on Cock Corner and paths in Ventura Close, these are on the Highway Rangers list.

Hedge – from road to Cemetery Car Park is overhanging – Clerk asked to write to Icen Academy to ask them to cut this back so people going to the Cemetery can access the car park easily.

10. Correspondence – None

11. Any Further Reports

Chairman – Today we received an email and new contract from the Streetlight Contractor regarding the contract and an increase to costs, the current contract runs out on 31st July, supplier proposes to increase charges from £105.12 +VAT per month to £110.36+VAT per month, this includes fixed prices and a 5% discount for three years contract. Mr Hood proposed to accept, Mr Ashman seconded Agreed.

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

Quotes: Hall decoration 3 quotes received, Contractor A £3860.75 Contractor B £3536 Contractor C £4350 + £84 Mr Ashman proposed Contractor B seconded by Mr Hood – Agreed

Moles-5 contractors were asked to quote 2 have submitted quotes.

Contractor A £1500, Contractor B £3276-Contractor B did not quote to the spec he was given as he considered this not to be cost effective.

Discussions around spec. Contractor A will be asked to quote for the same alternative scheme as Contractor B quoted. This will be discussed again at next month's meeting.

Mrs Charlesworth-Smith questioned the spec used and was assured that they all received the same spec, Contractor B chose not to quote as per the spec.

Brickwork St George's Hall-3 contractors have been asked to quote for this, one previously quoted and was accepted but since this he has stopped working. Clerk sent out to another 2 Contractors and has received 1 quote, this was for £550 +VAT Mr Ashman proposed that this quote was accepted as the work is urgent and needs to be done before any adverse weather conditions this coming winter. Mr Hood seconded – Approved.

Fair Hill Seat Bases-4 Contractors were asked to quote and 1 quote received and accepted previously, since this the Contractor has stopped building, another 4 Contractors were asked to quote, 1 quote received for £1190.00 + VAT Mr Ashman proposed the Parish Council accept this quote seconded by Mr Thomas – Approved.

Meeting ended 10.20pm