

Methwold Parish Council Meeting
Thursday 10th April 2025 at 7.30pm
21 Room, St George's Hall Complex, Methwold

Present:

Councillors: Cllr French (Chairman), Cllr Grassick, Cllr Riches, Cllr Minkler, Cllr J O'Ware, Cllr A Senior
Borough Councillor A Ryves
Norfolk County Councillor M Storey
10 members of the public
Clerk

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. The parish council agreed to accept apologies for absence from Cllr Rodriguez and Cllr Thomas
3. Declarations of Interest (In accordance with S31 of the Localism Act 2011) and requests for dispensations - none
4. Cllr Grassick proposed to the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13th March 2025 as a true representation of the meeting, Cllr O'Ware seconded – Approved with 1 abstention from Cllr Horton who was not present at this meeting.
5. Matters arising from the Minutes not included on the agenda but for information only - none

6. Open Forum for Public Participation

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

Cllr Storey – Cranswick planning application was unanimously rejected at the Borough Council planning meeting last week, take this opportunity to say how high the quality of the speakers on this application, especially the Chairman of the parish council, some very good points were put forward. This is the right result so far, but no one knows if this will be taken to appeal. The Chairman and others attended a planning meeting on Monday, thank you very much for coming.

Devolution and Local Government Reform are ongoing, first round of representations had to be submitted by 21st March 2025. The 6-week public consultation runs out on 13th April and the 26th September is the date for National Grid Pylons across Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex countryside, NCC are against the pylons. National Grid have launched a consultation for the 114 overhead powerlines, the Secretary of State for energy will determine the decision.

Norfolk County Council have moved all streetlights over to LED a year ahead of schedule.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/63634/Norfolk-street-lighting-goes-green#:~:text=The%20work%2C%20carried%20out%20by,HID%20lights%20with%2015%2C531%20LEDs.>

1500 miles of scenic trails of walking, cycling and horse riding across Norfolk County.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/42852/Norfolk-Trails>

For more Norfolk County Council news click here <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/43979/News>

Cllr Ryves – echo Cllr Storey's thanks and gratitude to Chairman for attending and speaking at both planning meetings and thanks to Cllr Storey for his comments at the planning meetings. It is expected that if Cranswick are going to come back it will be in about 6 months, and there could be a public enquiry.

Cranswick Objection Group – thank the parish council and Chairman French for the support that they have given the local community, congratulate Chairman French for his heartfelt speech at the planning committee meeting.

It has been suggested by Terry Jermy MP who is working with the COG to celebrate the success of the rejected planning application, it might be nice to celebrate the success with the community, and to thank everybody for their work and contributions they have made through the process, would the parish council be willing to allow a BBQ and celebration on the recreation ground date to be agreed probably in June, using locally sourced food? - To Open Spaces for May meeting.

Chairman stated this is a battle that has been won but the war is not yet over, and he will not be celebrating until the planning application has been stopped.

Resident stated that they cannot understand why 8 mega huts have been allowed and are being erected in Brookville without any concerns being raised, what is the difference with this site and the Cranswick site, not one word has been said about this site.

Cllr Ryves – this site is not next to a special protection area, emissions created not damaging. Moving an existing operation to a single site further away from the village. The difference is an existing local farmer and a commercial enterprise located close to an SSSI site.

Why do people think the site in Brookville is not going to give out the same emissions as the Cranswick operation. Cranswick site combines two species.

Resident praised the parish council for moving their streetlights over to LEDs ahead of NCC, Chairman said although not on the same scale it is still important.

Many years ago, it was discussed that the road from Millgate Street to White Road is made one way, this kept getting quashed, resident asked - can there be a proviso on the Cranswick application that if it gets quashed at public enquiry it will not be able to come back again?

Will there be an update on the traffic survey on the roads – Brandon Road and Cranwich Roads?

7. Reports: Update and Report from the Open Spaces Working Group to consider the recommendations made at the meeting on 27th March 2025 to include:

7.1 Cllr Grassick proposed to accept quote to make repairs to the play equipment as detailed in the annual play inspection report £882.00 + VAT, Cllr Horton seconded – Approved.

7.2 Cllr Minkler proposed to accept Quote2 for The Pound roof £6750 + VAT and an additional £2000 + VAT for UK Powernetworks to install crash decking over the transformer to enable the work to be carried out, Cllr Riches seconded – Approved.

The trial of the two glass recycling bins at the rec car park has ended, once full the clear glass bin will be removed and just one bin for mixed glass left in place.

Thank you to Cllr Minkler for doing such a good job renovating the bench.

Cemetery stability testing – the Chairman has met with the contractor to discuss how they had marked the memorials which have failed testing, the tape used was neither discreet nor respectful. All the tape and sticky residue has been removed, in the next few weeks the Clerk and 2 councillors will be marking the graves with small markers at the head of the grave.

Where possible the owners of the memorials will be contacted and asked to make arrangements to have the memorials stabilised.

The Chairman also met with a memorial owner to discuss the procedure, their responsibility as the memorial owner and next steps.

Increase to the cost of emptying the dog waste bins by the borough council – the Clerk has asked if fortnightly collections are possible and for a cost to do this, no decision has been made by the borough council on this option yet. Alternative options are being investigated.

8. Finance

8.1 Accounts Update – Bank Reconciliation

Bank Account Totals

Current Account total on 28th March 2025	£ 4,962.24
Tracker Account total on 28th March 2025	£30,516.83
Saver Account (CIL & S 106) total on 28th March 2025	£53,144.77
Emergency Reserve Fund 28th March 2025	£25,859.75
Total	£114,483.59

Interest from January to March 2025 = £419.27

The invoice for dog bin emptying has been questioned, the Clerk is waiting for a reply as to whether the bins can be emptied fortnightly to make it cheaper, waiting for a reply from BCKLWN. The council discussed withholding payment of the current invoice until a response is received. The Clerk will investigate if there are other companies who empty dog waste bins.

Stability testing of the memorials in the Cemetery will be paid this month.

8.2 Cllr O'Ware proposed to approve payments, Cllr Horton seconded the motion – Approved.

The Chairman requested the Clerk minute thanks to the Responsible Finance Officer for looking after the accounts so well and clearly and making them very understandable.

8.3 Clerk circulated to all councillors quotes from 4 internal auditors – 3 quoted 1 has reached their quota –

Cllr Minkler proposed to appoint Quote A – approximately £75.00 as the Internal Auditor for 2024/25 accounts, Cllr Horton seconded the motion - Approved.

9. Planning

9.1 To receive planning decisions

25/00208/T3 Sewage Works Eldens Lane Methwold Norfolk - APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL: This Notice is provided in accordance with Paragraph A.3(1) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended which requires landowners to be informed of the submission of the application. Proposed Arqiva smart metering 1 No. omni at 13.75m mean mounted on proposed 12.0m street works pole. Proposed Arqiva smart metering 1 No. GPS antenna at 12.3m mean mounted on proposed street works pole. Proposed Arqiva smart metering 1 No. 3G omni antenna at 11.6m mean mounted on proposed street works pole. Proposed Arqiva smart metering equipment enclosure to be installed on a root foundation. Proposed Arqiva 1 No. concrete bollard

25/00069/F Whitegates Methwold Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QW - Construction of domestic garage, parking and turning area Application Permitted

19 March 2025 Delegated Decision

BCKLWN Planning Committee Meeting – outcome on 3rd April meeting.

22/00866/FM Demolition of existing poultry sheds, construction of 20 new poultry sheds, 4 workers dwellings and associated infrastructure at Airfield / Methwold Farm Brandon Road Methwold Norfolk IP26 4RJ – REJECTED.

22/00860/FM Demolition of existing buildings and construction of new buildings in connection with pig finishing provision and other associated works at Feltwell Farm Lodge Road Feltwell Thetford Norfolk – REJECTED.

24/02190/F 12 and 16 The Avenue, Brookville - Variation of Conditions 1 and 4 of Planning Permission 24/00302/F: Replacement of existing bungalow with chalet dwelling and detached garage/annexe at Land Between 12 And 16 The Avenue Brookville Norfolk – PERMITTED

It was stated - Any changes to builds should be as they are going along not after the building is done. Perhaps the planners need to do more to keep parish councils informed, think more carefully about retrospective planning. Chairman stated an interesting discussion about who is in charge in planning, it's easier to ask for forgiveness than permission but not when it comes to planning. Extremely unhappy that the basic premise of that build was ignored. Much fairer and equitable situation.

9.2 To receive planning applications – None.

9.3 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published – None.

9.4 Planning Appeal -

Land Rear of 27 Main Road Brookville Norfolk 4 super insulated, energy efficient houses built to Passivhaus standards, with landscaping, access, and parking. Appeal reference: APP/V2635/W/25/3361776 LPA reference: 24/00738/F

10. Items received for the agenda:

10.1 Cllr Minkler gave an update on the SAMS2 unit which has been sited in Brookville monitoring traffic, 26% of traffic were over the limit, this is down from the last time the sign was sited here, average speed of speeders is 46mph, this is down as well.

There was a question whether the SAMs sign was accurate, the data from the traffic count corresponds to the data on the SAMs unit, when the unit was at Cock Corner recording traffic from Brandon most of the traffic is going at between 35-40mph past the sign to the junction, although this is under the speed limit this is still fast especially as a junction. Up to 8am and after 6pm were the times most were doing these speeds.

Recently there was an accident at Cock Corner, the speed reduction during the day was noticeable due to this accident.

The sign is on Hythe Road a 30mph road, it has been here 3 days and the top speed registered here was 75mph, 70% were travelling above the limit and 30% below 30mph.

Community Speedwatch are back out on patrol again. The co-ordinator was asked by Northwold parish council to work with them to help set up Community Speedwatch in their parish, 2 sites have been authorised. No volunteers have come forwards and the Methwold Community Speedwatch team has been withdrawn. Cllr Ryves was asked to bring this up at the next Northwold PC meeting.

Meeting this week with Highways – confirmed an order has been placed for 8 roundels on the B1112 to remind drivers of the speed limit, once the roundels have been installed the SAMs unit will be sited at these places and the data compared. 2 new signs at the end of Brookville. It is thought speed will reduce once signs are installed but if not plan B will be put into action, but this could be some time away.

The recent traffic count has been completed, the B1112 daily average is 4,000 vehicles per day, when the count was undertaken is a quiet time of year, last summer the SAMs unit recorded 7,000 vehicles per day, this is a tourist route to the coast.

The Highways officer has said the SAMs unit data may be able to be used for projects, this is why we need to be sure the SAMs unit is accurate.

Out of the 4,000 vehicles, 134 HGV's or 3% if all goods vehicles over 7.5T are included this increase to 7% this is why the projected amount of 30 HGV's per day for the Cranswick site would be a massive increase.

The road strip was moved to the Cranwich Road, this recorded a total of 1200 vehicles per day, 28 of these were HGV's or 2.3%. The total cost for both surveys was £640.00 which is £360.00 under the allocated budget for this project. It is good to have a baseline survey. There will be a contribution from Cllr Ryves towards the cost of the surveys.

Cllr Ryves requested the report on HGV numbers. The Chairman thanked Cllr Minkler on all the effort he puts into reducing speeding and making the parish safer for us.

10.2 The Chairman gave an update on the recent meeting at the Town Hall in Kings Lynn on Devolution and the Local Government Reorganisation attended by the Chairman, Cllr O'Ware and the Clerk. We were there for some time and learnt very little because no one really knows but a possible plan is that Breckland Kings Lynn combines with part of North Norfolk and the same the other side of the county with Norwich on its own Unitary Authority, but nobody knows. What happens to parish councils? They could be wiped out and unitary does everything or PCs stay as they are bit with more responsibility, but nobody knows, also there would be an elected Mayor for East Anglian, open for discussion, public consultation ends on 13th April.

11. Correspondence –

Coram Beanstalk Charity – request for a few people who can be trained to become reading helps for a local school. If interested, please contact the Clerk who can take your details and forward them to the charity.

Footpath at Church View Methwold – this has been investigated by the Countryside Access Officer who has discussed the location of the footpath with the Developer, the diversion order was confirmed by the Planning inspectorate which shows part of the footpath is in the road.

Email received from the cabinet minister for Planning & Licensing regarding the increase to the cost of the dog waste bin emptying, apologising for the nature and timing of the recent notice of the revised dog & litter bin charges, we will do better in the future.

Recalculation of housing delivery test score for BCKLWN – confirmation 87% delivery of housing stock for 2023.

12. Chairman's Report – As of last Friday only 20 out of the 65 streetlights under the pc responsibility were left to be replaced with LEDs, generally the changeover has gone down well. Once completed the supplier will be contacted and the bills should reduce.

13. Further reports and items for the next meeting agenda – 8th May 2025

Recreation Ground – Quotes for the next phase of new equipment to Open Spaces in April

Cock Corner – 10-year period showing crashes at Cock Corner – 1 was serious – proposing commission of a survey to slow down traffic and make the junction safer. If a survey was done it is believed that the cost £6k could be recouped if it is proved alterations are required at this junction.

Can there be a sign at the entrance to Ventura Close, do not follow sat nav, 2 HGV's have been seen having to turn around in the close.

Footpath Trent VC and Ventura Close – path has been signed up but the repairs to the cracks have not been completed yet.

Footpath Church View – be helpful if there was a sign on the fence line to let those walking the path know there is a road ahead. A response will be sent to the Countryside Officer and a request for the bricks to be removed.

Cllr French proposed - May 8th 2025 is VE80 day, there will be a beacon lit in the village and other events which residents may wish to attend, would the parish council allow the meeting to start at 6pm to allow people to attend if they wish to, Cllr O'Ware seconded the motion – Approved.

14. 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:

The parish council have been approached to sell a piece of land to a private buyer, the council discussed this request.

Cllr O'Ware proposed that the parish council does not wish to sell land, Cllr Horton seconded the motion – Agreed

Meeting ended 9.05pm

DRAFT