

# Methwold Parish Council

Meeting of the Parish Council  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022 at 7.30pm  
21 Room St George's Hall Complex Methwold

Parish Councillors present:– R Scott - Chairman, D Scott, J Marriage, B Horton, D Charlesworth-Smith, S Liddle, M French  
16 members of the public  
Cllr Storey  
Cllr Ryves

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, thank you to those in attendance.

1 Co-Option - Deferred to August meeting due to candidate contracting Covid-19

2 Those Co-opted as parish councillors to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and take their seat on the council. – August Meeting

3 The parish council to receive and resolve to agree apologies for absence – I Cotterell, S Turner and P Andre.

4 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensations - None

5 To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6th June 2022 Parish Council Meeting – D Scott proposed to accept the minutes, J Marriage seconded - APPROVED

6 Matters arising from the last minutes - None

7 Reports

7.1 Update and report from the meeting of Open Spaces and to consider recommendations made at the meeting held on the 23rd June 2022

Meeting held in each village in the parish with Highways who have been shown the issues flagged to the parish council, it is hoped these meeting will continue and improvements will be programmed in.

The annual play equipment inspection has been completed and the report sent to the council, there are a few minor issues which will be dealt with e.g matting under the zip wire.

SAMs2 sign is up and running in Brookville, it will be moved around the parish regularly, thank you to S Liddle for taking this on.

The speed camera was seen in Brookville last weekend.

8. Items received for the agenda

8.1 Recreation Ground – request for improved skate board ramp, this request has been discussed at the Open Spaces Meeting in June where the group looked on it positively, there is an increasing number of children in the parish who use the recreation ground, the skateboard facility already in place is not user friendly for those learning and younger people, there is a new skateboard ramp in Feltwell which is excellent, can Methwold have something similar? The pc was concerned about the cost of a new ramp and cannot afford to fund a new skateboard ramp, the one in Feltwell cost £75k.

The Chairman opened the meeting to the public to allow for J Rodwell to explain the request. There are some parents willing to research, look at fundraising opportunities, talk to other parents and set up a working group to include 1 or 2 parish councillors to see if this project is viable.

D Charlesworth-Smith proposed the parish council is in favour of supporting the working group to research the project, J Marriage seconded – APPROVED.

J Rodwell was asked to report back to the parish council once she has had the chance to speak to more parents.

8.2 Household Support Fund – this is a grant being given out by Norfolk Community Foundation for help with utilities for those over 65, disabled and carers. Initial funding is for £2000 to be split into £50

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donations for help towards fuel, utilities etc. the pc have all received the leaflet and this has been shared to the community facebook page to get the information out to those who may qualify. Closing date is 28<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

The grant can be applied for by the pc but it was noted that th pc do not hold this information, how do the pc find out who those who may qualify are? GDPR and Data Protection mean personal information should not be held.

CLlr. Storey stated that the Borough Council and Norfolk County Council should have this information and should be encouraging individuals to apply. An offer was received to put together a leaflet to deliver to all in the parish explaining the grant but this would require volunteers to come forwards to deliver them.

Could a group such as the Community Support Group who helped during the pandemic work with the pc who could act as the banker as they did during the pandemic.

It was asked if Norfolk Community Foundation could come to do a presentation to the village to try and find those who require help?

Batchcroft may have some idea of who might benefit.

If some organisation in the community wishes to take this up the pc could assist them.

## 9. Finance

9.1 Accounts Update – Bank Reconciliation

9.2 For Approval of payments – Income & Invoice List – B Horton proposed to approve, seconded by D Scott APPROVED.

## 10. Planning

10.1 Planning & Monitoring Committee – election of chair for this group - M French.

10.2 To receive planning decisions

21/01530/F Whitegates Methwold Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QW - Erection of a new single dwelling at Whitegates, Methwold Road, Methwold Hythe, Thetford, Norfolk. Application Withdrawn 8 June 2022

22/00101/TREECA 14 Hythe Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PP - T1 Ash - Remove T2 Ash - Crown clean and reduction of extending limb T3 Ash - Reduction of extending lower limb to remove weight within Conservation Area. Tree Application - No objection 14 June 2022 Delegated Decision

22/00258/F Whitegates Methwold Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QW - Extensions and alterations to dwelling Application Permitted 20 June 2022 Delegated Decision

22/00785/F The Fallows 28A Old Feltwell Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PW - Conversion of existing garage and single storey rear extension to dwelling Application Permitted 23 June 2022 Delegated Decision

22/00508/F 15 Main Road Brookville Thetford Norfolk IP26 4RB - Timber Car Port Application Permitted 6 July 2022 Delegated Decision

22/00590/F Wissington Sugar Factory College Road Wissington Wereham Norfolk PE33 9QG - Installation of a new modern fully enclosed diesel pumping unit installed on a 3.5m by 5m concrete bunded plinth. This plinth will be the same height as an adjacent existing river bridge supporting plinth Application Permitted 6 July 2022 Delegated Decision.

10.3 To receive planning applications

22/00981/F Variation of condition 5 of Planning Permission 16/01039/O: Construction of three dwellings Land North of 49 Main Road Brookville Thetford Norfolk IP26 4RB – APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

22/01158/A 1 no externally illuminated fascia sign, 2no poster display units, 1no flat panel, 2no sets of window vinyls 42 High Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NT – NO OBSERVATIONS

22/01013/O Outline application with some matters reserved for the erection of 7 no detached CSB houses with garages and associated works Land S of 14 To 28 High Street Methwold Norfolk – OBJECT because of access, the site was not included in the Site Allocation and Development Plan 2016, insufficient infrastructure, concerns regarding development close to the edge of the chalk pit. CLlr Ryves was asked to

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call this application in. The meeting was closed to allow the public to comment – concerns regarding traffic, access – this is the narrowest part of the road, self builds won't be affordable houses and will mean more traffic trying to access the site. The public were asked to make their comments on the Borough Council planning portal before the deadline for comments on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022. Meeting was resumed.

10.4 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published - None

#### 11. Correspondence

Parish Partnership Applications are now open until 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022 – suggestions to the next Open Spaces meeting.

Initial – sanitary bins price increase

Glass recycling – price increase

Highway visit – update – road lining has been programmed in the parish, junctions and yellow lines will be scheduled later this year, centre lines may have to wait until next year.

#### Open Forum for Public Participation

An opportunity to hear from members of the public, Borough and County Councillors

Bus stop sign outside the Old Chapel – what is happening? Can a new sign be installed, and preventative measures be undertaken or a camera put up to gain evidence as to who removes the sign?

If there is a sign in place it needs to be enforced, can parking enforcement come out? Cllr Storey is chasing this and will update the Clerk when he has any information.

Bonfires in the parish – is there a local Bylaw which can be enforced or can we have a new Bylaw? -

[www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20129/nuisances/182/bonfire\\_and\\_smoke](http://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20129/nuisances/182/bonfire_and_smoke) link to BC website.

Methwold Hall Complex Charitable Trust – a resident stated that they didn't realise the halls were now held in a Charitable Trust, who decided this and why is it not controlled by the parish council anymore?

The Chairman explained the reason behind the decision to place the two halls into a Charitable Trust was due to discretionary rate relief being incorrectly applied and then withdrawn by the Borough Council, the rates payable for 2021-22 was £10,060 for the complex. The parish council have consulted Community Action Norfolk and a Solicitor who have a Charity division, this has also been discussed at meetings and decisions have been recorded in the minutes.

The application was sent to the Charity Commission in October 2021 but due to the pandemic there were long delays and it wasn't until April 2022 that the Charity Commission began to process the application and asked several questions regarding the parish office and the post office, despite the parish council explaining that the post office is a service for the community, the Charity Commission have said they consider the post office to be a commercial business and require them to pay a commercial hire fee.

The fee was calculated using the commercial hire rate for the kitchen £37 per 4.5-hour session this equates to £8.22 per hour and includes the electricity and heating. The kitchen is 15m<sup>2</sup> and the post office is 9m<sup>2</sup>, the hire rate for the room the post office occupies was calculated to be £4.66 per hour 15 hours per week x 4 = £302.90 per month, this is an increase on the current £51 per month hire fee which has been charged since the post office first opened and has not been increased.

The Trustees held a meeting with the hirer in early July to explain the situation and are waiting for a follow up meeting to discuss whether they wish to hire the room from the Charitable Trust at a commercial rate.

There may be a need to make increases to the hire rates later but if this happens it will be because of increases to costs for services not because the complex is now vested in a Charitable Trust.

The Charity Commission considered the sole use of the parish office by the parish council to be a conflict of interest, as the parish office has not been used by the parish council since the start of lockdown the council it was agreed that the room would be made available to hire if required.

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A local family attended the meeting to ask the parish council for help in resolving a dispute over a grave/headstone. The Clerk will contact NALC to ask for help with the legal position to resolve this situation.

12. Further reports and items for the next meeting agenda – August 11th 2022

13. To pass a resolution (under the Public Admission to Meetings Act 1960 to exclude members of the public and press for the following confidential items: None

Meeting ended 9.30pm