

Minutes of Market Overton Annual Parish Meeting

7.30pm on Thursday 9th May 2024

Market Overton Village Hall

APM1	Present & apologies	Cllr. Williamson (Chairman), Cllr. Birchall, Cllr. Boyle, Cllr. Ellis, Cllr. England, Cllr. Lukacs-Winn, Cllr. Robins, Parish Clerk. C.Cllr. McCartney 7 members of the public. Apologies: none received.	
APM2	To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held 11 th May 2023	The minutes were approved as a true record. Proposed Stuart Sanderson Seconded Cllr. England	
APM3	Chairman's Annual Report 2023/24	The Chairman referred to the annual Parish Council report and accounts – attached below.	
APM4	AOB	- Responsibility for footpaths – C. Cllr McCartney advised that responsibility for maintenance of footpaths lies with the landowner. C.Cllr McCartney agreed to contact the Rights of Way officer at Rutland County Council to request that the owner of the footpath exiting Market Overton be contacted and asked to make improvements to the unsafe surface. - Village Shop – Tim Munt reported on the current position of the village shop finances. Having reviewed the accounts, a trend of falling sales, increasing costs (electricity doubled) and a gross margin insufficient to maintain a break even have been identified. Committee members visited Barrowden's shop and have obtained recommendations of suppliers with smaller minimum order requirements, which will aid cashflow. The loss of the National Lottery has potentially impacted footfall. There is a drive to reduce stock and release further funds. It is hoped that changes will allow costs to be covered. A flyer is being prepared which will outline the severity of the financial situation, the costs of running the shop, and a potential 'Just Giving' fund raising. - C.Cllr McCartney reported the closure by RCC of the Catmose Leisure Centre, due to unsustainable costs. RCC reserves, although significant, are held for specific, earmarked purposes i.e. £8m cashflow. The cost of withdrawing the Local Plan is estimated to have been £1.2m. The Chairman thanked C. Cllr. McCartney for her assistance resolving some issues with RCC.	

		Thursday 16th May Alicia Kearns MP will be visiting Market Overton.	
		The meeting closed at 8.24pm	

Parish Council Report 2024

Another year has flown by with some interesting developments for the Parish Council.

Unfortunately, we have had to say goodbye to our allotments after being given notice to quit by the landlord. A few of the allotment leaseholders did not clear their plots as prescribed in their lease, but taking account of the legal fees it was considered not worth pursuing the matter. Grateful thanks to Councillor Phil England and his band of volunteers for their heroic efforts in cleaning up the site to the satisfaction of the landowner. The site was handed back in November. We also incurred a cost for skips to take away the debris in the amount of £465.

The Rutland Local Plan continues to slowly thread its way through the statutory adoption process, and we understand that hopefully it will be in place by the end of this year. The current Local Plan is set to expire in 2026. All planning applications therefore are subject to the current Local Plan which currently sets the eastern boundary, for planning within the village, at the fence line of properties in The Finches and The Limes lying adjacent to the field behind Walker Close. Therefore, since the site fell beyond the limits of planned development the appeal application to build three houses and five bungalows on land between Walker Close and The Lodge Trust, was refused by the Government Inspector. Concern was also raised by the inspector regarding the amount of shade created by the line of trees on the west side of the site. Given the rejection of the appeal it is likely there will be no application for the additional site behind Walker Close for a development of 28 houses, bungalows and affordable homes until the new Local Plan comes in to force.

We know that the limit of planned development will be moved eastwards within the new Local Plan and so we expect that these two planning applications may be revisited once the new Local Plan is in place. The two ongoing developments for houses on Teigh Road, beyond the Wharf, and the one opposite the top end of Main Street are well on the way to completion.

We have had a serious issue with the village grass cutting as our previous contractor, BIFFA, decided to withdraw from grass cutting maintenance on 31st March but without the courtesy of advising us they had done so. We only found out after trying numerous times to contact them to enquire when they were going to cut our grass. We have now contacted a company for a one-off emergency cut this week whilst we seek tenders for the ongoing contract.

We have also had issues with RCC Highways in relation to the number of potholes on our roads and the repair of several streetlamps. The standard reaction being 'we have no funds or personnel available at present'. We thank our County Councillor, Abigail McCartney, for her efforts on our behalf regarding this issue and note some of the potholes have been repaired in the last couple of weeks, It remains an ongoing battle which we shall continue to fight.

We are delighted that Martin Wintermeyer has made great efforts to get Feast Weekend up and running again. You will have seen various notices and posters on the village Facebook page. Events include the Scarecrow Trail, a Bake-Off Competition, cricket match and BBQ, bowls open day, lunch on The Finches green, music at The Black Bull and lots more.

The Parish Council have approved a grant of £2000 towards the church lychgate repairs and they are now well on the way. It will be good to see it restored in all its splendour. During the past year we have also donated £275 to the Coronation celebrations, £86 for additional Remembrance Day lamppost poppies, £170 for the village Christmas tree, £325 towards the defibrillator at the village hall and £300 towards the village clean-up campaign which has included repainting some of the road fingerposts and the telephone box on Main Street, as well as some equipment for assisting with ongoing tidying up issues.

We have, in conjunction with the landlord, applied to RCC to assist with moving the public right of way which crosses the fields from the extension of Church Way towards Woodwell Head. The alternative proposal is to continue to the main pathway to the end of the fields and then turn left to pick up the pathways going to Edmondthorpe and Woodwell Head. We are still awaiting reaction to our proposal.

Parking on the bend on Main Street opposite the Hart residence remains an ongoing problem. We have been notified of several near misses, one involving the local bus. We continue to remind local residents of the need to be aware of this danger when parking their vehicles.

Attached is a summary of the Parish Council accounts for the past year, you can find a copy of the full accounts on the Parish Council website. As you can see, the receipt from RCC, for grass cutting, falls well below the contract price we paid last year, and it is likely that there will be an increase in costs when we renew our contract.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their help and ongoing support during the last twelve months and a huge thanks to Helen Duckering, our dedicated and efficient Parish Clerk, for her help and guidance.

Andy Williamson
Chair – Market Overton Parish Council

Parish Council Finance Summary 2023/24

Receipts:	£12,951.00
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Precept	£10,122.00
Grass cutting	£883.00
Interest	£317.00
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	£321.00
VAT refund	£1,308.00

Expenditure (exc. VAT):	£13,776.00
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Salaries	£4,897.00
Grass cutting	£2,278.00
Street lighting	£1,918.00
Insurance	£722.00
Administration - room hire, stationery, audit, subscriptions, bank charges	£1,162.00
Website	£305.00
Allotments - skip hire	£485.00
Election	£220.00
Donations:	
Coronation celebrations	£275.00
Remembrance poppies	£66.00
Christmas tree	£170.00
Village hall defibrillator	£325.00
Market Overton Clean Up	£300.00
Feast Weekend	£50.00

Closing balance	£13,481.00
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£2000 allocated as a grant towards the lychgate repairs