

Morton Parish Council**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21st May 2014, 7.30pm, at the Rectory Rooms****Present**

Cllr A Coates (Chair)	
Cllr S Cashin (Vice Chair)	Cllr M Morris
Cllr W Edson	Cllr R McCullough
Cllr C Lawton	Cllr B Roe

In Attendance

Mrs J Taylor (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)
1 member of the public

Appointment of Clerk to the Meeting

Mrs J Taylor was appointed Clerk to the meeting

To confirm the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 15th May 2013 as a true record

These were approved June 2013

Chairman's Report 2013/2014**Our objectives**

At our January 2013 meeting we set out our objectives:

1. To improve village facilities.
2. To improve the village's appearance.
3. To encourage and support an active event /activities programme.
4. To represent the Village's interests.

Under these headings we set out a list of what we would like to achieve; many of which are dependent on funding being achieved. The list is intended to guide us in future decisions and to help us spot funding opportunities.

During the last 12 months, we have increased the amount of routine maintenance and cleaning carried out. All road and street signs have been cleaned, the bus shelter cleaning has continued and litter picking has been carried out. The War Memorial area has been tidied up as has the Pit Wheels area.

Our major success during the last 12 months is reducing substantially what we spend on the running of the Parish Council, freeing up cash to spend on our primary objectives.

Village Hall

Our next major project is to improve the village hall facilities. I have met with a Senior Planning Officer at NEDDC earlier this year to discuss the different options and who agreed to write to the Parish Council soon. This should give us a better understanding of which option(s) may be most viable.

Our Pubs

In my Chair's report 12 months ago I commented that The Corner Pin had received a "make over" and looked very smart. It's great that during the last 12 months The Sitwell Arms has a new landlady and has received a "make over".

Communication

News stories and photos of village events are posted to the website regularly. In addition Parish Council Newsletters are produced and distributed to every household in the Village.

Hanging baskets

The hanging baskets were again provided by the Parish Council in 2013 and looked fantastic. The large planters contained floral displays last summer, planted and maintained by volunteers, for which we are very

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grateful.

Morton Gala and Fun Run

Last year's Gala was very successful. The run for adults and older children once again lived up to its name – the Morton Challenge. Thanks to all those that were involved in organising and running this event.

Morton Events

There have been several successful village events held throughout the year including the Halloween Party and the Christmas Parties in the Village Hall. Thanks to all those that were involved in organising and running these events.

Neighbourhood Watch

The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme meets regularly and there are guest speakers on some occasions.

Precept

We have set a precept for 2014/15 of £32,000. The precept has now been kept at £32,000 for 6 consecutive years.

Attendance rates

The following list details the attendance rates in respect of Parish Councilors attending Parish Council meetings during the past year:

Andrew Coates - possible = 10 attended 10	Ruth McCullough - possible = 10 attended 9
Walter Edson - possible = 10 attended 9	Betty Roe - possible = 10 attended 8
Clive Lawton - possible = 10 attended 9	Sean Cashin - possible = 10 attended 10
Andrew Cooper - possible = 10 attended 9	Martyn Morris - possible = 10 attended 10
Liz Taylor - possible = 10 attended 8	

It should be noted that these attendance levels are exceptionally good compared to many other Councils.

Finance Report 2013/2014

The Precept for 2013/2014 was £30,063, this was less than the previous year as it was agreed to use the council tax support grant of £1,937 to offset the precept and not take it as additional funding. This grant will reduce each year for the next two years, after that there will be no grant.

Income received in addition to the precept and council tax support grant was £90 advertising income and £2,032 vat refund.

Expenditure for staffing was £9,702, which was £2,536 less than budget. There has been a period of time without a clerk, and the new clerk is working less hours.

Total non staffing expenditure was £13,928, which was £6,702 better than budget. The majority of this saving was made from the £9,500 budget for village improvements, which actual spend was only £2,300. Other areas of savings were newsletter, website and training. Areas of overspend were professional services, dog waste bins and subscriptions.

Total funds awarded via the Section 137 grant were £607.

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Total income and expenditure for 2013/2014 was a surplus of £10,492, in addition to the £16,227 carried forward balance from the previous year gives the council a reserve balance of £26,719 to carry forward into 2014/2015.

To consider any other Parish matter that may be brought forward by the Council or local government electors

None

Chairman

Date