

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 9th JULY at 11.00am

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

Also in attendance: R Buckle (Parish Clerk) Cllr A Ryves
5 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed all to the virtual meeting and thanked all for joining onscreen and on the telephone, including those who have put themselves forward for co-option to become parish councillors. A second Open Forum will be added to the agenda after item 9.

OPEN FORUM

Open Forum for Public Participation: an opportunity to hear from members of the public
Footpaths 9 & 10 have been cut albeit not very short, the metal fence around the building site still isn't where it's supposed to be. It is thought that it could be difficult to site this fence correctly until the Borough Council have approved the changes to the footpath, Clerk to follow up.
Petch corner, outside Brumble Barn, Cock Corner and various other areas of grass are the responsibility of the Borough Council to cut and these have been cut for the 3rd time this year. There is a big shrub near Brumble Barn which will be trimmed back by Methwold in Bloom because it is overhanging the path. It was reported that an awful lot of grass is reported as being left on the pavements, the Clerk will report this to the Borough Council who do not collect the grass trimmings due to the mowers they use.

It has been reported that people are using the play equipment on the recreation ground even though there are signs up to say it remains closed, the parish council would politely ask people not to do this. The Government eased lockdown rules on 4th July but the play equipment on the recreation ground remains closed until further notice; this is because the Government guidelines are very vague about 'regular' cleaning of equipment, our play equipment is not cleaned, we have spoken to our insurance company who will not cover unless the parish council have followed the Government Guidelines and have said the parish council cannot rely on signage alone, parish council are waiting for clarification from the Borough Council, and we are monitoring the situation, any changes will be on the Methwold Parish Council Facebook page. It is felt that the guidance has been targeted at commercial ventures where they have staff to supervise and clean the play areas. It was reported that Northwold have opened their play area. The Chairman asked resident to bear with us on this.

Cllr. Ryves gave an update on the Borough Council and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been a cost of £5 million with a £3million loss which has met by a short term gap from reserves. Refuse collections have been efficient and on time.

Vulnerable people have been very well supported; this includes the homeless in King Lynn.

Discretionary grants have been made to local businesses but if there are any more businesses which need help there is a scheme which may be able to help.

To see democracy online – go to Youtube WestNorfolkBC, there is a full meeting this afternoon which people can watch.

Recovery – going forwards it is important that local communities are self-sufficient it is time to support local business, would the parish council be willing to set up a meeting so that those interested could discuss the feasibility of a village shop?

The Chairman reminded the meeting that there was to have been a presentation from those who had set

up a community shop in Norfolk at the Annual Parish Meeting but this had been postponed due to COVID 19 outbreak. Currently it is not known when this presentation will be held, it may be possible to set up a Zoom meeting to have the presentation.

- 1 Co-Option procedure – Three candidates have put themselves forward for co-option to the parish council, there are currently four vacancies.
The parish council voted and Jean Margetts, Chris West and Denise Scott were accepted as parish councillors.
- 1.1 The Clerk emailed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form to the newly co-opted councillors to sign and show to the meeting, this enables them to take their place on the council immediately.
- 2 To receive apologies for absence – D Thomas.
- 3 To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensations - None
- 4 To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 11th June 2020 – D Charlesworth-Smith proposed to accept the minutes, R Gibson seconded - APPROVED
- 5 Matters arising from the last minutes –
- 6 Reports
- 6.1 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Open Spaces and to consider recommendations made at the meeting held on 25th June. - SAMs2 sign will be installed on 13th July in Brookville. Speedwatch – at present the group are not able to do this due to social distancing. If anyone is ok to social distance, then it may be possible with Norfolk Constabulary’s agreement. The Police were in the village yesterday.
- 6.2 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Hall and General Purposes Working Party and to consider recommendations made at the meeting held on 25th June – To discuss any updates regarding opening of play area and hall complex which remain closed until COVID-19 Government Guidelines and insurance requirements can be met. The Clerk is working through Risk Assessments for the Complex but at present it is not likely the Complex will be opening in the near future but this will be kept under review.
Electrical work in St George’s Hall will be discussed in item 11.
7. Finance
- 7.1 Accounts Update – Bank Reconciliation sent to all councillors before the meeting.
- 7.2 Approval of payments – Income & Invoice List – S Burbridge proposed – R Gibson seconded – APPROVED
- 7.3 To Request approval of Internal Audit – circulated to all. D Charlesworth-Smith proposed to accept, P Crawley seconded – APPROVED
- 7.4 Annual Governance Statement to be approved and signed by Chairman and Clerk – J Marriage proposed to approve, Seconded S Burbridge – APPROVED
- 7.5 Accounting Statement 2019/20 to be approved and signed by Chairman and Clerk – J Marriage proposed to approve, S Burbridge seconded – APPROVED
8. Planning
- 8.1 To receive planning decisions

20/00597/F Lancaster Park Farm Globe Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PQ -
Retrospective application for partial demolition of redundant outbuilding Application Permitted 23
June 2020 Delegated Decision

- 8.2 To receive planning applications
- 8.3 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published
20/00959/F Two storey extension to side & rear of dwelling at 14 Thornham Road Methwold
Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PH – The parish council voted to support this application.

Enforcement Notices – the parish council does not receive notification of these, but they can be found on the Borough Council planning portal <https://online.west-norfolk.gov.uk/online-applications/> and click on enforcements

Cllr Ryves is to follow up on those enforcements listed, some have been on the list for some time.

9. Correspondence – Clerk received an email re: speeding tractors in Globe Street, this has been reported to the farm concerned who have dealt with the problem, thank you.
A letter from a Borough Councillor has been circulated to the parish council regarding the sifting process used by the Borough Council when deciding planning applications, the way this is managed is being reviewed and the parish council was asked to give their opinion of the current system, the Chairman and S Burbridge have replied.
Cllr. Ryves stated that the sifting process is carried out by a select panel of Borough Councillors who decide whether an application is taken to full planning for consideration. A Neighbourhood Plan would be advantageous to the parish, there was also to have been a presentation from the Borough Council on Neighbourhood Plans at the APM but this was postponed due to COVID-19.

Open Forum

Can zoom meetings be advertised in the Methwold Times? Zoom meetings are being held on a Thursday the usual day and time for the full parish council meeting is the second Thursday of the month at 2.30pm but today's meeting has been changed to 11am because this meant more parish councillors were able to attend. The time and date can be posted in the Methwold Times but because this is circulated monthly there is no way to let people know if there is a change. If anyone would like to join the zoom meeting please contact the Clerk who will send the link via email.

Grass on Fair Hill, when will the bollards be installed? The farm has widened the entrance and it was hoped that the bollards would now not be necessary, the quotes we had are now out of date Clerk asked to obtain quotes.

Bins at the Drill Hall – has anything been done about these? Currently unable to find the detailed planning application, Cllr. Ryves has been unsuccessful in his search but it may be on microfilm.

Plastic factory in Bunting Lane – lorries using the lane are noisy especially when empty, does anyone know how many lorries are using the lane? Could an agreement be obtained with the factory for a timetable of vehicle movements? It is thought that there are up to 10 vehicle movements a day. Can a zoom meeting be arranged with the factory to discuss? Highways have no issues with the use of the lane or vehicle movements.

Wall Buntings Lane/Petch Corner has fallen over, it is unclear of this is due to vandalism or being hit by a lorry, St George's Management Committee are investigating.

Cllr. Ryves suggested people support local businesses especially The George.

Resident reported at last month's meeting weeds along the path outside Cllr. Ryves property, these have been pulled up but have been left on the pavement.

In the past 5 years attending the meetings the parish councils' opinions on planning applications have not been taken into consideration.

10. Further reports and items for the next meeting agenda (Thursday 13th August 2020)
Batchcroft Trust are short of a representative from the parish council, would anyone like to volunteer? P Crawley has volunteered to do this.
The Trod from Methwold to Methwold Hythe – was cleared last year and Cllr. Storey gave some of his budget for this work but it is overgrown again, it is never cleared wide enough and it doesn't help if tractors and lorries drive over the verge. The chance of obtaining funding to improve The Trod are extremely small, in the past enquiries have been made as to the cost to put in a pavement and lights but this was in excess of £75k.
Hedge in Brookville is overgrown and hanging over the grass on the Main Road, please can this be reported to Highways?
Mill Lane/The Avenue are a Restricted Byway but continues to be used as a cut through from Northwold by motorbikes, delivery vans and cars. Rubbish and garden waste is being dumped here and on the lane near the solar farm at the far end of Brookville.
Scotts Lane – it was assumed that the area around the seat and flower tub was managed by Highways but the grass and weeds are overgrown, the parish councilor has cut the area, the Chairman explained that this used to be cut by a resident but that person had since moved house.
The Auction opened on Monday, it was thought that two more posts in the car park had been knocked but it was explained that the posts are rotten and old, and it is probably due to age.
Also, a member of the public reported a white transit type van parking on the old club drive, even if the complex is closed this area is not a car park and vehicles should not be parked here. Notices to be printed and will be put on windscreens of vehicles parking here.
Can the Clerk ask the Northwold Clerk to request that Farmers trim down the edges of Mill Drove, it is impossible if walking to get out of the way of vehicles using this Restricted Byway.
Reported that the hedge here is being cut today.
11. 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:
Quote for electrical work in St George's Hall to obtain electrical certificate – the parish council decided that due to the current situation only the work required to obtain the electrical certificate should be completed, cost for this will be £2800 + VAT B Horton proposed, P Crawley seconded - APPROVED
Quote for tree trimming on Lower Green – quote for £624.55 + VAT was proposed by J Marriage, seconded by S Burbridge - APPROVED

Meeting closed at 12.55 pm