

**MINUTES OF METHWOLD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL**  
**THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

Present: Mr J. Marriage Chairman, Mr R Hood, Mr P. Ashman, Mrs D. Charlesworth Smith, Mrs T Thomas, Ms S Stones, Mrs K Plumridge. Mrs R Gibson, Mrs S Ramsey, Mr B Welland, Mr D Thomas,  
8 members of the public  
PCSO Law  
Sgt Hemeter  
Mr Marriage welcomed all to the meeting

**OPEN FORUM**

To explain Sgt Hemeter's attendance, the Chairman advised that an incident was reported to the Clerk where youths were up on St George's roof smashing glass or roof tiles onto the car park. This incident was reported to Police by the Clerk on the 101 number and received an incident number. Another Parish Councillor went to the car park to check for any damage, no damage was done to property and the youths had disappeared.

As this incident was not shown on the following week's crime report from Norfolk Police, the Clerk updated the Parish Council as to what had happened. A member of the Parish Council made the decision to write to the Chief Constable to express a 'concern' or 'complaint'. The Clerk has since received telephone calls from Norfolk Police Call Centre Manager, PCSO Law, Inspector Cant and the Temporary Chief Superintendent. The Clerk has also received an email from the Parish Councillor forwarding a response from the Police.

The Parish Councillor who contacted the Police had not brought the matter to the attention of full council, it had not been discussed and agreed by full council that any 'concern' or 'complaint' would be made to the Police and that no emails sent to the Chief Constable or Police from the Councillor have been seen by the Parish Council.

The Chairman stated that he felt the Police did a good job with limited resources and that the Clerk and Parish Council have a good working relationship with PCSO Law and if there had been a complaint made it was not with the agreement of the full Parish Council.

PCSO Law gave a crime summary for the period August to October-burglary non dwelling 4, criminal damage 3, fraud and forgery, theft from a motor vehicle 6, individuals have been charged. Violence against a person 4, 38 CADs were phoned in including the above and including alarms, safety and road traffic collisions. Anti social behaviour 3 CAD's, this is down by 25% yr on yr for crimes reported to the Police.

The Police do not have access to Facebook so please call 101 rather than post on Facebook, emails can be sent to the smt mailbox.

Methwold already has a marker, this means that any incident of ASB reported to Police triggers action and officers have to respond even if the PCSO is not on duty. If possible the Police will need names and addresses to be able to investigate and get the appropriate agencies involved.

Mr Hood asked why the theft of the railings at the beginning of the year weren't on the Crime Report despite having a crime number. Sgt Hemeter replied that this could have been due to human error and details have to be non-specific so names and actual addresses have to be left off the Crime Report.

A member of the public commented on motor bikes going up and down the High Street between 9pm and 4am at speed skidding with girls on the back no helmets, they have tried to call 101 on several occasions but have given up because the call is not answered, it's too late to email. Sgt Hemeter recommended that for this sort of incident to call 999 and the Police will decide on which level of response the call warrants. This will also depend on resources available at the time. It was asked if CCTV could be used and could this be extended to take photos of people? PCSO Law will get the Police Officer who deals with CCTV to contact the Clerk to arrange a meeting to discuss what is available and permitted.

It was noted that in the past two weeks the Police have been seen more often around the village.

Sgt Hemeter explained that PCSO Law will attend future Parish Council meetings if she is on duty and able to.

A member of the public asked if the gate to St George's Hall car park can be closed to stop the motorbikes riding round and around, especially when there are functions in the Social Club? To be able to do this the Parish Council would need to organise the closure of the gate.

Another member of the public asked in respect of the 'concern' 'complaint' made to the Chief Constable by a member of the parish council, is it acceptable that they have done this and if the Parish Council have not seen the email/letter is this acceptable?

If the correspondence had implicated the Parish Council in a complaint against the police then this would be a breach of the 'Code of Conduct' and there is a process to be followed to deal with this. At present there is no evidence to show what was said to the Chief Constable; the Clerk will ask to see the email/letter.

A member of the Parish has emailed the Clerk regarding Storey's Meadow, they also contacted Councillor Storey on 29/09 Cllr Storey explained that this went into his County mailbox and he wasn't able to access this until recently due to computer difficulties, Cllr Storey has since been to speak to the Parishioner and has apologised for not responding sooner.

1. To receive and consider accepting apologies for absence - Mrs B. Horton, Mr P. Crawley
2. Declaration of Interest - Councillors invited to declare any interest in any item on the agenda - none
3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015, Minutes were proposed by Mr Ashman seconded by Mrs Thomas – agreed.
4. Matters arising from past minutes – Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked that the name of the person who wrote the letter regarding the moles Mrs O'Ware is shown on the minutes, this was agreed and will be changed.

5. Reports:

5.1 Chairman's Report:-

Following the council meeting on 10th September I have been unable to attend either the Open Spaces or Hall and General Purposes Meeting.

- I am in correspondence with Nick Hancox (solicitor) to clarify aspects of the registration of Humble Pit and I am currently seeking to clarify some points from his reply
- I have received a significant number of emails regarding an incident at the village hall which occurred in the early evening of 19th September. I drove up to the Hall and noted a lot of broken glass etc. In total I saw 5 youths all of whom seemed to be congregating at the back of the Social Club. Subsequently I received a proposal that the village hall car park gate should be locked.
- Brian Nixon (who I believe is away this coming weekend) has told me that the skip in the Rec car park is filling up but is also beginning to smell. He suggests that it should be removed once the clocks have changed [25th October].
- I also inspected the work in the kitchen whilst it was ongoing and answered a couple of queries. All appeared satisfactory.
- I have received a comment concerning the hoardings in front of the chapel and also questions over the ownership of the two footpaths from the recreation ground out to Globe Street. I have asked the Clerk to contact NCC Highways with regard to the hoardings and I am currently investigating the matter of the two footpaths.

5.2 Clerk's Report:-

- Fair Hill Seats – Contacted by a 5th person with regard to having a seat on Fair Hill in memory of a family member if the Parish Council decide to place any more seats in the future.
- Seb Chaplain Memorial Seat-have discussed requirements with seat supplier to ensure this seat will be the same as the ones purchased for Fair Hill and given Memorial Group the contact details of the seat supplier so they can order and pay for seat themselves.
- St George's Hall – Gable end roof – I have been given the name of a roofing contractor and will contact them and ask them to come out and investigate what needs to be done to the roof. Once I have this information I will need a spec to get 3 quotes.
- Kitchen- work started 21st September.
- 19th September-received phone call from member of the public who was concerned that there were youths on the roof at St Georges throwing glass into the car park, I reported this to Police on 101 number – Incident number 386.

- Discussions with Police & PCSO
  - Highways – reported the following items:- Loose chippings on the road through Methwold after the road has been resurfaced, the footpath which runs from Methwold to Brookville is overgrown with weeds and needs to be cleared so people can use it, the trod between Methwold and Methwold Hythe is needs cutting and cleaning so the kids walking to school walk on the path and not the road, Feltwell Road edges are crumbling in places, footpaths and roads around Methwold Hythe need to be cleaned. At the junction at Cock Corner coming from Cranwich into Methwold, the hedge on the left is really overgrown and obstructs the view.
  - Brookville-white gates - asked Highways when these will be fitted, phone conversation with A Wallace now waiting for update.
  - Bylaws-the Parish Council should hold a record of these on file but they are proving difficult to find, have contacted KLWNBC to ask Information Officer at Legal Services if he has a copy, when I have copies they will be kept on file for future use.
  - Contacted Insurance Company to check that Wicksteed are suitably qualified to carry out the annual play area inspections, waiting for response.
  - Updated information for publication in the Methwold Directory for 2015/2016
  - Training-booked onto budgeting course in October and annual conference in November
  - Emailed Scamps to ask for permission to dispose of small tables in old waiting room, this permission has been given.
  - Meeting with Chairman and Vice Chairman to discuss agenda items.
  - Preparation for Finance and Parish Council meetings.
  - Hall emails and admin up to date, Cemetery admin up to date, minutes completed for PC, OS and Hall meetings.
- 5.3 To accept the Report from the Open Spaces Working Party held on 24.09.15 and to consider recommendations made: Flyer in the Methwold Times, the Clerk asked if it would be possible to put a flyer in the Times to remind people about the Byelaws regarding dogs on the Rec and Cemetery, this is not possible, we can have a double page centre spread instead, Mr Ashman proposed to accept Mrs Ramsey seconded. Clerk to discuss with Methwold Times.  
Noticeboard – outside the Post Office, once refurbished it is moved to the side of the post box this will make putting up notices easier and hopefully more people will see it. Proposed Mr Welland seconded by Mrs Ramsey.
- 5.4 To accept the Report from the Hall and General Purposes Working Party held on 1.10.15 and to consider recommendations made: – Kitchen, at present the kitchen is undergoing refurbishment, the previous Council decided that some cupboards would not have doors on them to allow anyone hiring the kitchen to use the cupboards as shelving, it also makes it easier to clear and wipe down after hire.  
There has also been a problem in the past where the doors have been locked by the various groups who have used them for storage, this has been overcome as each group now has allocated storage and stillages. The working group propose that all cupboards have doors, this would be possible but means an additional cost which is not known at present. The original grant was for £8200 and the council have £3000 to put towards the refurbishment, if all the money is not used any remaining money have to be repaid so there is money available for doors. The extractor fan and parish council crockery are being discussed by the group. A proposal was made that if doors are put on regular users of the kitchen cannot put items in them, they have to use the storage and stillages already provided, this was proposed by Mrs Thomas and seconded by Mrs Gibson, the council voted 5 for and 5 against putting doors on the cupboards. The Chairman used his vote. This will be reassessed in 6 months' time.  
Anti-vandal paint-It is understood that there is some anti vandal paint in The Pound, if it is ok it will be used on the back of St George's Hall, notices will be required to inform people that the paint has been used-Mr Marriage already has these, proposed by Mr Thomas seconded by Mr Ashman – All in favour. Meeting was suspended for a member of the public to speak-the anti-vandal paint can only be used 2m from the ground.
- 5.5 To accept the Report from the Finance Committee held on 27.2015 and to consider recommendations made: The Clerk has received an invitation to renew the contract for electricity to St George's Hall from EON, currently approx. £800 per year on fixed rate there is a small increase but still cheaper than the variable rate approx. £1200 per year. Proposed by Mr Ashman seconded by Mrs Plumridge. All agreed to renew the contract.  
Grants group-no feedback on funding for 3 x flashing speed signs, the group proposed to increase the number in the Grants group, Mrs Gibson has agreed to join the group. Mr Marriage proposed that Mrs Gibson joined the grants group Mr Ashman seconded. All agreed.

Financial Regulations 2014 – we are still working to 2012 Fin Regs, the Finance Group have had copies of the 2014 Regs, the chief difference is in contracts and services and the limit on quotes. At present if a quote/estimate is above £1k the council needs to obtain 3 quotes/estimates below £1k the council must make it's best endeavour to obtain 3 but can make a decision, the council already found it very difficult to obtain quotes/estimates. 2014 raises the limit to £3k and does not require the 3 quotes/estimates. One member of the council has already voiced concern about this change as this would increase the limit to a 10<sup>th</sup> of the Precept, councillor would accept the limit to be raised to £1500. The Chairman proposed to change to the 2014 Financial Regs. 5 voted in favour and 5 voted against, the Chairman used his vote. Agreed to change to 2014 Financial Regs.

## 6. Finances

6.1 Accounts Update –Bank Account Totals 29th September 2015 Business Current Account £ 62,913.26, Business Saver Account £331.17, Tracker Account £ 40,349.92, Total Amount £103,594.35. The Chairman reminded everyone that there is a significant amount of money which has been accounted for in the Financial Regulations Policy.

6.2 Approval of payments – Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked who Lazy Days are? This is a group who regularly use the Fenton Room. Mrs Thomas proposed approval for payment, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith seconded.

Trialling a screen and projector to view the plans as KLWNBC want all parish councils to view plans electronically instead of them sending out paper copies.

7. To receive planning decisions – 15/00845/O Land North East of 14 Whiteplot Road Methwold Hythe Norfolk - Outline application for 2no detached 2/3 bedroom dwellings Application Permitted 8 September 2015 Committee Decision

15/01170/F 2 Eldens Lane Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 4PZ - Proposed single storey side extension and rebuilding of dilapidated brick/clunch wall to boundary Application Permitted 9 September 2015 Delegated Decision

7.1 To consider any planning applications: 15/01456/F Change of use to convert existing shop to residential dwelling at 25 High Street Methwold Thetford Norfolk IP26 – externally there is very little change, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith questioned if there was sufficient parking but the applicant explained that there will be less traffic when a residential property. Mr Ashman proposed to support the application, Mr Thomas seconded there were no objections.

7.2 To consider any planning applications received after the agenda was produced - None

## 8. Items received for Agenda

Coffee Morning/Surgery-Chairman proposed holding a coffee morning/open surgery for residents, proposed Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October between 10am and 12 noon. Mrs Charlesworth-Smith thought this was too short notice as not everyone has access to a computer especially if only advertised on the parish pages. The Chairman would like to get it started as soon as possible and would like to see regular surgeries with other councillors volunteering to attend. Mr Hood said that he wouldn't like to think that a booking would be lost because the parish council is holding a surgery which potentially might not be attended, the Chairman suspended the meeting to ask the members of the public what they thought, worth trying Saturday is good for those who are at work during the week. The members of the parish council agree to try 2 sessions in October and November date to be confirmed to see how the sessions are received.

## 9. Correspondence

AGM of NALC-

East Anglian Air Ambulance-requesting information on any grants available-pass onto MCAG

CWWG letter-informing the council that they will no longer be responsible for the maintenance of the war graves, also email from Historic England asking for information about the War Memorial, Clerk is looking into this.

## 10. Any Further Reports - for information only

Mr Marriage-concern that the working groups are too big, the Clerk and the Chairman are to put together a proposal and circulate this to the council, to be discussed in the November meeting.

Mr Ashman asked if any quotes had been received for the fence at the Rec. the Clerk has not had a specification to be able to send out for quotes.

The play area inspection needs to be done, Mrs Plumridge is to set up a rota and circulate to the 4 councillors who are trained to inspect the play area.

Mr Hood please can the Finance meeting be earlier in the month so as not too close to the main meeting, the Chairman explained that the meeting had to be moved this time to enable people to attend.

Mrs Charlesworth-Smith-the response to the letter received last month regarding the moles, is the response going to go in the Methwold Times? All agreed that it will be published.

11. To pass a resolution to exclude members of the public

Mr Thomas presented his proposal for the Parish Council website, this was done without the public present because the website is ready for the council to view and make comments before it goes live.

The parish council were asked to make any comments and if they were happy with the format? It is planned to have as much information as possible on the website including all agenda's, minutes and policies so as they can be viewed at any time. It was asked that the parish sign is made more distinctive/prominent?

The parish council Facebook page was also presented, this is already live and the Clerk and Mr Thomas are administrators for the two sites.

The parish council is happy with the development of the web page and it was agreed to make this live after the next meeting so that the council have had time to look at the website and give comments.

Both the Facebook site and the Methwold Parish Council webpage received a good response from councillors present, Mrs Charlesworth-Smith asked if the parish council have bought the domain name, Mr Thomas already owns the Methwold.net name and the parish council is a section of this.

The Chairman gave an update on Humble pit.

Meeting closed 9.50pm