

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 11th FEBRUARY 2021 at 7.00pm

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

Also in attendance: R Buckle (Parish Clerk)

Cllr A Ryves

Cllr M Storey

3 members of the public

The Chairman 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, Apologies received from D Charlesworth-Smith who has requested a temporary leave of absence for 5 months due to family matters – ACCEPTED

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 January 14th 2021 – S Burbridge proposed approval, C West seconded – APPROVED

4. Matters arising from the last minutes – None

5. Reports

5.1 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Open Spaces and to consider recommendations made at the meeting held on 28th January 2021 – No recommendations to full council.

5.2 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Hall Group and to consider recommendations made at the meeting held on 4th February 2021 -

a. Update on Rates for St George's Hall Complex - Recommendation to pay the rates and try to increase the usage of the complex. The Borough Council has confirmed that because the parish council own two buildings unable to claim Small Business Rate Relief and because we are a precepting Authority cannot apply for Discretionary Rate Relief. There are two options a)- Pay the rates and increase the use of the complex to cover the cost or b) to investigate a transfer to a Charitable Organisation with the parish council as the Sole Trustee, the decision will be deferred to a later date until the Chairman and the Clerk are to investigate further.

b. Shop proposal – The parish council understand that some might want a shop in the village and have looked at the proposal that was submitted for a commercial shop within the Fenton Room side of the building. Pre COVID- all areas within the complex were used and for the past two years the hire fees have covered the running costs with a small amount of profit going back into the facilities for refurbishment etc. It was not felt that the proposal justified a community building being used for a commercial business, and an alternative was offered - an area of the car park could be used (subject to planning etc) for a temporary building to set up a shop as either a community project or a commercial enterprise, this would allow the shop to be trialled to see if viable. Services would need to be installed to this structure.

A commercial shop or community ran shop proposal are two different options.

P Crawley proposed there should not be a shop within the building but to offer to lease an area of the car park approx. 40ft x 16ft footprint to any interested party coming forwards with a complete and costed proposal to site a village shop. D Scott seconded – Voted 8 to 2 in favour of the proposal.

c. Software to handle bookings/invoicing when the complex re-opens – JM proposed that a purpose built village hall booking system is investigated, approx. annual cost of £350 + VAT per annum, the parish council's own website will need to have the Complex rooms for hire and Mini Methwold added to it and before going live a 90 day trial can be undertaken free of charge to make sure it satisfies all requirements. S Burbridge seconded – APPROVED

6. Finance – All councillors have received the bank rec and income and invoice list.

6.1 Approval of payments list – S Burbridge proposed approval, C West seconded APPROVED

6.2 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Finance Committee and to consider recommendations made at the meeting held on 9th February 2021 – R Gibson proposed Appointment of internal Auditor is M Bergin, cost will be £36 of completed online or £75 if able to visit office. S Burbridge seconded – APPROVED,

Community Action Norfolk Membership Subs are due £50.00 J Marriage proposed to pay subscription, R Gibson seconded - APPROVED

7. Planning

7.1 To receive planning decisions

20/01931/F Wissington Sugar Factory College Road Wissington Wereham Norfolk PE33 9QG - Replacement of the existing bridge and foundations with a "Like for Like" new bridge. Application Permitted 4 February 2021 Delegated Decision

7.2 To receive planning applications

20/02009/F New build 3 bedroom chalet bungalow with parking for 3 to 4 cars Blencathra 47 Main Road Brookville Thetford Norfolk IP26 4RB

Methwold Parish Council have discussed and have voted to **OBJECT** to this application because

a. There are no main drains in Brookville, where will the foul water go?

b. The parish council are very concerned - this development abuts the up to the boundaries, and one corner of the proposed plan encroaches the neighbouring property.

c. Allowing development in a back garden would set a precedent for anyone with a garden to apply for planning permission to build.

21/00096/F Variation of conditions 9 and 10 of planning permission 17/01699/F to change material of windows at Petch House 27 Hythe Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PS - Methwold Parish Council have discussed and have voted to **OBJECT** to this application because the parish council understand this house is listed as a Designated Heritage Asset and the original character of the windows is wood, therefore replacement windows should continue to be wooden.

7.3 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published - None

8. Items received for agenda - None

9. Correspondence – Dog fouling the Enforcement Officer has visited the parish twice since December but has reported that he found no issues, he has been asked what he considers to be an issue considering the number of reports of dog fouling in the parish. Please pass on details of problem areas to the Clerk so these can be highlighted to the Borough Council for their next visit.

CIL Funding Applications – the Borough Council have a fund which is now open for councils to apply for new projects.

Open Forum for Public Participation

Older children/teenager gym equipment on the rec. who is funding this and will it be covered by the parish council insurance? Funding will be from the Section 106 for the Storeys Meadow Development and includes the provision for toilet facilities on the rec. but funding has not been received yet. The parish council's insurance will cover any new equipment on the rec.

How many have actually shown an interest in setting up a shop? Why doesn't someone set up a mobile shop instead, it would be easier and cost less to start up.

Cllr Ryves is to follow up on the proposal from the PROW Officer to remove the kissing gates from the footpaths around the parish. Input is required for anyone who has used the kissing gates in Blackberry Lane – Eldens Lane to Hythe Road to try and save them, please contact the Clerk with any information. There is a lot of mud being brought out from the development along Hythe Road, this is spreading along the road.

10. Further items and reports – the plastics company are offering a collection of hard plastics J Marriage to follow up.

Food wrappers have been found in the dog waste bin on the rec. we pay to have the dog waste emptied from these bins please do not fill them up with rubbish, use the proper bins.

Any sign of the electrician to complete the work at the Hall? Clerk is chasing.

Waste/rubbish bags piled up at the entrance to Scotts Lane, it is thought a turning point was to be incorporated into the plans to enable the refuse cart to access the houses along here, this has not happened, Cllr Ryves and R Scott to liaise to try and get this resolved, maybe an enforcement issue.

Police document regarding the provision of public toilets on the recreation ground has been circulated to the parish council, this has raised a number of issues/solutions.

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. Commercially sensitive information which was received after the agenda was posted was given to parish councillors, this was regarding the provisional interest shown by a Developer for a portion of St George's Hall car park. Currently the parish council are studying this information which will be brought to a full parish council meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.30pm