

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 14th JANUARY 2021 at 7.00pm

Parish Councillors present: J Marriage – Chairman, R Gibson – Vice Chair, S Crump, P Crawley,
D Charlesworth-Smith, C West, D Scott, L Burge, B Horton, R Scott

Also in attendance: R Buckle (Parish Clerk)

Cllr A Ryves

Cllr M Storey

2 members of the public

The Chairman wished everyone a Happy New Year, welcomed all to the virtual meeting and thanked all for joining onscreen and on the telephone.

1. The parish council to receive and resolve to agree apologies for absence, all councillors were present.
2. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensations - None
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 10th 2020 C West proposed approval, D Charlesworth-Smith seconded – APPROVED S Burbridge abstained as not present at the last meeting.
4. Matters arising from the last minutes – None

5. Reports

Chairman apologised for not circulating a Chairs report.

Clerk's Report for December – The parish council have been informed that the 100% Discretionary Rate Relief which is applied to both St George's Hall and the old social club was incorrectly awarded and will stop in April 2021. The reason for this is that the Parish Council is a precepting authority and therefore does not qualify for rate relief. Small business rate relief cannot be applied for because the parish council owns the two buildings.

Rateable value of the old social club, as the alterations have been completed to this building and to ensure the correct rateable value is applied, the Valuations Office Agency were asked to revalue, they have carried out their assessment and have decided that no adjustment is required, the value remains the same and the parish council will be paying the full business rate for the two buildings. The Chairman proposed to write to Cllr B Long for advice and help on this matter.

5.1 No Open Spaces meeting in December – The Clerk emailed the Enforcement Officer from the Borough Council with the areas which were reported to have a dog fouling problem, he has since visited the parish and has reported that he hasn't identified any issues with dog fouling in the parish. Please can anyone who wishes to report dog fouling please use the online report form on the Borough Council website with as much evidence as possible, time, date, where found and (if you have it) photographic evidence. https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20094/animals_and_pests/751/dog_and_other_animal_fouling The Enforcement Officer has stated that he 'did find evidence of dog fouling on the byway leading on from The Avenue, but checks reveal this section not to be maintained at the public's expense.' Clerk to find out if there is a phone number to use if there is no access to the Borough Council website.

5.2 No Hall and General Purposes Working Party meeting in January 2021 – The oil ran out at St George’s Hall and we had to wait for a delivery, there was a problem with the boiler and had to call out the engineer, this seems to have been resolved.

6. Finance

6.1 Approval of payments list – the bank rec. and income and invoice list have been circulated to the parish council, the most recent CIL payment has been moved from the current account to the Grants and Donations Account. P Crawley proposed approval of payments, B Horton seconded - APPROVED

7. Planning

7.1 To receive planning decisions –

20/01572/F West Croft 27 Crown Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NR - Re-instate roof to existing outbuilding Application Permitted 15 December 2020 Delegated Decision

20/01277/F 15 Feltwell Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QJ - Construction of one dwelling Application Refused 16 December 2020 Delegated Decision

20/01846/F British Sugar PLC Wissington Sugar Factory College Road Wissington Wereham KINGS LYNN Norfolk PE33 9QG - Horizontal cylindrical tank 8.5m long by 3m diameter installed on the outside of an existing building on an open steel structure. Application Permitted 22 December 2020 Delegated Decision

20/01304/F Petch House 27 Hythe Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PS - Removal of section of concrete block boundary wall and infilling opening partly with facing brick wall and partly with a pair of 1.8m high solid timber gates Application Permitted 12 January 2021 Committee Decision

7.2 To receive planning applications - None

7.3 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published

20/01851/F Proposed 2 x agricultural dwellings Methwold Poultry Farm Brandon Road Methwold THETFORD Norfolk IP26 4RJ – Required for those working on the poultry unit, SUPPORT

21/00006/LB Listed building application for installation of an eaves gutter and two rainwater pipes to the west elevation The Old Vicarage 11 Crown Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NR – Required because dwelling is in the conservation area and materials need to comply with regulations - SUPPORT

8. Items received for agenda - None

9. Correspondence – circulated to the parish council. Email received regarding the mud on the road at Hythe Road and Herbert Drive, the Developer has said that the road sweeper is booked this week. There are roadworks/traffic lights further along Hythe Road, vehicles are cutting up the verge on the opposite side of the road when passing covering the road with mud.

Open Forum for Public Participation

Surprised to hear that there has been no evidence of dog fouling found, this has increased considerably during lockdown, the dog bins are very full, Clerk reported these should be emptied by the Borough Council every Wednesday morning.

Wastebin on the rec, when will this be reinstated? This will be done but despite having a concrete base it is regularly pushed over.

Grass verge by Lancaster Park Farm has been dug over, what is happening here? Chairman to investigate. Changes to the old social club, cannot believe that there is not a change to the rateable value, the Chairman stated that the rates are based on the structure of the building.

Dog fouling on Hall Farm field, Eldens Lane and Hythe Road has never been as bad as it is now.

St George’s Hall – when the plans for the parish office were submitted the application included several other changes – replacement windows in the Fenton Room, possibly to lower these, an extended boiler room to incorporate a tea room in the lobby so those using just the main hall have access to tea making

facilities, at the time of submitting the planning application these were included so the alterations were paid for once, this does not mean these will happen but they might in the future.

Public Footpaths – Who do we, the public contact with regard to the proposed removal of the kissing gates in the village? The village needs to fight to keep these kissing gates, what happens in the rest of the country, there are gates, walls and stiles everywhere, why are Methwold being told they can't keep their kissing gates? The Secretary of the OSSS has requested the kissing gates are removed to make all paths accessible to all.

Once the kissing gates are removed will the footpaths be made into paths which can be used by pushchairs, wheelchairs etc? It is the parish council's understanding that nothing will be done to the actual paths to make them accessible.

The Chairman explained that the kissing gates on the Rec. were installed in 1913 therefore predate the Order, evidence of this has been sent to the PROW Officer who has accepted this and will write these into the description, the OSSS would like the kissing gates to be removed until this has been completed then reinstate them, there would be a cost for this to the landowner.

Blackberry lane kissing gates, would these be gates have to be removed, this path is very narrow and could not be widened to accommodate anything other than pedestrians.

It is thought that the kissing gates on the meadow could remain in case the Owner should wish to graze animals on there in the future.

The Chairman asked if Councillors Ryves and Storey would get involved and would encourage the public to contact the PROW Officer and the OSSS to raise questions, this can be done via contact with the Public Rights of Way Officer at the Borough Council and the Secretary of the Open Spaces Society. Contact details can be obtained from the Clerk. Cllr Ryves requested clear instructions from the parish council to take this forwards.

10. Further items and reports

The Deed of Variation for the Meadow Development has been modified, this allows money in the Section 106 to be used for play equipment and the provision of toilets on the recreation ground. This will be taken to the next Open Spaces meeting on 28th January 2021.

There is a lot of litter around the village, especially along the Trod from Methwold to the Hythe.

On Thornham Road there is an amount of beer bottles which have been dumped and a noticeable amount of disposable masks are being discarded around the parish, please take your litter home with you and dispose of it in your bin.

The play equipment on the recreation ground needs to be cleaned it is green and mossy, this will be taken to the Open Spaces meeting.

Councillor reported that she had attended the second Police meeting in December, this was a repeat of the previous meeting attended.

The dog bin on the Main Road Brookville is wonky and the verge overgrown, the verge is the responsibility of Highways and the dog bin the parish council.

Parking vehicles outside the Old Chapel, this is a bus stop when will Highways re-mark this? Clerk to contact Highways.

There is increased litter in Ventura and Trent VC Close.

2 Police Officers visited a parish councillor at home to discuss speeding cars on The Avenue, The Police requested that any problems with vehicles using The Avenue are reported with a registration number, vehicle make, time and date to the Police on the 101 number, without this nothing can be investigated, please do not post on Facebook because the Police do not monitor this site.

It was reported that the current Restricted Byway signage is not clear, it might be possible for the parish council to fund a bigger more descriptive sign at the start of the track to inform those using the track of the Restricted Byway status. Clerk to speak to Highways.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm