

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE 21 ROOM ST GEORGES COMPLEX
THURSDAY 8th MARCH 2018 at 7.30pm

Present: J Marriage – Chairman, D Thomas - Vice Chairman, D Charlesworth-Smith, S Stones, K Plumridge, S Burbridge, P Crawley, R Gibson, B Horton, C West.

Cllr. M Storey, Cllr. M Peake

6 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

A thank you was given to the Parish Council for offering the use of the Complex for the village celebrations on May 28th 2018. Organiser requested permission to go into The Pound to look at the old tables to see if these can be used for the celebration, Chairman asked the council who all agreed.

On the 10th April an Australian who flew Lancaster and Sterling planes from Methwold airfield will be visiting the Parish, He will be visiting the archive and the bell ringers will be putting on a peel of bells to mark this occasion, the Parish Council are welcome to attend.

The 100th Anniversary of the end of World War I will be marked with national celebrations, the village are looking to mark this anniversary, would it be possible for T Thomas to join the group and provide feedback to the Parish Council? In her absence D Thomas agreed on her behalf.

Cllr. Storey was asked about potholes in the Parish, the repairs that are being made are not lasting, large potholes at the entrance to The Avenue in Brookville were part filled but not completed. Cllr. Storey stated there is enough money but too many potholes. White Plot Road - mud has been reported to Highways on several occasions but there has been no improvement, Cllr. Storey will visit White Plot Road. Cllr. Storey has decided to allocate 30% of his £6k budget to The Trod (between Methwold and the Hythe) for work to benefit all those who use it. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Storey for this contribution, which will be discussed with Highways. Cllr. Storey will follow up on potholes.

1. To receive and consider accepting apologies for absence – R Hood, T Thomas.
2. Declaration of Interest - Councillors invited to declare any interest in any item on the agenda. B Horton declared an interest in item 5.4 Post Office.
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2018 as a true record of the meeting, proposed to accept D Charlesworth-Smith, Seconded by R Gibson – All agreed.
4. Matters arising from past minutes – B Horton was not present at the last meeting when the response from the Planning Officer regarding 1 Stoke Road was read out, the Chairman read this again. No response has been received from Lorne Green. Letter has been received in response from Spencer Farms, the Chairman and Clerk will reply.
5. Reports:
 - 5.1 Chairman's Report – Fire Alarms, emergency exits, fire doors and signage, an assessment has been carried out of the fire doors, the cost of the assessment should offset the cost of the consultants report, work is due to start next week. The new fire alarm system has been commissioned, there was one change to a switch which can be used when there are functions using smoke machines in the 21 room. A risk assessment, the signage and the emergency lights will be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

The Chairman was asked how the Parish Council surgeries are run, it is voluntary for parish councillors to attend and anyone is welcome, last Saturday there were 3 parish councillors and 3 members of the public attended. Dates for next Parish Council Surgery 7th April, 19th May, 30th June and 25th August 10-12 in the 21 Room.
 - 5.2 Clerk's Report – The Chairman asked Cllr. Storey what the Borough Council is doing about the new Data Protection Regulations which come into force on 25th May 2018?

5.3 Open Spaces Working Party on 22nd February 2018 and to consider recommendations made regarding: – Tree-to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Methwold being awarded the Market Charter the council would like to plant a tree on the green on Fair Hill, part of this event will be to have some of the primary schoolchildren to help plant the tree using an engraved trowel, the trowel could then go into the archive room. Open Spaces Coordinator has approached the school who are very keen to be involved, it was suggested an art completion possibly to draw St George & the dragon and 2 children from each class chosen to help plant the tree. The Parish Council have received an offer to donate a Rowan/Mountain Ash tree, require permission from the Parish Council to plant the tree on Fair Hill. B Horton requested permission from the Parish Council to plant the tree on Fair Hill and to run the completion at the primary school, seconded by R Gibson – All Approved.

Manhole covers – in the grass at the back of the old club there are several manhole covers which urgently need replacing, a large slab has had to be used to cover one of the bigger holes. S Burbridge proposed that all manhole covers are inspected and those which need to be replaced are done as a matter of urgency. D Charlesworth-Smith seconded – All Agreed.

Grass Mats-an alternative specification was sent out for quotes, to remove the original mats, concrete and replace with soil and grass mats, 3 quotes have been received and waiting for 2 more to be returned.

Speed and parking outside the primary school – this has been bought back to open spaces and the school has been asked if they would like to be involved in a campaign to reduce speed and improve the parking outside the primary school, it was suggested a completion for the children to design a sign which could be displayed in the gardens of the houses along the route to and from the primary school, the school and house holders along the routes who have been asked are keen to be involved with this – costs will be obtained for printing the boards.

Hall & General Purposes Working Party on 1st March 2018 and to consider recommendations made regarding: Post Office – It has been found that access to the toilets or to other rooms in the Complex has been given to members of the public through the Post Office, some hirers have found the toilets have been dirty even though they had been cleaned ready for the hire, this has been discussed in several Hall meetings. The Parish Council discussed this in detail; the Post Office should not allow access to the hall or toilets. The door to the corridor enables staff to use the toilet and the kitchen, at all other times it should be locked. There is concern that the security of the building and the Post Office is compromised if this is being allowed and this could negate our insurance. A notice was given to the Post Mistress to place on the door asking people to cooperate but this has not been displayed. The Parish Council are not trying to put the Post Mistress under any pressure but this is not a public toilet and access to the other parts of the building should not be through the Post Office. Members did not feel this unreasonable and support putting the notice in the Methwold Times.

There is no contract in place for the Post Office; all other hirers have a contract. It was felt that this needs to be rectified as soon as possible. The Parish Council have tried to help the Post Office by agreeing not to increase the hire charges. D Thomas proposed that a set of guidelines are in place for the Post Office to include a proper hire agreement and the notice placed in the Methwold Times. Seconded by C West - Agreed by 9 Councillors B Horton abstained. Concern was raised that the Post Office is not always open during the times stated which may cause people to go elsewhere. It was also stated that people have stopped using the Post Office because they cannot use the toilet facilities.

Hot Cabinet- the lunch club has been running for 3 months and are looking to purchase a hot cabinet which will be in the kitchen for any hirers to use. Through coffee mornings the lunch club raised the money to purchase the fridge which is now in the kitchen and can be used by hirers, the money raised for this was paid into the parish council funds and the VAT for the fridge has been reclaimed, the lunch club have asked if the Parish Council would be willing to donate the £ reclaimed VAT towards the cost of the hot cabinet? Members agreed to the proposal.

6. Finances

6.1 Accounts Update – Request made to find out how much would have been made from the solar panels so far? Dog waste bins the cost to empty these has increased by almost £100 this year, do we know which ones are used the most? No there is no information on this.

6.2 Approval of payments - D Charlesworth-Smith proposed approval of payments, seconded by C West All Agreed.

7. 7.1 To receive planning applications:
- 18/00245/F Alterations and extensions to dwelling, including removal of part of front bays and rear flat roof extension at 46 Hythe Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PS. The Parish Council discussed and thought this would be an improvement and voted to SUPPORT this application.
 - 18/00238/F To install 3 additional Liquid Nitrogen storage tanks. The tanks will need a dedicated plinth of suitable design, to take the additional loading. The tanks are 3100mm diameter and 12510mm high at Marlow Foods Quorn Foods Brandon Road Methwold Norfolk. The Parish Council discussed and voted to SUPPORT this application.
 - 18/00329/F Extend above the lounge to create a master bedroom at 4 Millgate Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NY The Parish Council discussed and voted to SUPPORT this application.
- 7.2 To receive planning decisions:
- APP/V2635/W/17/3179526 R&B Motors Brandon Road Methwold – Appeal has approved this planning application, this site is now up for sale.
 - 17/02283/F Chalk Cottage 10 Millgate Street Methwold Norfolk - Single and two storey extensions. Application Permitted 2 February 2018 Delegated Decision
 - 17/01651/RM Lime Kiln Farm 23 Whiteplot Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QP - RESERVED MATTERS: Residential development for four dwellings Non-determined Invalid now returned 23 February 2018
 - 18/00344/PACU2 The Old Chequers (Shop) 17 High Street Methwold Norfolk IP26 4NT - Change of use from office to shop Non-determined Invalid.
- 7.3 To consider any planning applications received after the agenda was produced: None
8. Items received for Agenda: None
9. Correspondence Email from the Methwold Times – invoicing to change from April to December to fall in line with their end of year. Letter received regarding the state of White Plot Road Methwold, this will be taken to the meeting with Highways.

OPEN FORUM

Thank you to the ladies who run the lunch club, the food is lovely.

The idea for the children to design some road signs for outside school is an excellent idea, resident has seen this having an effect in other areas.

Concern from a resident that the Post Office is not being security conscious.

Would the History Group consider purchasing and engraving the trowel used to plant the tree? Previous tree planted on Fair Hill caused opposition from some residents because views have been obstructed this should be considered. The choice of tree is not as dense and hopefully will be considered suitable, the railings which are around the Holme Oak on Cock Corner can be reused for this tree.

10. Any Further Reports - for information only

Request that the Parish Council reconsider CCTV to monitor vehicle movement in the village, this would need a lot of cameras, who would fund this, who would monitor the cameras, also will come under the new regulations regarding Data Protection coming into force in May 2018.

Councillors were asked to consider attending the GDPR course on 21st March to find out more about this new law and how will affect the Parish Council.

Elizabeth Truss MP hosted a meeting with the Secretary of State for Culture, Matt Hancock MP, on Friday 23 February at Weeting Village Hall to discuss broadband and mobile phone connectivity in South West Norfolk DT & DCS attended, Methwold is not the worse for internet access but it varies throughout the Parish. The meeting was supported by BT Openreach.

During the recent bad weather bin collection information was poor, Brookville was given black bin bags.

The streetlight in Trent VC Close has been on all day for some time, can the Clerk report this?

The battery in the Fenton Room clock need to be replaced.

S Burbridge attended a recent planning presentation, this included Neighbourhood Plans, if we had one in place it would give the Parish more control over planning, it supersedes the New Development Plan by the Borough Council and if in place would increase the CIL from 5% to 15-25%. To put a Neighbourhood Plan together would take a lot of time and effort but there is funding and support available to do this, and this will be investigated further.

The green room – although this is not for sole use of the Theatre Club they have offered to paint it if the Parish Council will provide the paint, it is thought that there is enough paint remaining from recent decorating to do this. Electricity cables at the top of The Avenue Brookville, the trees have overgrown and the cables are in the trees, these used to be cut down regularly UK Power are coming to so a tree survey and the Clerk has informed UK Power of this problem.

B Horton made her apologies and left the meeting.

There was a very unpleasant incident in the Parish Office today where 3 members of the council and the Clerk were subject to verbal abuse and harassment, future measures must be put in place to prevent this happening again. The Clerk will not be working in the Parish Office due to this incident. The Chairman is to look into what can be done and may take this matter further.

11. To pass a resolution to exclude members of the public – Japanese Knotweed in the Churchyard were requested for a programme to eradicate the JKW in the Churchyard– Quote A only gave a quote for 1 treatment therefore was not accepted. Quote B £2970 + VAT scheduled for 6 visits over 5 years Quote C £1519 + VAT scheduled for 4 visits In the reserves policy there has been an allocation of £4k put aside to treat the JKW. R Gibson proposed to accept Quote C, Seconded by P Crawley All Agreed.

Meeting finished at 9.41pm