

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 11TH NOVEMBER 2021 at 7.00pm
21 ROOM, ST GEORGE'S HALL COMPLEX, METHWOLD

Parish Councillors present: J Marriage – Chairman, R Gibson – Vice Chair, D Scott, R Scott, P Crawley, P Andre

Also in attendance: R Buckle (Parish Clerk)

4 members of the public

Cllr Storey

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting

1. The parish council to receive and resolve to agree apologies for absence apologies received from D Charlesworth-Smith, I Cotterell, S Turner and P Crawley.

Concern was raised regarding attendance at meetings especially those who do not submit an apology.

2. To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda and consider any requests for dispensations - None.

3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 14th October 2021, D Scott proposed to accept the minutes, R Scott seconded - APPROVED

4. Matters arising from the October 14th 2021 minutes. The funds from MCAG have not been received yet.

5. Reports

5.1 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Open Spaces at the meeting held on the 28th October 2021 to include:

Tree planting for the Queens Platinum Jubilee – it was felt that a commemorative tree should be planted with a plaque to mark the occasion, the Wildflower meadow was suggested as a suitable site. The chairman opened the discussion to the public to find out what they felt. – Could the tree which was cut down on the perimeter of the recreation ground be replaced? Can Methwold Hythe and Brookville have a tree? To plant a tree in the church yard a faculty would be required and since there is now a good view of the church it was not felt any more trees are required in here.

This will be taken back to Open Spaces but if the public have any suggestions, please send these to the Clerk.

SAMs2/Community Speed Watch – there are reports of regular speeding through Brookville, with some overtaking on the bends past the school. The speed camera was seen parked in Brookville today.

The SAMs2 unit is currently not in use, as there are no volunteers to install and move this unit regularly.

The unit is heavy requiring two people to handle it into place, the batteries must be charged and changed regularly, and the unit sited in different locations every 4 weeks, it cannot return to the site for 8 weeks, there are 6 sites located around the parish.

Community Speedwatch is not in operation at present and needs volunteers to be able to start up again, a minimum of 6 people are needed to be able to operate 2 teams of 3 to run the sessions. If anyone would be interested in volunteering, please contact the Clerk.

There was no Hall meeting, having signed the Deed of Trust for the buildings the running of the halls now falls to the Sole Trustees, a meeting will be arranged.

Use of the Complex is slowly increasing but it would be good to be busier.

6. Finance

a. Bank Reconciliation circulated to all councillors, Although the accounts are healthy the additional expenditure on the rates for the buildings is causing concern.

b. Approval of payments – Income & Invoice List circulated to all councillors. R Gibson proposed approval of payments, P Andre seconded - APPROVED

c. The Chairman gave an overview of the Finance Meeting held on Tuesday 9th November 2021. Members will be given details of the Precept for the next meeting – 9th December.

7. Planning

7.1 To receive planning decisions

7.1 To receive planning applications

21/01987/F Variation of condition 4 of planning permission 19/00329/FM to enable accommodation of seasonal workers from 1st May to 31 December in any calendar year for the following 5 years starting from 2021 Agricultural Building at Duchy Farm Broad Drove Methwold Hythe Norfolk – NO OBSERVATIONS

21/01530/F Erection of a new single dwelling at Whitegates, Methwold Road, Methwold Hythe, Thetford, Norfolk. at Whitegates Methwold Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk – NO OBSERVATIONS

21/01870/F Change of use from residential to retail space with office and store above at 42 High Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NT – SUPPORT although concern raised regarding shop opening hours and parking.

7.2 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published

21/02101/F Loft conversion with new rooflights at 1 Thornham Road Methwold Thetford, Norfolk IP26 4PH – NO OBSERVATIONS.

8. Items received for the agenda

Batchcroft Trust – Volunteer required to sit on the Batchcroft Trust.

The Countryside Access Officer, Community and Environmental Services was in the parish today, the Chairman had a conversation with him regarding the Footpaths in the parish.

Questions were raised at the meeting as to why someone from outside the parish can complain about a closure or diversion to a footpath in the parish. Can the Countryside Access Officer be asked where the closure orders and the comments be found? Clerk to investigate.

9. Correspondence

It was reported at the last meeting that there had been 6 graves which have collapsed in the cemetery, this is thought to be due to the age of the graves and the recent weather conditions, the Grave Digger was asked to fill the graves and to use topsoil and put grass seed down, this has been done. One of the graves has had artificial grass installed, this does not comply with the Cemetery Rules and the family have been asked to remove the artificial grass. The graves which have been left after being topped up and re seeded are already sprouting new grass. The Clerk has been asked to find out a cost to lay turf on the grave instead of the artificial grass.

Safer Neighbourhood Meetings in 2022 - 31st January 2022, 13 April 2022, 20 July 2022 & 19 September 2022

10. Open Forum for Public Participation

An opportunity to hear from members of the public, Borough and County Councillors

Streetlight on Eldens Lane is on and off all night, please can this be attended to?

Cllr Storey reported the signage which will be enforceable for the Bus Stop outside The Old Chapel should be installed around Christmas. Highways will be asked to inform the Clerk when it is installed so it can be photographed in situ.

The additional yellow roundalls have been installed in Eldens Lane to depict the footpath route.

Footpath closure - due to the objection raised by someone which does not live in the parish closing Footpath 9. Following the chairman's meeting with the Countryside Access Officer (see above) it is understood that, due to an objection the diversion of footpath 9 is currently with the Secretary of State for approval. In respect of footpath 7 which lacks a footbridge, Countryside Access Officer has measured the gap. The width may require a substantial bridge rather than the normal plank bridges as used across the county, consequently there could be a considerable cost involved. Resident asked why doesn't the BC/NCC

spend money on cleaning the streets and fixing potholes in the parish rather than wasting money on putting in bridges on footpaths which have not been used for years. There are several incidences recently where someone who doesn't live in the parish has objected to a closure to a footpath, this is happening elsewhere outside the parish as well; it is thought to be the Open Spaces Society who are making the objections.

There needs to be a sign outside the kitchen door in the Fenton Room end of the building, cars were parking outside the door at the weekend and it is a fire exit.

The Craft Fair was successful, thank you to all those who donated a prize for the tombola, if anyone would like to make donation towards the tombola for the next Craft Fair on the 28th November please contact the organiser D Scott.

The Chairman thanked the organisers for putting the craft fair on and hopes more people will support this event.

A resident asked why the Borough Councillor had not attended the last 2 or 3 meetings, he is an elected representative of Methwold Parish yet does nothing for the villages, the Chairman is to email the Borough Councillor.

11. Further reports and any items for the next meeting agenda – Thursday 9th December 2021

The next Craft Fair is to be on Sunday 28th November from 10am until 2pm in St George's Hall, we are grateful for any tombola prizes that people would like to donate.

Cllr Storey gave a contact in the rates office, but unable to contact them.

The wildflower meadow has now been cut and raked, reported as looking good.

12. 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:

The council discussed the councils Finances and proposals for the next Finance meeting due to be held in November.

Meeting ended at 9.10pm