

MORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting for Morton Parish Council held on Monday 8th January 2024, at 6:30pm in the Community Room at Morton Trentside School

15-minute public forum – no members of the public in attendance.

Chairman Cllr B Allison welcomed all to the meeting.

In Attendance - Cllr B Allison, Cllr J Butoid, Cllr Parry, Cllr C Allison, Cllr Lightfoot, Cllr King, Cllr Ward (joined meeting at 6.58 pm), C. Graves (clerk)

1. Apologies For Absence – Cllr Youngman, Cllr Gott, Cllr Clews, Cllr Carless – apologies noted and accepted.
2. Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 11th December 2023 - Proposed as a true and accurate record by Cllr Lightfoot. Seconded by Cllr Butroid.
3. Declarations of Interest – Cllr Butroid, 54 Field Lane (8b).
4. Accounts – Distributed prior to meeting. Cllr King enquired about the current contract for pest control. Clerk reported that the contract would be up for renewal soon and alternative quotes would be sourced. No further questions. Proposed Cllr C Allison. Seconded Cllr Lightfoot.
 - a) Final Precept 2024/25 – As agreed at the meeting on 13th November clerk had submitted a precept estimate of £15,977.52 for 2024/25. Clerk advised by the Council to submit the final claim to WLDC for the same. Proposed Cllr B Allison. Seconded Cllr Butoid. Clerk to action.
5. Community Safety (Crime, Vandalism, Anti-Social Behaviour & Speeding)
 - a) Feedback from Police/Parish Engagement Meeting 14th December – A link for the presentation had been shared previously with councillors. Cllr B Allison summarised that the number of police to cover the vast area of Lincolnshire was not enough, and as West Lindsey had fewer crimes than other parts of the county resources are focused on those areas where crime is most prevalent. However, response times on average were much quicker for Morton than other rural areas. Majority of parishes shared the same concerns regarding speeding vehicles and were keen to hear how the police were going to tackle this. Unfortunately, as Lincolnshire Speed Watch relies on volunteers and police support minimal due to limited resources, this has proved difficult to promote. On a positive note, a commitment from the Police & Crime Commissioners office was made for a meeting to be arranged where Parishes across the District could discuss ways forward to get further funding and explore opportunities to reduce the volume of speeding vehicles that plague villages across the county. Cllr B Allison will keep pressing for this commitment.

b) New Crime Reports – Reports of continued problems with quad and pit bikes around the village. Following submission of this problem to Lincolnshire Police for inclusion in priorities for the quarter, it was advised that as many of these incidents go unreported, they were unable to include this. Discussion took place on how residents could be encouraged to report issues to the police, whether online or by telephone and Crimestoppers UK allows you to report a crime anonymously. It was suggested that a police village drop-in session, similar to those held in town, would be helpful and more advertising on social media to encourage reporting. Cllr Parry felt that people are disheartened by lack of police presence and follow-up on crime which discouraged reporting.

Cllr Butroid reported a van had been abandoned and set alight on Field Lane requiring police and fire attendance. Vehicle had since been removed.

6. Playing Field & Shared Community Facilities

a) Playing Field Committee – Prior to the next meeting of the committee on Monday 15th January, Cllr C Allison requested an update on the rabbits and the topsoil. Cllr Butroid reported that following enquires, as the playing field was a public space, this limited the options for safely culling rabbits. Therefore, the use of ferrets would once again be pursued. The council discussed amending the terms and conditions of hire to clearly state that it was the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that rabbit holes were filled prior to any activities on the field. Clerk to action. Cllr C Allison would enquire at the meeting with the cricket club on how much topsoil they use.

b) Morton Festival 13th July 2024 – Cllr B Allison would attend the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 24th January and feedback at the next meeting. As the Parish Council were not hosting the event the Festival Committee would be required to ensure liability insurance was in place prior to the event and use of the playing field.

7. Burial Ground – Cllr C Allison reported that following a walk and recent assessment of the burial ground following the heavy rain, it was quite waterlogged but hopefully this would recede in the next few days. It was noted that the boundary on Blyton Road, was quite open leaving the burial ground quite exposed. She suggested that planting holly or a similar fast-growing shrub would help fill and maintain an adequate border. The skip had been emptied. Clerk advised that she had received a complaint regarding the full skip and grass. Cllr King reported that the footpath running adjacent to the burial ground going out of town was in bad repair. Cllr Parry informed the council that on looking through old parish records recently a proportion of land was sold to LCC in 1969 to enable them to extend the bend on the A159 and it was documented that a condition of the sale included LCC to maintain the fence, drain and shrubbery. Cllr B Allison thanks Cllr Parry for this information.

8. Planning

a) No new planning applications received. Cllr Butroid reported that recent application 147365, 36 Walkerith Road had been passed with conditions. 147358, 73 Walkerith Road passed and PL/0069/23, Gainsborough Skip Hire passed.

b) 54 Field Lane (Kitty's Field) - No update.

c) Important Open Space, Field Lane – Cllr B Allison reported that several complaints had been received recently following the delivery of a skip that had been placed on the grassed area in Field Lane, behind a property on Southlands. The skip was relocated following enquiries with the skip hire company by the Parish Council. However, it raised concerns on ownership of the land, and extension of gardens, and the Council had previously been in correspondence with several properties in 2019. Cllr Butroid would further investigate with Land Registry and feedback.

9. Village Environment

a) Re-wilding Field Lane – Cllr Butroid advised that R Bull was happy to prepare the soil in preparation for the rewilding at a cost of £100. Proposed Cllr Ward. Seconded Cllr King. All in agreement, pending correspondence with R Bull. Clerk to submit Councillor Initiative Fund application.

b) Fix My Street – January report circulated by Cllr B Allison for for information. New reports included water on Morton corner and sink hole Mill Lane. No further fly tipping.

c) Litter Pick 2024 – Cllr B Allison asked councillors to consider the dates of Saturday 6th April. 6th July and 5th October 10am-12noon for this year's community litter picks. No objections. Cllr B Allison and Clerk to arrange posters and promotion.

10. Tyler Trust – Next meeting 9th January.

11. Village Hall Representative – No update. Next meeting 31st January.

12. Community Assets – no update.

13. Website - Clerk shared correspondence from Webmaster prior to meeting regards to linking articles of public interest to the Parish Links Website. No objections. Clerk to action.

14. Councillor Updates – Cllr Butroid and Cllr C Allison raised concerns that following the recent flooding reports had been received that the developers of the new Horsley Road build had compromised the bank by pumping flood water from the development through the bank into the river. Although the estate was not situated in Morton any damage to the flood defence would have an impact on the village. Further investigation to be made. Cllr B Allison reiterated his expectation for the council to have a Flood Contingency Plan.

15. Items for Inclusion on next Agenda

a) Playing Field Fees

16. Date and time of Next Meeting – Monday 12th February 2024 at 6:30 to be held at Community Room, Morton Trentside School. Cllr Lightfoot gave her apologies in advance.

Meeting closed at 7.59 pm.