

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE FENTON ROOM ST GEORGE'S HALL COMPLEX
THURSDAY 13th JUNE 2019 at 7.30pm

Present: D Thomas –Chairman, J Marriage –Vice Chairman, P Crawley, D Charlesworth-Smith,
S Crump, K Plumridge, B Horton, S Burbridge, R Gibson
PC Sinnott
Cllr. Ryves
Cllr. Storey
6 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

OPEN FORUM

Old Methwold Chapel, there are no road markings for the bus stop although it is unknown if this would prevent anyone from parking there, Cllr. Ryves will ask Highways. Cllr. Storey stated that he has been unable to cut Footpath 10, this is because there is a combination lock on the fencing, he will contact the developer to ask for the code and cut the footpath next week.

Cllr. Ryves - an enforcement Officer has been appointed by the Borough Council to deal with litter and dog fouling, the officer will be patrolling the parishes and is able to impose on the spot fines.

A note of thanks was given to the 'tub fairies' who have done a splendid job of transforming the tubs around the parish and the area in front of the Post Office.

AGENDA

1. To receive and consider accepting apologies for absence-None
2. Declaration of Interest - Councillors invited to declare any interest in any item on the agenda – D Thomas declared an interest in item 5.2 Handyman.
- 2.1 To consider any dispensations - None
3. Declaration of Interest – Councillors invited to declare an interest in any item on the agenda-
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of 9th May 2019 as a true record of the meeting-D Charlesworth-Smith proposed approval of the minutes from 9th May meeting, S Burbridge seconded – APPROVED – D Thomas signed the minutes.
- 4.1 Matters arising from the minutes – The Avenue is overgrown on both sides did the Clerk find out who owns the hedges?
5. Reports
- 5.1 Update and Report from the Open Spaces Working Party to consider the recommendations made at the Open Spaces Working Party meeting held on 23rd May 2019 to include:
Grass cutting contract - request permission to include maintenance, spraying and hedge cutting to all outside areas at the Complex, Churchyard and Cemetery when obtaining quotes. It was agreed that quotes should have the option to include these areas in a new contract.
A quote has been obtained to tidy up and maintain the area around the Complex, a separate quote for the Churchyard and the Cemetery is on its way. J Marriage met with Contractor to discuss requirements.
Highways has finished the work on the Trod, a contribution from Cllr. Storeys fund has been used to complete this work.
Knotweed in the Churchyard – the contractor will be asked to deal with the knotweed which is growing through the wall in the Churchyard but it is thought that he has already done this.

5.2 Update and Report from the Hall and General Purposes Working Party to include consideration of the recommendations made at the Hall and General Purposes Working Party meeting held on 6th June 2019 to include:

Agree date for clearing items from club – Thursday 20th June – skip to be exchanged so there is somewhere to put rubbish.

Request permission to obtain quotes for partitioning of the cellar in the old social club to make lockable cleaning cupboard with sink and increase the area for storage – A quote will be obtained.

Request permission to have keys cut to make up full sets of keys for the board in the office, Clerk and Key Holder- so if required they can open all doors throughout the Complex – a full set of keys is required for the Key Holder, Clerk and a spare set in the office for emergencies – J Marriage proposed that any keys required to make up these sets are purchased, D Charlesworth -Smith seconded – APPROVED

Request permission for Zumba to have a key – this is the only weekly group not to have a key, K Plumridge proposed a key is given to Zumba, R Gibson seconded - APPROVED

Handyman list – permission to proceed with jobs which have been identified – Quotes have been obtained for the jobs identified throughout the Complex, all quotes were for the same rate £15 p/h.

J Marriage proposed to use the Cleaner as the Handyman to work through the jobs identified, B Horton seconded – APPROVED D Thomas abstained.

Quotes for chairs and tables – The council agreed that it would be good for all tables and chairs to be the same throughout the Complex especially as we are getting bookings for weddings and larger parties. Quotes will be obtained, money can be set aside in the Financial Reserves Policy to cover the cost, R Gibson will look for any grants which may help towards the cost.

Updated and quotes for dividing doors – this is quite a specialist item and despite speaking to several Companies no quotes have been received, investigating alternative type of dividing door.

Parish Office Door – planning permission has been passed, contractor quoted and hoping to commence work in July.

The windows in the Fenton Room and this end of the building are rotten and in need of attention, the Clerk will obtain two quotes to replace the windows - quote 1 to replace like for like and quote 2 to increase the depth of the windows to allow more light into the Fenton Room.

Social Club Driveway including costs full update by Chairman – Land Registry informed the parish council that the owners of 20 High Street had applied for a prescriptive easement on the driveway to the social club. A Solicitor was contacted and has sent a prospective agreement. this restricts the type and amount vehicles able to park outside number 20, the gabions are retained. Cost to date is £3500 + VAT and possibly an additional 5 hours to complete. The draft has been circulated to the parish council, there are 2 amendments to make.

6. Finance

6.1 Accounts Update – Bank reconciliation

6.2 Approval of payments – Income & Invoice List– K Plumridge proposed to approve the bank reconciliation and approval of payments, R Gibson seconded - APPROVED

6.3 Request approval for R Gibson to continue as Financial Internal Control Officer - S Burbridge proposed to approve, B Horton seconded - APPROVED

6.4 Request approval of updated Financial Reserves Policy – K Plumridge proposed to approve, S Burbridge seconded - APPROVED

6.5 Request approval of updated Budget 2019/20 S Burbridge proposed to approve, B Horton seconded - APPROVED

6.6 Request approval of Internal Audit – circulated to all. B Horton proposed to accept internal audit and recommendations contained within, P Crawley seconded - APPROVED

6.7 Annual Governance Statement to be approved and signed by Chairman and Clerk – B Horton proposed to approve, R Gibson seconded - APPROVED

6.8 Accounting Statement 2018/19 to be approved and signed by Chairman and Clerk – R Gibson proposed to approve, J Marriage seconded – APPROVED

Council commended the excellent job preparing for the Internal Audit and the very good work done over the year by the Clerk and R Gibson, thank you.

7. Planning

7.1 To receive planning decisions - None

7.2 To consider the following planning applications -

7.3 To consider any planning decisions and applications received after the agenda was produced
18/00994/F Construction of 4 dwellings following demolition of single dwelling at Fair View 8 Globe Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk – Methwold Parish Council have discussed 18/00994/F Construction of 4 dwellings following demolition of single dwelling at Fair View 8 Globe Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk, the only change to the original application seems to be that the houses are now in a line and not staggered, the parish councils original comments dated 20 June 2018 are still relevant but it was considered that the current dwelling is in a poor state, S Burbridge proposed to SUPPORT this application, K Plumridge seconded – all agreed.
The Heritage, Design and Access Statement states that Methwold has shops, the only shops in Methwold are a fish and chip shop, a hairdresser and a part time post office.

19/01027/CU Change of use of former aircraft hanger building to B8 storage and distribution at Methwold Beef Unit Brandon Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4RJ - The parish council discussed, this is a retrospective application. S Burbridge proposed to SUPPORT D Charlesworth-Smith seconded – all agreed.

8. Items received for Agenda

Co-option of parish councillors to fill the 4 vacant seats – Co-option notices are on the noticeboards, and more information is available on the parish council website www.methwoldpc.info or contact the Clerk by email methwoldpc@outlook.com

It is very disappointing that many people complain about the parish and what is happening here, this is your opportunity to become a member of the parish council to try and make a difference.

9. Correspondence which has not already been circulated

Complaint has been received against a member of the parish council. The Chairman, Vice Chair and Clerk have met with the councillor concerned to gain their understanding of the reported event. Whilst it was apparent that the council member had not acted on behalf of the council and therefore the complaint could not be handled under the council's complaints procedure, they were advised that the Code of Conduct expects councillors to act with integrity. It also became apparent that the matter had been passed to the police and that evidence obtained by the councillor has been handed to the police. The matter is now closed.

Vandalism – there have been reports of glass bottles being smashed on the play equipment on the rec. and under and around the skate board ramp on each occasion the glass has been cleared up only for it to be there again the next day, the police have been notified because this is classed as anti-social behaviour, PC Sinnott met with the Clerk, Chairman and Vice Chair to discuss several incidents recently and the advice is for these to be called into the 101 number to report.

Children have been making a camp by the big trees on the rec. this is fine but there is a lot of broken glass in this area.

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PC Sinnott Beat Manager for the area spoke and explained that if the police are not told of issues/incidents in the parish they won't divert resources to this area, please inform the police on 101 or report online, if it is an emergency, someone needs assistance or a crime is in progress then call 999.

Safer Neighbourhood Meetings – currently held in Downham Market but they are looking to hold closer and these will be publicised.

Heritage England was mentioned earlier during planning - as they are not objecting to the planning application 18/00994/F as discussed earlier, have they given up considering the development in the centre of the conservation area?

10. Any Further Reports and items for the next agenda-for information only
- Thank you to the fairies who have marked up the noticeboard at the Complex, hopefully this will be very useful to the parish to know what groups are using the Complex regularly.
 - The Avenue – recently a pony with a child was badly spooked by a motorbike, this was very distressing for all concerned, what is the legal status of the Avenue and lane, can this go on the website and Facebook page? Can the Borough Council be asked to put up signs to show the status? This lane is being used as a cut through to Northwold by vehicles and motorbikes. It is thought to be a Restricted Byway – public access along the entire route limited to non-motorised use but this will be confirmed.
 - It has been a long time since there was a review of what the village wants, Neighbourhood Plan to be discussed at the next Open Spaces meeting, it is costly, time consuming and plans for multiple developments have already been passed.
 - Overgrown hedges, leaves and debris from hedge on the pavement – along the footpath near Brook Lane, this can be reported on www.fixmystreet.com
 - Electrical items have been left outside on the pavement in Brookville.
 - A tree is overgrowing the footpath between the entrance of Ventura Close and the gas tank.
 - Vandals have damaged the noticeboard at Methwold Hythe, this is the 2nd time in a year that this has happened and the volunteer who has repaired it in the past is not prepared to repair it again.
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:
Discussion regarding chairs & tables – a quote has been obtained to replace 250 chairs and 20 round tables with transportation racks, it will be difficult to obtain other quotes because we have gone straight to the manufacturer to obtain a quote. Can suppliers be asked to bring samples for the council try? Round tables are considered to be better if replacing. There are no grants available at present but R Gibson will keep looking.
HR Committee met to interview an Assistant Clerk; the standard of the candidates was high and all were equally able to undertake the work required but one stood out because of her local knowledge. The contract is for 10 hours per week £9.39 per hour, this is taken from the NALC SCP salary rates. It will be a 6-month probation period, to start 1st July 2019. The parish council approved this post and the Clerk was instructed to offer the post to the candidate.

Meeting closed 9.15pm