

Morton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Rectory Rooms, Morton on the 9th May 2012.

Present. Councillors Mr A. Coates, Mrs E. McCullough, Mr W. Edson, Mr C. Lawton, Mr A Cooper, Mr S.J. Cashin, Mr M. Morris and Mrs E. Taylor.

Also in attendance were Mr P. Goodwin - Clerk and 1 member of the public.

Apologies. Councillor Mrs B. Roe and County Councillor Mr B. Lewis.

Absent. None.

Minutes. The minutes of the 2011 Annual Parish Meeting were approved as a correct record and signed.

Chair's Report. The Chair, Councillor Mr A. Coates presented the following report about both the key issues affecting Morton and the work that the Parish Council has carried out during the past year:

Achievements

As a village we have achieved an awful lot in the last 12 months.

A New Park for Morton - I'll talk more about the park shortly in this report.

The Cricket Club taking the opportunity to own the whole of the cricket pitch, securing the future of Morton Colliery Cricket Club for generations to come and raising the funding to achieve this aim (they already owned part of the pitch).

A successful Neighbourhood Watch Scheme - established within the last 12 months and now up and running with regular events.

A successful Walking Club has been set up within the last 12 months and already there are 45 members; there have been regular turn-outs of about 20 people on each walk

New Park

The new park will be completed by the end of the month and the official opening will be at the Gala Day on 24th June.

The park has been designed with the aim of something for everyone; for youngsters and for parents and grandparents to bring their children with seating for anyone to sit and relax.

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The planting scheme will be put in place over the next few weeks.

We are most grateful to Viridor Credits who gave 90% of the financial support required, through a donation from the Landfill Communities Fund. The Parish Council gave a £7,500 financial contribution and will have further costs on planting. I note that Viridor Credits are due a second vote of thanks tonight as they are also the principal funders for the Cricket Club's purchase of the cricket pitch.

On behalf of the Parish Council I wish to record our thanks to everyone involved in the Park including the following who have all committed significant time to the project: Councillor Sean Cashin, Tina Frost Morris, Tina Chipp, Helen Cashin, Councillor Liz Taylor, Councillor Clive Lawton and Alison Griffiths from North East Derbyshire District Council. There are many other people who have helped enable this project to come to fruition in a relatively short period of time.

Improving communications

The Parish Council's website has been redesigned and upgraded in the last 12 months. The new website includes much more information about Morton and the amenities and facilities that can be found in the village. One major new section is a "What's on" guide to all the events that take place in Morton. We now have the ability to update all the website content ourselves which provides much more flexibility, particularly in respect of publicising local activities, events and groups.

Parish Council Newsletters have been regularly distributed to every household in the Village for a few years. Thanks to Councillor Liz Taylor, the newsletter has undergone a makeover and is now branded 'The Morton Messenger'. It includes much more content than previously, most of which is written by Liz herself. She has also been incredibly successful at selling advertising space. The next edition of the newsletter will go to the printers within the next week. Many thanks are due to Liz in this respect.

We have recently introduced an email alert system, which provides alerts, news and an advance copy of the Morton Messenger to subscribers. We hope eventually to have most households in Morton as subscribers to these email alerts.

Challenges for the year ahead

We see the Village Hall as an important amenity for the village and we will be exploring how this facility can be improved.

There is a strong feeling within the village that the path from Pit Lane through to Stonebroom should not become a bridleway. There are health and safety issues as well as the fear that motorbikes will once again have access to this area. The decision not our decision and we appear to have no influence on whether a path in Morton Parish remains a path or becomes a bridleway. This decision will be taken solely by Derbyshire County Council.

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We are concerned that the number 98 bus service is to stop soon leaving part of the village without any bus service. Given the number of elderly people throughout our village, leaving some of them with no bus service could greatly affect their quality of life. However, following canvassing by the Parish Council on behalf of local people we have just determined today that a two-hourly number 150 bus service will replace the number 98 service which is excellent news. Dog fouling and horse fouling remain issues for the village.

Other matters

The hanging baskets were again provided in the summer of 2011 along with large planters. In our February 2012 newsletter we stated that we could not afford hanging baskets for 2012. However, the good news is that we have managed to find a way of having hanging baskets at a much lower cost than in previous years allowing us to reverse our previous decision. The hanging baskets this year will be at Sitwell Villas, Main Road/Station Road and Penfold Way. The hanging baskets will be fully maintained and watered by the supplier; however, to cut our overall cost, the planting, watering and maintaining of the seven planters will need to be carried out by volunteers. Please get in touch with one of your Councillors if you are prepared to help.

Last autumn the Parish Council planted flower bulbs either side of the Pit Wheels and around the Centre of England tree plaque. These have flowered over recent weeks and did well to survive the late heavy snowfall. Over the next few years the Parish Council intends to plant more bulbs each year at various locations throughout the village. We will be asking for volunteers later in the year to help with this.

Keeping Morton Tidy, part 1 - On Saturday 10th March over 20 volunteers helped clean up Morton Brook. Many tyres, beer cans, plastic sheets and other rubbish were pulled out of the mud and picked up from the area filling a skip. Overhanging branches were pruned and the area was tidied up. The clean-up was jointly organised by Morton Parish Council and Shirland and Higham Parish Council. There are photos on our website showing the cleanup.

Keeping Morton Tidy 2 - Thanks to the Community Service team for the recent litter picking up days around the village and to local resident Gareth Waller, who first raised the matter of litter at a Parish Council meeting a few months ago and he has been most helpful in acting as the point of contact to meet the Community Service teams and also helping at Morton Brook.

War memorial - We are going to carry out repairs and refurbishment to the war memorial. An application for funding is about to be submitted which should cover half of the cost.

School milk - The Parish Council continues to pay for the whole cost of the school milk at Morton Primary School.

Morton Gala Day

Coming up soon is Morton Gala Day on 24th June 2012.

Runs - A new off-road race will take place at 11.00am called "The Morton Challenge" - and it will be a challenge. The Family Fun Run follows this at 12 noon.

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The Official Opening of the Park will take place immediately after the Fun Run. As well as a special ribbon cutting ceremony it is hoped that there will be a balloon release of more than 500 balloons symbolising every household in the village that will benefit from this park in some way.

The Gala will then kick off. This will be a great day - its success depends on the time committed by everyone involved throughout the year in planning the day and then also helping on the day. Thanks in particular to Councillor Walter Edson and his wife Chris. Also, thanks are due to Barry Lewis for his financial contribution from the County Council funds that are available for him to allocate.

Parish Councillors - Attendance at meetings

I finish my report by summarising the attendance rates in respect of parish councillors attending Parish Council meetings during the past year. The attendances are excellent, with most councillors never missing a meeting within the last 12 months.

Andrew Coates - possible = 10 attended 10

Ruth McCullough - possible = 10 attended 10

Walter Edson - possible = 10 attended 9

Betty Roe - possible = 10 attended 10

Clive Lawton - possible = 10 attended 10

Sean Cashin - possible = 10 attended 10

Andrew Cooper - possible = 10 attended 7

Martyn Morris - possible = 10 attended 10

Liz Taylor - possible = 8 attended 8

Matters Raised by members of the public. None.

There being no other business raised, the meeting then closed at 8:15pm.

Chair 15th May 2013