

Methwold Parish Council Meeting of the Parish Council
Thursday, 8th February 2024 at 7.30pm
21 Room, St George's Hall Complex, Methwold

Present

Councillors: Cllr M French (Chairman), Cllr A Grassick, Cllr B Horton, Cllr J O'Ware, Cllr F Riches, Cllr K Rodriguez, Cllr D Younge, Cllr J Rodwell

Cllr. M Storey

6 members of the public

Clerk

1. The Chairman, Cllr French, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2. Open Forum for Public Participation

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

Cllr Storey gave an update on the following:-

UK100 Network - In 2022 Norfolk County Council became a member of the UK100 Network. This network, comprised of elected councillors and leaders and supported by officers, is a UK-wide network of local leaders who have pledged to lead a rapid transformation to Net Zero ahead of the government's legal target.

Budget 2024/25 – NCC Budget meeting is on the 20th February 2024 at County Hall, all consultations are being considered and NCC are hoping to produce a balanced budget.

NCC is not one of the 14 councils across the country who are bankrupt, NCC is not one of them.

Broadland Innovation – Secretary of State visit to witness first hand technology being delivered and employed by Norfolk farmers, including a vertical farm.

As an aside, East Anglian farmers grow enough grain to bake over 5 billion loaves of bread every year.

All information can be found on the NCC website <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/>

A representative from the Cranswick Objection Group updated the meeting on the proposed planning on the old Methwold airfield for poultry and pig production.

Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council commissioned a report by Reading University to investigate the planning proposal in detail. The report for the poultry unit is available on the borough council planning portal and the pig report is expected to be released today.

[https://online.west-](https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RBZ32NIV05900)

[norfolk.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RBZ32NIV05900](https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RBZ32NIV05900)

The parish council were asked to read the reports and consider the long-term effect on the parishioners and the area. A copy of the report was handed to the Chairman who encouraged everyone in the parish to go online and read the report if they are able to. Chairman stated the decision whether the planning applications go ahead does not lie with the parish council. As a parish council are a statutory consultee, more effective for individuals to make their objections known to the Borough Council.

A resident asked if the comments from the Cranswick objection group also apply to the proposed poultry site in Brookville? It was stated that there are several developments going on around the parish that the cumulative effect is being looked at as well.

The road sweeper has been in the parish and swept the roads and it looks a lot better.

Light out at the end of the building – Trust matter

Can Peggy's Room lights be changed as it is too dark? – Trust matter

Community Speedwatch in Brookville, how are they getting on?

3. Apologies received and accepted from Cllr. A Ryves, Cllr. T Thomas, Cllr. R Scott and Cllr. S Liddle, apologies for absence were accepted.

4. Declarations of Interest (In accordance with S31 of the Localism Act 2011) and requests for dispensations. None

5. To accept the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 11th January 2024 as a true record of the meeting, proposed by Cllr. B Horton, seconded by Cllr. J O'Ware - ACCEPTED
Two abstentions due to not being present at the January 2024 meeting.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes not included on the agenda but for information only – None.

7. Finance

7.1 Accounts Update – Bank Reconciliation

Current Account total on 30th January 2024	£ 17,935.77
Tracker Account total on 30th January 2024	£ 29,958.59
Saver Account total on 30th January 2024 (Grants & Donations)	£ 68,907.99
Emergency Reserve Fund 30th January 2024	£ 25,386.71
Total	£142,189.06

7.2 Cllr. A Grassick proposed to approve the Income & Invoice List for payment, seconded by Cllr. B Horton – APPROVED

7.3 To approve the minutes of the Finance Meeting held on Monday 29th January 2024 held to approve the Precept requirement for 2024/25 – Cllr. F Riches proposed to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting, seconded by Cllr. J Rodwell – APPROVED - Two abstentions as members were not present at this meeting. Chairman signed and dated the minutes.

Precept Requirement for 2024/25 – The Precept for 2023/24 based on 576.3 Band D houses in Methwold Parish was £66,567.66, the amount paid by a Band D house in 2023/24 was approximately £121.28.

For 2024/25 the information received from KLWNBC is based on 597.4 band D houses.

A 5% increase will be required for 2024/25, this increases the Precept to £73,390.84 which equates to a total increase of £3494.80 for the parish. A Band D house will increase by approximately £5.85 per year or 49p per month.

8. Planning

8.1 To receive planning decisions

23/02023/LDE Land Between 12 And 16 The Avenue Brookville Norfolk - LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE APPLICATION FOR EXISTING; Lawful Demolition of No.14 The Avenue, Brookville. The site is an existing residential plot used as a private dwelling which benefits from planning approval for replacement dwelling. Not Lawful 5 January 2024 Delegated Decision

23/01600/F Wissington Sugar Factory College Road Wissington, Wereham Norfolk PE33 9QG - Sugar extraction debottlenecking process/equipment. Application Permitted 9 January 2024 Delegated Decision

23/01910/F Holly Tree House 2 Main Road Brookville Thetford Norfolk IP26 4RA - Reposition existing vehicle access from the northern boundary to the southern Application Permitted 10 January 2024 Delegated Decision

23/02034/F West Croft 27 Crown Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NR - Replace existing sash windows. Application Permitted 24 January 2024 Delegated Decision

24/00004/TREECA The Fallows 28A Old Feltwell Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PW - Two mature Rowan trees and 2 mature Acer trees at the end of garden, growing relatively close together. Height at 7m or more. Reduce to between 3.5 to 4.0m dependent upon final shape and the locations of specific branch unions. Tree Application - No objection 23 January 2024 Delegated Decision

8.2 To receive planning applications -

22/00785/NMA_1 NON-MATERIAL AMENDMENT TO APPLICATION 22/00785/F: Conversion of existing garage and single storey rear extension to dwelling. The Fallows 28A Old Feltwell Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PW – NO OBSERVATIONS

24/00101/F Single storey rear extension Lavender Cottage 38 Old Severalls Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QR – NO OBSERVATION

8.3 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published

24/00113/F Proposed replacement dwelling with garage, Keepers Cottage, Decoy Road, Southery, PE38 0PH – NO OBSERVATION

24/00151/PACU6 Notification for prior approval for change of use from commercial to residential Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA, 39 Stoke Road, Methwold, IP26 4PE – NO OBSERVATION

9. Items received for the agenda

9.1 Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan - Update given by Cllr. K. Rodriguez at the meeting, to Open Spaces. Understood this is for land owned by the parish council but would be good to encourage the village to participate. With the group to find out initiatives which may work.

9.2 Adult Gym Equipment presentation by Cllr. A Grassick, three companies have been approached for quotes. To be discussed in more detail Open Spaces, agenda item for March meeting.

9.3 Benches on the recreation ground, Cllr. F Riches

The picnic benches on the recreation ground need to be replaced, suggestion to have three replacement benches and one with disabled access. The concrete bases will need to be measured. To be discussed at Open spaces, agenda item for March meeting.

9.4 Bench on far side of recreation ground, the wooden bench at the far side of the recreation round is beyond economic repair, a replacement bench is required. Original plaque for Peggy Wallace to be reinstated on the new bench.

Suggest that all benches purchased are the same as the new recycled bench installed recently in Methwold Hythe. To be discussed at Open Spaces, agenda item for March meeting.

9.5 Memorial bench for Cllr. D Scott – site to be decided but thought that the backless bench by the church could be replaced with a bench. To be discussed at Open Spaces, agenda item for March meeting.

9.6 SAMs2 Update – Cllr. S Liddle was unable to attend the meeting, an update was read out by the Chairman.

Retrieved the SAM2 sign this morning at about 8:30am from Methwold Hythe where the speed limit is 30mph.

You'll see in the info below that the 85th percentile speed was 39.4mph - as a percentage of the speed limit, this is the highest I've seen across the sites I've monitored across the parish.

The sign will be going up in Brookville (northbound) in the next day or two (and I'll retrieve the bracket from the fallen pole at the same time).

Some highlights from the Methwold Hythe stats:

Sign was deployed from 13:00 on 11th Jan to 08:30 on 7th Feb.

Duration: 26 days and 19 hours (approx.)

Total vehicles captured: 11,104

Top speed was registered at 75mph (2.5x the speed limit!) on Saturday 27th Jan at 10:45am.

85th percentile speed: 39.4mph

Approximately 60-67% of vehicles exceeded the 30mph speed limit (the average for Tuesdays and Sundays was lower but this was skewed by the two periods of activity detailed below.

During the daytime, the number of vehicles was typically between 10 and 50, and fewer overnight.

However, there were a few unusual periods of activity:

21/01/2024 22:00-23:00 count: 561

21/01/2024 23:00-00:00 count: 248

22/01/2024 00:00-01:00 count: 0

22/01/2024 01:00-02:00 count: 99

23/01/2024 10:00-11:00 count: 74

23/01/2024 11:00-12:00 count: 207

23/01/2024 12:00-13:00 count: 293

The average speeds during both these periods was considerably lower (10-20mph) than the "regular" traffic patterns.

I don't know if these can be explained by a traffic diversion or nearby road closure, or some local event.

9.7 Approval to purchase new laptop – recommendation to be confirmed by Cllr. Liddle – defer to March meeting

9.8 Update and to consider approval to purchase Scribe account package – defer to March meeting

10. Correspondence

MHCCT – Support Funding – request for the balance of the support funding to be transferred, already agreed to £12,000, £6,000.00 has already been paid in this financial year, this is the balance, Cllr B Horton proposed the transfer is made, Cllr. D Younge seconded – APPROVED

Your Community Snapshot from the Police -

https://www.methwoldpc.info/_files/ugd/6f15b4_6b019c3d030c47cba084e52dd1ca5341.pdf

RAF War Memorial on Cock Corner – Quote received and passed to insurance company along with photos driver details. Cost to rebuild £1050.00 + VAT with £100.00 excess. Insurers have been asked to pursue driver for cost.

Chairman has a contact in the RAF who may rededicate the memorial once rebuilt.

11. Further reports and items for the next meeting agenda – 14th March 2024

Sign Ventura Close to stop drivers trying to access Trent VC Close, chasing Highways.

Anglian Water trenches – Brandon Road – have been marked up and scheduled for 12/2

Church View – scheduled but expect there to be a road closure.

Old Feltwell Road – Section 81 reported first almost three years ago, still chasing

12. Chairmans Statement – February 2024

Over the last few months, the Parish Council's processes have been totally vindicated from all the challenges raised by a number of Parishioners.

As I said in my last month's statement, now is the time to put this behind us, and concentrate on our core business, which is to improve life in our Parish.

You have heard this evening of a number of projects that we are progressing, but I am very aware, that the majority are in Methwold. Not a great surprise as Methwold is the biggest of our three villages.

As a Parish Council, we want to improve all three villages. To do this, we need suggestions from residents of all three.

Please will you all think about what you would like to see in your village, that you don't have at the moment. If it is within our gift then we will see what we can do. Please do contact me and let me know your ideas.

With rising costs, as discussed earlier in this meeting, the precept is having to be increased for the next financial year. As a Parish Council, we have shown shrewd fiscal management, and the rise of 5% represents for a Band D property 49p per month. To use the Mars Bar analogy That's half a Mars bar per month.

I would like to thank all the Parishioners for the support that you give to the Parish Council, it is greatly appreciated. As I said earlier, please do feel free to contact us with your ideas for Methwold Parish.

13. Exclusion of the Press and Public (Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 S1)

Proposed – Chairman, Cllr M French Seconded – Cllr F Riches

That by the virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during the discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

All in favour

Meeting ended 8.50pm