

# METHWOLD

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Date: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Time: 7.00pm – 9.00pm

Place: Video conferencing

1. Welcome and receive apologies for absence The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting which is being held virtually this year due to the pandemic, thank you all for attending.

Meeting was attended by

6 members of the parish council

Cllr Ryves

8 members of the public

2. Due to the pandemic we were unable to hold a meeting last year. J Marriage proposed to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019, seconded by A Burbridge - APPROVED

To receive reports from

3. Jim Marriage, Chairman of the Parish Council, on the Council's year – This is a parish meeting and not a parish council meeting, thank you to all who are attending on Zoom this evening. The parish meeting is a requirement by law and is an opportunity for the parishioners, local groups to let everyone know what they are doing and what they can offer to the community.

Thank you also to those members of the public who are persisting with Zoom to attend the parish council meetings over the past 12 months.

Thanks also to the Methwold Community Support Group and those in the community who have helped supporting those who are isolating or have asked for help during the pandemic, there are too many to mention, Thank you very much.

Thank you to former Chairman David Thomas for your time as a parish councillor and as the Chairman, also thanks to Jean Margetts and Chris West for serving on the parish council.

There are currently 3 vacancies, anyone interested in becoming a parish councillor please contact the Clerk. It would be good to see some new faces on the council representing all ages in the community.

The parish council would like to have all Footpaths and rights of way registered on the Definitive Map before 2026, any that are not on the Definitive List by this time will be lost, if you have any information on Footpaths please contact the council so that records can be updated.

Apart from the Post Office, St George's Hall Complex has not been used since the start of the pandemic.

A new parish office door was installed at the beginning of the year.

Planning permission was recently obtained to have a new external door installed in the Fenton Room, this will improve access/exit and improve safety.

The parish council has received a request for toilets on the recreation ground, and for outdoor gym equipment, it is hoped that the Section 106 funding from the meadow development can be used towards this, funding will not be released to the parish council until at least 5 of the new dwellings are occupied.

An amendment to the Section 106 allows for improvements to the facilities on the rec. ad toilets are viewed by many as essential. A suggestion has been to add changing rooms to the proposed toilets, to be able to justify the expense of a new building we need local sports groups to register the need for these facilities on the rec, unless we can demonstrate this the parish council will have problems finding funding.

Architects have been approached to draw up plans and this is ongoing.

The parish council are not a planning authority, only a consultee, everyone is able to write to the Borough Council to give comments on all planning applications which can be found on the planning portal on the Borough Council's website.

The SAMs2 sign needs to have 2 volunteers to move and install these, due to Covid they have not been in use.

Community Speedwatch is no longer operational due to Covid, they are hoping to be back soon.

The parish council has been asked about a shop, and have looked at offering an area in the car park for a temporary building to be site for a community shop to be set up. A proper survey would be required to find out if a shop would be viable. The pandemic has made home delivery easier to use and there are local suppliers who will deliver to homes.

Received interest for a Developer who would like to develop the land behind the car park and Old Social Club. They would like to build up to 40 houses on this area but to do this would need to purchase a strip of land from the car park to allow this level of development, without this piece of land only 7 properties might be permitted to use the existing lane. The parish council feel that once we are able to meet again face to face, a public meeting will be held for the Developers to present full plans and proposal. No discussions have been held with the Developers.

Statement on Fly Tipping - The parish council have no remit for fly tipping, please report any fly tipping to the Borough Council or Highways.

Proposal to transfer the buildings at St George's Hall Complex to a Charitable Trust with the parish Council as Sole Trustees - The Borough Council have removed the discretionary rate relief on both buildings as from April 2021 St George's Hall = £3742.50 and the Old Social Club = £6861.25 Total £10603.75.

There have been discussions with Community Action Norfolk and Solicitors who have advised there are two options a. make the complex busier to be able to pay the rates or b. set up a Charitable Trust and transfer the buildings into the Trust, this would mean that the buildings are protected from sale as any funds would need to be used to ensure community buildings are provided for the parish and the parish council could apply for rate relief on both buildings which means the Trust could apply for grants for projects.

Questions received

Chairman asked why is our Precept so much higher than Northwold? - Methwold Parish consists of three villages, the parish covers one of the largest areas in Norfolk.

If the parish council agree to sell the strip of land to the Developers aren't we agreeing to more houses in the village, we already have problems with schools, doctors infrastructure is in need of investment, the village is already overcrowded. – The parish council intend to hold a public meeting so that residents have the opportunity to hear from the developer, and intend to go out to the whole village so that everyone has an opportunity to let their feeling be known.

The Chairman asked for a show of hands as to no further development – 10 In favour of further developments 0

4. Annual Bellringers Report to Parish Meeting - The global pandemic has certainly curtailed our ringing over the last year, when lockdown restrictions eased, we were able to ring alternate Church bells for our Services. Ringing while wearing face masks has presented challenges but meeting all Government guidelines and protocols has been paramount to protect everyone.

We were still able to ring in certain situations throughout the year:

During the weekly public celebration of the support for our amazing NHS staff at 8pm every Thursday, our Carillon Chimes were rung in support as only one ringer was needed. This evolved into a 'Name That Tune' competition which was widely enjoyed by ringers and our local community.

VJ Day Celebration – there was a National Appeal to celebrate the 75th Anniversary on Sat. 15th August. A public address was given in our Churchyard at 11.10am with everyone observing social distancing. The Tenor bell was rung 75 times followed by a Minute's Silence. The event was well supported by our Community.

One of our former ringers sadly passed away this year but we were able to ring four bells at his funeral in honour of his life.

The funeral of Sir Captain Tom Moore took place on Sat. 27th Feb. at 12 noon. One of our bells was rung 100 times at noon to commemorate and celebrate his life.

The sad passing of Prince Phillip initiated a National appeal to ring Church bells the day after the official announcement. Consequently, our No. 7 Bell was rung 99 times half muffled on Sat. 17th April. On the day of his funeral, a bell was tolled half muffled from 2.15 till 2.45pm.

During lockdown, all our ringers were keen to keep in regular contact so a WhatsApp group was formed along with traditional emailing. This has maintained strong links and all our group are keen to resume ringing when allowed.

Ringing on alternate bells can resume from 17th May and from 21st June all our bells should be able to ring, assuming the steps of the Roadmap to Recovery are not compromised.

Alan Burbridge Tower Captain April 2021

5. Methwold St. George's Church Annual Report to Parish Meeting, April 2021

The global pandemic has necessitated introducing strict measures to ensure that our Church Services can continue whilst protecting everyone entering our lovely church, regular Risk assessments of all areas are undertaken to monitor and update as necessary.

The use of chairs instead of pews inside our church meant that defined areas could be easily laid out so that social distancing could be met along with all the other necessary protocols. The main body of the church is used for Sunday Service and the North Aisle is segregated so it can be utilised for Morning Prayer every Thursday so enabling two separate Services each week. Given that many of our congregation are classed in the vulnerable category, stringent measures are employed at all times.

The Foodbank operating from our Porch has continued throughout the year even during lockdown. This essential service has been well supported by our Community.

During lockdown, the Church has been regularly checked, maintained and cleaned to ensure it is ready for reopening.

We are extremely grateful to all our volunteers who provide flower arrangements, undertake regular cleaning and keep a watchful eye on our lovely Church. It is much appreciated.

Alan Burbridge Church warden April 2021

Rosemary Gibson, Methwold Theatre Group – The Theatre Group is hoping to start up again soon on a Tuesday evening and we are hoping to run a production in November.

Rosemary Gibson, Methwold Sewing Group – we are a small group who haven't met this year, hoping to start again once restrictions are lifted, we are a small friendly group who meet once a fortnight on a Monday afternoon and welcome anyone who likes to sew.

Chris Stone – Methwold Community Action Group – This has been a really difficult 18 months for the Community. Most of the groups who are up and running have not been able to meet which is very frustrating. MCAG would like to arrange an AGM to elect a new Chair and are aiming for 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7.30pm in St George's Hall if restrictions allow.

Methwold in Bloom – Held a plant sale to boost funds, tubs have been moved to Petch Corner. The wild flower meadow has been resown, they hope to see lots of colour, thank you to all who have helped, a little help goes a long way.

Ladies Group –

T Doughty Youth Centre – based at the Icen Academy, we are in our 4<sup>th</sup> year and despite lengthy closures we are operating online, this year we have held a virtual bake off, art show, dog show, quiz, and the eternal youth group has run online.

We hope to reopen next month with a maximum of 15 young people in year group bubbles, once restrictions have lifted the capacity will increase to 50 young people.

If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer for the youth club please contact Tracey Doughty.

It is hoped a fete will be held on 1st August, this will be a community event and any volunteers are

Welcome to join us, otherwise come along on the day and have fun.

Comments from public

On Facebook there have been a lot of negative comments – it is hoped that those who complain and make comments will come along and join in with those who are working to get the community spirit – it is noted that those who complain didn't even come along to this meeting to say what they want from their village.

Thank you to the parish council for everything they do in the village, thank you to all who carry out the work long may they carry on.

The Chairman thanked all who attended and declared that this had been a positive meeting with a lot of supportive people, a trend that he hoped will continue.

Please attend the MCAg AGM on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

DRAFT