



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on 11th April 2002 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: G Puddephatt (Chairman), Councillors: C Lewis, P Challis, Mrs A Philips, A Thorpe, K Davies, M Loader, Ms S Harding, Mrs J Lever, Mrs R Weiss and Mrs J Kirk (Clerk), 1 Member of the Press.

Apologies: Councillors: J Morden, R Peters, L Picking, J Gosling and K Lock

02/63 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the 14th March 2002 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

02/64 **Report from District Councillors:** Ms Harding reported that the reduction from 140 houses to 120 on the Mortimer Hill site in the West Berkshire Plan was the only modification challenged by GOSE when the plan was submitted recently. GOSE have accepted the arguments for the reduced density put forward by West Berkshire.

02/65 **Presentation from Simon Gregory WBC re Parish Plan:** Mr Gregory from West Berkshire Council gave a presentation about Parish Plans. His presentation included the headings What is a Parish Plan? Where the idea of a Parish Plan came from, Why do a Plan? Who Pays to do the Plan? How long will it take and will it make a difference. Information from the report can be found on the Parish Council Website www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk and on the Parish Council Notice Boards.

02/66 **Planning: Report:** In the absence of Mr Morden Mrs Kirk reported that The Planning Committee met once during the month on the 14th March at the Parish Office, Victoria Road when 2 applications were considered:

02/00065/HOUSE Amended Plans, Meadow House, Turks Lane, Mortimer. Demolish existing outbuildings and build single storey extension, conservatory and double garage.

Object: Same reasons as for previous application; The garage should be resited. Following this decision Cllrs J Morden and A Thorpe conducted a site visit (3rd April 02). There appears to be valid reasons for the siting of the garage as proposed and our objection should be withdrawn. Whilst it is the normal practice of this Parish Council to object to the siting of any substantial building forward of the existing property it was felt an exception could be made in this case provided: -

1. The height of the garage must not exceed 4.5m.
2. The existing tree and shrub screening to the road and footpath be maintained.
3. No additional vehicular access be permitted.

02/00383/HOUSE 36 Stephens Firs, Mortimer. Block of four garages.
Object: This is a residential area and the four garages are unlikely to be used for residential parking. The prime purpose is likely to be in connection with the applicant's commercial business run from this address (see Yellow Pages advert attached).

02/00397/HOUSE West View, Mortimer Lane (Wokefield Parish). 2 storey extension.
Observations as adjoining parish - No objection.

The following Planning Decisions have been received:

02/00065/HOUSE Meadow House, Turks Lane, Mortimer. Demolish existing outbuildings; build single storey extension, conservatory and double garage – Approved.

02/00209/HOUSE Stanton, 63 Victoria Road, Mortimer. Extension and alteration – Approved.

02/00110/HOUSE 9 Stephens Close, Mortimer. 2 storey side extension and formalisation of access to site – Approved.

02/00096/FUL The Carpenters Arms, Windmill Road, Mortimer. Demolition of Public House, construct 10 x 2 bedroom apartments. Refused – reason over development of site.

02/00101/HOUSE Abbey Croft, The Street, Mortimer – Approved.

02/00102/LBC

i. **Update on Mortimer Hill Planning Application:** An “ecological health check” has been produced by Bioscan Environmental Consultancy for Bryant Homes Southern Ltd. The main concern appears to be the “veteran” trees on site, which provide habitat for various invertebrates and fungi, but more importantly bat roosts, which are a European protected species. There is little talk of newts but much talk on vegetation. It was agreed that the report is passed to the Parish Council’s own ecologist for comment. **The Clerk** to action.

ii. **Report on Deposit Draft Joint Structure Plan for Berkshire Meeting:** On the evening of Monday 25th March Mr J Morden attended the Parish Information Session of the Berkshire Deposit Draft Joint Structure Plan. This Deposit Plan is for the period 2001-2016 and set out the distribution of the housing requirements. The 6 Unitary Authorities, bearing in mind the constraints of the available land, both brown field and green field in each district (Slough has very little room for development whereas West Berkshire has, even deducting the AONB has the greatest potential) had arrived at a reasonable equitable distribution. Until West Berkshire put forward it’s own Draft Plan showing where it intended to locate their share of the housing there was little, if anything, that the individual Parishes could contribute to the debate. The figures for housing for West Berkshire were:-

Period	Houses
2001 - 2006	3900
2006 – 2011	2590
2011 – 2016	2590

The reason for the higher number of houses in the first period is because of the shortfall in housing completions during the current Local Plan. These figures are subject to reassessment as the time rolls by and if employment in the area does not continue at its present rate of growth the numbers could be reduced. One way of achieving these targets without too much green field development is to use urban and town centre sites. Densities of 115 dwellings or more per hectare will be expected in town centres!

02/67 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** No report but Mr Challis mentioned that there is still no fence next to the Kissing Gate at the Hammonds Heath entrance to Footpath No 17 and that horses could easily use the footpath. He also mentioned that Footpath No 10 that runs parallel to The Avenue is very uneven and subsiding. **The Clerk** to chase WBC

i. **Update on Gas Main Brewery Common:** Prof. Davies asked that this be deferred until the next meeting.

02/68 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Mrs Philips reported that the Fairground Sub Committee had a brief meeting to discuss the quotations for the barrier/fence for the car park. Two quotations were received; one from Mr J Clarke and one from Eaton Berry and Mrs Philips proposed that the quotation for £2,985 from Mr J Clarke be accepted. This was seconded by Mrs J Lever and unanimously accepted. Mr C Lewis proposed that the quotation from Mr J Clarke to paint the car park barrier white for £125.00 also be accepted. Mrs A Philips seconded this

i. **Mortimer Fairground Trust – Report and Proposals to Parish Council:** Mr Puddephatt proposed the Parish Council accept the Fairground Trust’s proposals that the Parish Council act as agents on behalf of the Fairground Trust for:

- a) Finance
- b) Maintenance of The Fairground
- c) Play Equipment
- d) Tennis Courts

This was seconded by Prof. K Davies and unanimously accepted.

Mr Puddephatt read out the reply from Mr Coles of Brain, Chase & Coles Solicitors, in reply to our letter asking for legal advise regarding the right to hold a fair on the Fairground. **The Clerk** will forward a copy of this letter to The Charity Commissioners.

ii. **To Agree to Release a Payment on Account of £2,000 to The Fairground Trust in Accordance with the Budget agreed on 10th January 2002:** This was held over.

- 02/69 **Cemetery:** Mr Mazillius reported that he and Mr Gosling had inspected The Cemetery and felt that work needs to be done, as there are now a number of graves with shrubs/flowers planted on them, which is contrary to The Cemetery Rules. He asked that **The Clerk** send a letter to the next of kin asking for the gardens to be removed. The roses/shrubs are to be re planted in the garden of remembrance.
- 02/70 **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Code of Conduct:** The Stratfield Mortimer Parish Code of Conduct had been previously circulated to all Councillors and it was resolved that:
- a) In accordance with Section 51(1) of the Local Government Act 2000, Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council adopts the Model Code of Conduct set out in the Schedule to the Parish Councils (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2001 without amendment as the Council's Local Code of Conduct with effect from 1st May 2002.
 - b) Every member of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council shall sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office incorporating the statutory undertaking to observe the approved Local Code of Conduct and return it to the Clerk by 30th June 2002 at the latest. The Clerk shall inform West Berkshire District Council's Monitoring Officer accordingly.
- 02/71 **Audited Accounts/Bank Accounts:**
- i. **Acceptance of Audited Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2001:** The Chairman presented to the Council the slightly amended Parish Accounts (following Audit) for the year ended 31st March 2001. These were agreed then signed and dated by the Chairman and The Clerk (RFO).
 - ii. **Confirmation of Receipt of the Memorandum of Matters Arising from the Audit of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2001:** The Chairman read out the points on the Memorandum of Matters Arising from the Audit Year 2000/2001. The Chairman then signed the Memorandum of Matters Arising, which is to be returned to The District Auditor, confirming that the Parish Council considered these matters.
 - iii. **New Audit Arrangement:** Mr Puddephatt advised Councillors that the new Audit arrangements are now in place and that the Parish Council will need to appoint an internal auditor to review the month to month running of the Council's Accounts. This is to be held over until next month so that a suitable Auditor may be found. Councillors were asked to let The Clerk have names of any person that may be approached.
- 02/72 **Councillor Training – Training Day 29th June 2002:** This is the date that the Parish Council will hold a training session at St Johns Hall with The Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Further Education. More details to follow. **Councillors** please keep this date free.
- 02/73 **Update on Sovereign Housing/West Berkshire Information Centre:** Ms Harding reported that there had been some confusion over the establishment of a joint Information Centre in St John's Hall, with both West Berkshire and Sovereign Housing being reluctant to make the first move. However they are both now saying they are ready to start, subject to the premises being examined and being acceptable. **Ms Harding** will organise a tour of St John's Hall.
- 02/74 **Report from Governor Mortimer St John's Infant School:** Mr Puddephatt read out a report from Mrs Mayes, Local Authority Governor, Mortimer St John's School. The report stated that the school is now organised into three year groups, with 154 children on the roll. There is a successful After School Club for both St John's and St Mary's pupils and other extra curricula activities including French Club, Football and Line Dancing. The School was the subject of an Ofsted Inspection during the Spring Term and Mrs Mayes will let the Parish Council have a copy of the official report when it becomes available.
- 02/75 **Annual Parish Assembly:** Mr Puddephatt reminded Councillors that the Annual Parish Assembly is on Wednesday 24th April at 7:30 p.m. in St John's Hall. The minutes of the 2001 Annual Parish Assembly were circulated to all Councillors.
- 02/76 **Information Day for New Councillors: Saturday 11th May 2002:** Mr Puddephatt said that the four new Councillors had been asked if they would be interested in attending an Information Day for New Councillors on Saturday 11th May 2002 at Lambourn Memorial Hall. Mrs R Weiss said she could and Mr J Mazillius may be able to attend. **The Clerk** to action.
- 02/77 **Foudry Brook Flood Study by Environmental Agency:** Mrs Philips advised that the Environmental Agency is undertaking a flood study of the Foudry Brook. The study will involve hydrological and hydraulic modelling and floodplain mapping of the Foudry Book and its tributaries.

The first phase of the study involves the production of a historic flooding database, to include records of past floods and they ask for if anyone could provide them with relevant source of information which may include photographs, newspaper articles etc. Councillors were asked to pass on any information to The Clerk.

02/78 **Parish Office:** No report.

02/79 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:**

- i. **Clerk's Salary:** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr P Challis.
- ii. **Clerk's Tax and NI:** Proposed by Mr A Thorpe and seconded by Mr C Lewis.
- iii. **Clerk's Expenses:** Proposed by Mr M Loader and seconded by Mrs J Lever
- iv. **Custodian's Hours and Expenses:** Mr J Mazillius declared an interest. Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr A Thorpe.
- v. **SLCC Publications – A Practitioners Guide – Manual for New Audit Procedures £9.95:** Proposed by Mr G Puddephatt and seconded by Ms S Harding.
- vi. **West Berkshire Council £237.40 inc. VAT for Dog Waste Collection:** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr J Mazillius.
- vii. **British Telecom £176.43 inc VAT:** Mr G Puddephatt declared an interest. Proposed by Mr A Thorpe and seconded by Mr J Mazillius. **Ms S Harding** has agreed that she will look into alternative telephone suppliers and report back to the Council.
- viii. **Viking Direct £117.49 inc VAT for Fax/Copier Machine for Parish Office:** Already agreed at Meeting on the 14th March 2002.
- ix. **Grant to Fairground Trust £2,000.00:** Held over to next meeting.
- x. **Butlers Land Services £675.63, including VAT, for cutting the Fairground Hedge as agreed March Meeting:** Proposed by Mr C Lewis and seconded by Mr P Challis.
- xi. **Subscriptions to Newbury Weekly News/Reading Chronicle:** It was decided not to subscribe to the above newspapers.

02/80 **Correspondence:**

- i. Invitation to Members of the Parish Council to remember Mrs Ruth Crichton at St Mary's Church on Sunday 21st April 2002 (to include a visit to the Parish Council Office to view the clock which stands in appreciation of her work for the village). **Mr J Mazillius and Mr A Thorpe** to attend.
- ii. Invitation to Members of the Parish Council to the Mortimer Maying Service to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee at St May's Church on Monday 3^d June at 3p.m. **Mrs A Philips** is to attend.

02/81 **AOB:** There was no Any Other Business.

Date of Next Meeting: Annual General Meeting - Thursday 9th May at 7:30 p.m.

List of payments made:

Date	Cheque No.	Payee	Amount
11 th April 2002	501074	SLCC Publications	9.95
	501075	Mrs J E Kirk	
	501076	Inland Revenue	
	501077	Mrs J E Kirk	
	501078	Mr J S Mazillius	165.06
	501079	West Berkshire Council	237.40
	501080	British Telecom	176.43
	501081	Viking Direct	117.49
	501082	The Co-operative Bank Plc	2,000.00
	501083	Butlers Lands Estates Services	675.63

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 21:30