

MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING HELD
THURSDAY 9th DECEMBER 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, I Cotterell, B Horton

Also in attendance: R Buckle (Parish Clerk)

5 members of the public

Cllr Storey

Cllr Ryves

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, P Andre, S Turner. Apologies accepted - The Chairman wished P Andre a speedy recovery.
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 11th November 2021, R Scott proposed to accept the minutes, D Scott seconded – APPROVED B Horton and P Crawley abstained.
4. Matters arising from the November 11th 2021 minutes - None
5. Reports
 - 5.1 Update and report from the virtual meeting of Open Spaces at the meeting held on the 25th November 2021 to include:
 - a. Cemetery Signs – D Scott proposed approval to purchase two signs cost £100, Seconded by P Crawley – APPROVED
 - b. Artificial Grass on grave – The family have been asked to remove the artificial grass but are unwilling to do this. (i). Artificial grass is not permitted in the Cemetery, (ii). It may cause a health & safety problem when the machinery is used, iii. had it not been laid the grass seed would have had a chance to grow, the other graves which were topped up and reseeded at the same time have sprouted new grass.

The option to re-turf is not considered viable the cost would be approx.£120, and it would need to be looked after to prevent it dying. The council appreciate the request to remove the artificial grass may cause bad feeling, but the parish council believes the only option is for it to be removed. I Cotterell proposed a letter is sent to the family and the artificial grass is removed, R Scott seconded – APPROVED
 - c. Trees to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee 2022 – the parish council are in favour of planting trees and agreed to plant one tree in each village in the parish.

Methwold – in the wildflower meadow
Methwold Hythe – Common Land
Brookville – still trying to identify a site, Clerk asked to contact Highways to find out if the grass area at the start of The Avenue would be suitable. Unless anyone has another suggestion?
6. Finance – Bank reconciliation and the Income and Invoice lists have been circulated to council.
 - a. Accounts Update – Bank Reconciliation
 - b. Approval of payments – Income & Invoice List – B Horton proposed to approve payments, D Scott seconded - APPROVED
 - c. Update and report from the Finance Meeting held on Tuesday 25th November 2021

i. Update regarding the rates paid in 2021/22 – P Andre has been investigating the situation with the rates and Covid grants, as PA did not attend the meeting an email was read out. The parish council agreed that a letter should be drafted and sent to the Borough Council and to Liz Truss MP.

7. Planning

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7.1 To receive planning decisions

21/01870/F42 High Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4NT Change of use from residential to retail space with office and store above. Approved 6th December 2021

7.2 To receive planning applications

21/02111/F Swimming pool cover and associated rooms, enlargement of the pool in length, application has been approved for a smaller version - 14/01193/F 11 Old Feltwell Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PW - SUPPORT

21/01560/F Retrospective change of use of land to use as aqua-landscaping contractors and construction of pond at 1 Warren Cottage Brandon Road Methwold Thetford Norfolk - SUPPORT

21/01820/F 2 Storey Rear Extension at 14A Old Severalls Road Methwold Hythe Thetford Norfolk IP26 4QR – NO OBSERVATIONS

7.3 To consider planning applications received after the agenda was published

21/02281/F Replacement of bungalow with chalet dwelling as Essenjay 14 The Avenue Brookville Thetford Norfolk - SUPPORT

8. Items received for the agenda

a. Ashwood Bond Development presentation on 15th November – The Chairman addressed the meeting, he wanted to make it abundantly clear that despite the factually incorrect posts on Facebook, the parish council have had no discussions with Ashwood Bond Developments Ltd apart from asking for plans to be able to hold a public meeting for them to present their proposal, this meeting could not be arranged until the sketch and information was available.

At the meeting the mood was clear that those attending were against any further development in the village and that the road junction was of real concern.

i. Update from Ashwood Bond Development Ltd to questions asked at meeting -

Traffic survey on High Street and the proposed junction was requested but this was not available at this meeting.

Proposed mix of housing on the site, for both the 7 dwellings and the 35+ dwellings – unknown at present
Community Unit – this would be built by the parish council from funds received from the sale of the strip of land.

Construction Management Plan – this can be implemented as part of the planning process.

ii. Methwold Parish Council to discuss update and agree next step- The proposers came to the meeting very unprepared; they did not have the documentation and the technical reports to back up their responses and were unable to give clear replies to the questions asked.

The Chairman read out a letter which if approved he proposed to send to the Developers which explained that until such time that they have all the information and are able to give full answers, the parish council have no further interest and are unwilling to spend any more time discussing their proposal. JM proposed to send this letter, R Scott seconded – APPROVED by all members attending.

9. Correspondence

CIL Infrastructure Funding – this has been circulated to all members, the start date for applications is 1st January 2022 ending 1st February 2022

Norfolk County Council Budget Consultation – circulated to all.

Streetscene Inspectors will be in the Parish in January 2022 - key concerns they want to know about potholes, mud on road and standing water/flooding. Councillors to send any items to the Clerk.

10. Open Forum for Public Participation

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

On discussing traffic reports – have the Developers been to the village on a Monday when the auction traffic is parked everywhere? Last week on Tuesday a low loader went through the village, the whole vehicle was as long as the pub.

Integrity of the council – I have been attending council meetings for over 50 years and have never encountered a council as honest as this one, those people who sit on their computers impugning the members integrity should hang their heads in shame.

When will the noticeboard be installed on the rec? It is hoped this will be done soon.

Glass bank – there is a lot of broken glass around the glass bank on the ground.

Fly tipping – Hythe Road – on the edge of the road by the hedge, can this be reported.

Trod to the Hythe – in a really bad condition.

Platinum Jubilee – when will the trees be planted? Now is the best time to do this when the trees are dormant, advice is to be taken as to the variety and type of tree and permission to be sought for the areas not owned by the parish council.

Update on the sign for the bus stop outside The Old Chapel – this has been ordered and is expected to be fitted soon. Cllr Ryves was asked if he could chase up with the Enforcement Team about the scaffolding, it is in a conservation area, something must be able to be done to get this removed. Cllr Storey stated that he had been told this was in hand.

Cllr Ryves has a fund of approx. £1000 to spend in the parish, he was asked for an update as to what project this would be spent on?

Are the railings still in place in front of the Old Chapel?

Over the last 2-3 weeks there has been activity across the meadow with regards installing a footbridge over the ditch to allow the footpath to be used, there has not been a crossing here for many, many years. This is going to cost a significant amount, money which would be better spent on the potholes and cleaning up areas of the parish, we need the Borough Councillor and the County Councillor to fight this, it is ridiculous to spend money on a footbridge which is not required just to see if the footpath is used.

11. Further reports and items for the next meeting agenda – Thursday 13th January 2022

Chairman informed that he will not be standing as Chair in May.

Can the council revert to virtual meetings? At present the powers to hold the main meeting ceased in May 2021, until such time this is reviewed we have to continue with face to face meetings.

Stoke Road streetlight is covered with ivy, it is thought the sensor is covered therefore the light is on all the time.

The Chairman wished everyone a very Happy Christmas.

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 cleaner terminated the cleaning contract with immediate effect. The complex is not very busy at present, a longer-term solution will be discussed by the Sole Trustees for the Charitable Trust when they meet.

Meeting ended at 20.40pm