



Midsomer Norton Town Council

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Mayor: Cllr Paul Myers

Town Clerk: Clive Stilwell

Minutes of the Midsomer Norton Annual Town Meeting held in the Assembly Room, Town Hall The Island, Midsomer Norton on Monday 20th April 2015 commencing at 7.00pm

Present: Mayor: Councillor Paul Myers

Councillors: Councillor M Evans (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor S Box
Councillor L Dunford
Councillor B Lawrence
Councillor J Lewis
Councillor P Moccock
Councillor S Plumley
Councillor A Purchase
Councillor L Robertson
Councillor R Robertson

In Attendance: Clive Stilwell (Town Clerk)
Carole Sims (Administrative Officer)

Fifty One (51) Members of the Local Electorate

Fire Safety – Evacuation Procedure

The Town Clerk explained the fire evacuation procedure as detailed in the Agenda.

Recording Protocol

The Town Clerk explained the Council's protocol for recording meetings.

Election Protocol

The Town Clerk explained the Council's election protocol.

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no Apologies for Absence from Councillors as all Members of the Town Council were present.

Apologies were received from Shirley Steel and Glyn Davis.

2. Minutes

Copies of the minutes had been made available in advance and were also available at the meeting.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Monday 12th May 2014 be signed and adopted as a correct record. The Mayor subsequently signed the Minutes.

3. Introduction by the Mayor of the Town Council and an Overview of 2014/2015

The Mayor of Midsomer Norton Town Council, Councillor P Myers welcomed everyone to the Annual Town Meeting for the people of Midsomer Norton.

The Mayor explained to the Meeting that the objective of the Annual Town Meeting was to provide residents with a report on the Town Council's work and to offer them the opportunity to ask questions of the Town Council.

The Mayor gave the Meeting a brief overview of the highlights of the last four (4) years including:

Midsomer Norton Carnival 2014
Sliver Street Crossing
Youth Club
Town Hall Transformation Project

Councillor Myers thanked all Councillors for their hard work on behalf of the town. Councillor Myers also acknowledged the contribution of Councillor S Box, Councillor L Dunford and Councillor P Moccock for all their input whilst serving on the Council as they would not be seeking re-election.

Councillor Myers also thanked the Town Clerk, Clive Stilwell and Administrative Officer, Carole Sims for their help and support over the last year.

Patricia Flagg was presented with flowers as a token of thanks for acting as the Mayor's Consort.

Councillor Myers took the opportunity to thank the Town Council's Contractors including:

Dave Paisey – Town Warden
Flowers by Nicola – Horticultural Contract
Primrose – Grass Cutting Contractor
RS Security – Street Marshals

4. Report from the Chair of Town Council's Planning Committee

A report from the Chair of the Town Council's Planning Committee, Councillor P Moccock for the Municipal Year 2014/2015 was received covering the role of the Committee and how MPC were the key factors when commenting on applications.

Planning Application Statistics:

Total Applications Received & Considered	79
Supported	52
Opposed	14
No comment made	3
Comment only	5

BANES Decision already made	3
Unable to reach a decision	1
Decision noted	1
<i>Overall there were 8 cases where the Planning Authority's decision contradicted the Council Committee's recommendation.</i>	

Councillor Moccock took the opportunity to thank his fellow Councillors and the Council staff and wished them all the best for the future.

Planning – The Bigger Picture

Core Strategy

Councillor J Lewis addressed the meeting on 'Planning – The Bigger Picture' and gave an update on the Core Strategy which had been adopted in July 2014 after extensive consultation.

Councillor Lewis also briefed the meeting on:

The Neighbourhood Plan

The Plan if adopted would give the community direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood.

Green Spaces Designation

The Town Council has proposed 13 locations to be designated as green space.

Housing Development Boundary

The Town Council proposed to limit development beyond the three approved/planned developments at Monger Lane, Fosseway South and Wheelers Road.

Councillor Lewis thanked the Town Clerk, Clive Stilwell for the marvellous job he had done creating maps and descriptions for the Green Spaces Designation and Housing Development Boundary and that without his input the deadline would not have been met.

5. Progress Reports on Working Party/Projects Progress During 2014/2015

Operations Working Party (OWP)

Councillor Plumley explained the role of the OWP, a small group of Councillors who met once a month to review progress on projects.

Councillor Plumley and the Town Clerk updated the meeting on the various projects currently being worked on including:

St Chads Well

Acquired in March 2015, and improvements to St Chads Well were being carried out in the near future including improving the fencing and garden, restoration of stones and the memorial and the possibility of a culvert for the drain.

Garden of Friendship

The area previously known as the Catholic Church Garden would soon home a K6 telephone box designed by Giles Gilbert Scott who had also planned the restoration and conversion of the Tythe Barn to the present day Catholic Church.

Trees had been pruned and cleared exposing a 'grotto' in the top corner of the garden. Further plans include the erection of a fence and listed building consent was currently being sought for a gate and lantern arch from Bath & North East Somerset Council. Additional work to the south border and the introduction of a Sensory garden on the north side were also planned.

Town Park

Permission to change the use of land had been granted by Bath & North East Somerset Council and negotiations to purchase the land and sign contracts were nearing completion.

Once the land along the River Somer from Gullock Tynning to Wheelers Road had been acquired the securing of the perimeter and access points would need to be agreed. Implementation of a long term plan and funding would be required to enable the future development of the park.

Promoting Sport & Health

West Clewes

The Midsomer Norton Recreation Ground Trust had completed the construction of the Amenity Block and helped with planning and building control issues for Welton Rovers' new stands.

West Clewes – Play Park

Councillor Plumley advised that a potential future project for West Clewes would be the installation of new play equipment for children, along with adult exercising equipment.

Grants

During the last four years the Town Council had awarded several grants to sport groups and clubs including:

Clonkers Boxing Fitness Club
Norton Radstock Swimming Club
Midsomer Norton Rugby Club
Midsomer Norton Cricket Club
Prattens Bowls Club
Camvale Tennis Club

South Wansdyke Sports Centre

Midsomer Norton Town Council had recently secured representation on the Writhlington Sports & Leisure Trust Board who would be running South Wansdyke Sports Centre.

Pride in our Town

In Bloom

Councillor L Robertson updated the meeting on In Bloom 2014, the town had been the recipients of a Gold award, and that this year the Town would be entered into the 'Champion of Champions' category.

Carnival

Councillor Myers reported that the Midsomer Norton Carnival 2014 had attracted between 11-12,000 people to the High Street creating an amazing atmosphere. Midsomer Norton & District Carnival Association had worked hard to find a new route for the procession after appeals from local residents to return the Carnival to the town centre. However, Councillor Myers advised that unless sufficient funding could be secured it was unlikely that the 2015 Carnival would go ahead, which ultimately could result in the Carnival being lost forever.

Midsummer Fayre

After the relocation of the Midsummer Fayre to Gullock Tynning, Councillor L Robertson reported that the event which had included stalls, live dance and drama performances, a skate jam, maypole dancing and a Punch & Judy show had proved a great success. The Fayre had seen the first ever Town Show, with the judging of entries such as Cookery, Hobbies & Crafts, Flowers and Produce.

The 2015 Midsummer Fayre would take place on Saturday 11th July 2015.

Town Hall Ambitions

Councillor Myers advised the meeting of the plans to restore the Town Hall to its former glory. It was an ambitious project with 'huge' challenges ahead and these would include:

- Securing planning permission and listed building consent
- Funding for the project
- Securing a long term lease from Bath & North East Somerset Council.

Safe & Enjoyable for Everyone

Councillor L Dunford, who would be standing down in May, told the meeting that it had been a pleasure to serve on the Town Council along with her Council colleagues and thanked Clive Stilwell and Carole Sims for their help and support over the last four years.

Councillor L Dunford reported that a new Street Marshal contractor, RS Security, had been appointed and had received positive feedback.

Councillor L Dunford was pleased to report that crime figures were continuing to fall in the Designated Public Place Order area.

Councillor L Dunford finished by thanking the Street Marshals, Police and Street Pastors who truly made the community a safer place.

Engaging Young People

Councillor S Box briefed the meeting on projects that had been funded by the Town Council, these included:

Norton Youth Club

A new venture in the town for young people to meet and 'chill out' at the Town Hall

New Gaming Equipment

New gaming equipment had been purchased for the Youth Club members to use.

Incredible Years

A project supporting parents with children in the key development years.

Money Matters

Councillor B Lawrence advised the meeting that there had again been no increase in the precept. The Town Council continued to maintain its reserves whilst meeting its commitments to the community and had made grants totalling £22,000.00 to seventeen community groups.

The Annual Return of Council Accounts had met the external audit standards.

The Town Council continued to keep to its expenditure strategy to broadly equal thirds:

Running the Council

Council Duties

Discretionary spend

6. Midsomer Norton Town Council – Member Attendance 2014/2015

The Town Clerk, explained the Midsomer Norton Town Council Members Attendances.

Resolved: That the submitted Member Attendances be noted.

7. Questions from the Public

The Mayor invited questions and comments from members of the public.

Chris Watt (Bath & North East Somerset Redford Ward Councillor) commented on all the progress that had been achieved in the last four years and how focused the Town Council had been on the town. He congratulated the Town Council on its pioneering spirit and thanked the Town Councillors for doing such a fantastic job.

Lee Barrows (Norton Radstock Swimming Club) asked if there was any further information on the asset transfer of South Wansdyke Sports Centre to Writhlington Sports and Leisure Trust.

No further information was available, it was thought once the elections were over the asset transfer would go ahead.

David Shearn (Midsomer Norton & Radstock Community Service Vehicle Trust) informed the meeting that a new mini bus had been purchased but the Trust needed more users. David also enquired about the progress of the Tourist Leaflet.

The Tourist Leaflet was in its final draft and a copy would be with the editorial group shortly.

Before the meeting closed Councillor Dunford particularly wished to thank Councillor Myers for all the incredible work he continued to achieve within the Community.

Councillor Myers invited all present to join the Councillors for refreshments.

Meeting closed at 8.06pm

**Signed: Dated:
(Chairman & Mayor)**