

Morebath Parish Council – Minutes of the meeting 29 July 2014, Morebath Village Hall

Public question time / County and District Councillors Reports

A member of the public thanked all those parish council members and other volunteers who had worked on the Keens Solar Farm planning application and following appeal, subsequently rejected by the inspector. Thanks were also due to MDDC for their support.

A letter had been submitted about rubbish left by the 2014 Iron man event. It was agreed that there had been an improvement since 2013 but that any rubbish was unacceptable. Funding was provided by Iron Man UK to local communities but these seemed to be remote from the event itself, despite disruption caused. A letter would be sent to Iron Man UK about levels of littering and seeking funds for the communities affected by the event. An approach would also be made through Rotary.

It was requested that the 2013 free salt distribution be repeated.

Graffiti had been noticed on signs on the Timewell Hill that needed to be cleaned.

Village bus shelters were thought to be in need of routine maintenance. A proposal was needed.

It was noted that the play area was now operational. A management committee had been set up and had met there were questions around how this was related to the parish council and the parish council's ongoing active involvement in the play area. The parish council was asked to make a donation to the project / contributions to ongoing maintenance. The vice-chairman reminded the meeting of decisions made in 2010 that the installation project only proceeded on the agreement that there would be no call on the parish council finances / precept to fund the cost of maintaining and equipping the play area, and that the council would not be responsible for the management of the site. It was noted there were other sources of funding available (eg TAP fund, locality budget). An action was placed to propose how the parish council and management committee should work together, although the latter was also asked to put their ideas forward on what they sought from the Council.

Ray Stanley asked that the council respond to the Landscape Sensitivity Study and provide support if requested to the Shillingford Solar Action Group.

Polly Colthorpe gave an update on the closure of residential homes and youth centres. People were encouraged to register their views at the Tough Choices web site.

Attendees

Parish councillors Chorley, Conway, Moore, Reed, Rowland and Wescott.

Parish Clerk

County and district councillors Colthorpe and Stanley

Five members of the public.

Apologies – Cllr Adams

Declarations of interest – there were no declarations of interest

Minutes of the last meeting – the minutes of the last meeting were **AGREED** and signed as a true record.

Matters for discussion from previous meetings

Loyton Farm Kennels has yet to be inspected by the Enforcement Officer.

There was no update on the blocked footpath at Keens / Loyton as the P3 representative was not present. (Post meeting note: the P3 representative advised that the footpath is not blocked and that subject to works having been completed to repair the fence etc at Exebridge, there was nothing to report.)

The background to the nomination of Heritage assets was explained and the draft list proposed by Cllr Moore discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to submit a number of items to MDDC as Heritage Assets.

The ideas put forward for village improvements met with a mixed response. There was concern that whilst budget may be available for initial purchase, ongoing maintenance would probably be needed with associated costs. It was unclear who would undertake such projects. It was decided that further information was needed on support for the idea. This would be sought through and entry in Signpost.

The idea for emergency response equipment (oxygen and defibrillator) was not strongly supported because of the practicality of securely storing the equipment and the existing availability of the fully trained local NHS response teams for situations demanding such equipment. A proposal to provide 1st action / 1st aid training to the community was welcomed and was to be investigated further.

Highways / Footpaths

It had been determined that highways was responsible for the Morebath railway bridge opposite Moor Farm. The bridge needed attention to deal with the vegetation before structural damage was caused.

The Morrells Cross signpost replacement was awaited as was a decision on the Exebridge traffic mirror. The idea of a seat at Chilton Cross could not be pursued as the land was in Bampton and not Morebath parish.

Community Plan / Website / Personnel

As members had not received their copy of the community plan, discussion was postponed to the next meeting.

There was some discussion over the ongoing cost of website maintenance and Cllr Moore, currently responsible for the site, would bring more information and a proposal to the next meeting.

The council needed to had a transparent process for recruiting a replacement clerk and given that the advertisement had not brought any responses a locum would be needed. That too would take time. It was **AGREED** that in the interim the chairman would also take on the clerk's duties. It was also **AGREED** that a sub-committee would be formed to undertake all aspects of the recruitment of a locum and permanent clerk.

Planning

Submissions had been made as identified in the agenda. Application 14/01048/FULL (Somerset Lodge / Exemead House) – it was unclear what the changes to the previous submission were but from discussion there was no particular objection. A response would be provided accordingly.

It was proposed that there was a return to the previous system of circulating or distributing hard copies of planning applications to councillors to review. This was counter to the move to all electronic documentation and distribution by MDDC and would be considered by the councillor responsible for planning.

Memorial Garden

The proposal for a memorial garden was discussed. Historic support, particularly from Valley View residents, was divided. It was noted that reported objections from the village hall committee were unfounded. Concerns were raised about the initial and ongoing maintenance costs of such a scheme. Local view would be sought. It was **AGREED** to review this topic at the next meeting.

Village hall - The annual village fete had made £867. Otherwise there was nothing to report.

Play area / environment

Further to the earlier discussion it was recorded that the installation project work was complete with the exception of the provision of a bin and hedge planting to be completed in the autumn. The (final) invoice submitted for approval at the meeting appeared to take expenditure over the figure included in the 2014/15 budget, although it was unclear whether it included or excluded VAT. After discussion it was **AGREED** that an audit of overall play area project finances be undertaken.

Church – there was nothing to report.

Clerk's report

A statement was provided by the clerk on the overall parish finances and a forecast for status at year end.

Plaques for commemorative trees would be c. £30 each. It was suggested that an alternative might be an information board.

The TAP proposal for the cricket club had timed out so there was a total of £693 available (£291 for 2013/14, plus £301 for 2014/15) for projects with adjacent parishes.

There was some discussion of council adherence to the agreed budget, particularly when reviewing requests for payment and new spending ideas.

A complaint had been received that children had not been involved in the Morebath litter picking events. Cllr Moore briefly advised that he would no longer be organising events and would outline reasons separately to councillors.

The clerk advised that the costs for a clerk had been increasing over time but were still below the budget figure proposed by Cllr Moore and the previous clerk.

The clerk advised that all formal parish council correspondence had to go through the clerk and that a breakdown in communication with MDDC had arisen because this procedure had not been followed.

All requests for payment identified in the agenda were agreed.

Chairman's report – there was nothing additional to report.

Other matters

There had been a lot of dog fouling in Higher Tickeys Lane. The resident had been asked to identify the problem dogs but otherwise there was little that could be done, as for fouling in bus shelters. It was noted the dog warden could be involved if a persistent offender was identified.

With the resignation of the clerk, a prompt handover of parish records was requested.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for 8.00pm on Tuesday 9 September 2014.

Minutes prepared by Cllr Moore.