



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 14 November 2002 at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** G Puddephatt (Chairman), Councillors: K Davies, Mrs R Weiss, J Mazillius, J Gosling, Mrs A Philips, C Lewis, L Picking, M Loader, J Morden, A Thorpe, R Peters Mrs J Kirk (Clerk), K Lock (District)

**Apologies:** Councillors: P Challis, Ms S Harding,

02/201 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

**Minutes:**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> October 2002 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters Arising:**

- 02/176(iv) Mrs Kirk read out a letter from Mrs Plank, Guide Leader Mortimer Guides, which thanked the Parish Council for paying for the second skip needed to clear the site after the demolition of the Guide Hut.
- 02/186 Mrs Kirk reported that Thames Valley Police had replied saying that they were unable to give extra Police cover over Halloween and a letter thanking us for our action from a parishioner who said there was no repetition of last year's trouble.
- 02/189 Mrs Kirk reported that West Berkshire Council have confirmed that they are arranging for the delivery of the sand and sandbags for the bottom of The Street and that they have ordered a sand hopper.
- 02/195 Mrs Kirk read out a letter received from the Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need Charity regarding The British Legion's request to refurbish the War Memorial. They have said that they would support a scheme with a 50/50 contribution from the Parish Council. This was held over until next month's meeting.
- 02/174 Mr Lock reported that he had ascertained that there isn't a budget at West Berkshire Council to provide a litter bin next to the notice board at St Catherine's Hill but they would be prepared to empty one if perhaps the Parish Council could provide the bin. **The Clerk** to obtain costings and report back at the next meeting. Mr Lock also said he is awaiting exact details regarding the ownership of the land at St Mary's School but the Garden is leased by the Council, the playing fields belong to the Council and the buildings to a trust. He will obtain more information and report back.

02/202 **Report from District Councillors:**

Mr Lock reported that signs for alternative routes for vehicles over 17.5 tons have been put up in the village. This is because the bridge at Bloomfield Hatch has failed a recent survey and is in need of repair. He said the railway authority has promised to do the work within 18 months but West Berkshire Council are pressing them to do it sooner. The planning application for a dwelling to be attached to Aborn Parade has not been decided but at present there is a disagreement between the Council and the developer over TPO's on trees adjacent to the site. The Mortimer Garage site has received planning permission and the concerns about access via St John's Road have been resolved. There has been an appeal against the decision to refuse a workshop in Mortimer Lane. Work on altering Windmill Court is likely to proceed early next year and the aim is to provide extra care facilities for residents remaining in their own home with a Social Services support package.

02/203 **Planning:** Mr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met just once since the last Council Meeting on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2002 to consider three applications:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 02/02090/FUL | 56 Victoria Road (Mann & Co). Ground floor extension with terrace over external staircase. Demolition of garage and adaptations to toilet block. No objection. |
| 02/02166/ADV | 56 Victoria Road (Mann & Co). Un illuminated fascia sign. No objection.  |

02/02261/HOUSE 22 St Mary's Road. New catslide porch to front, two storey rear extension. No objection.

**The Following Planning Decisions have been received:**

02/02006/HOUSE 34 The Crescent. Proposed single storey rear extension – approved.

02/01935/HOUSE 21 The Crescent. Joining of pitched garage and porch roof across front of house – approved.

02/01081/FUL 8 West End Road (Mortimer Garage). New dental surgery, 6 flats and one cottage with parking – approved.

02/01932/HOUSE 16 Spring Lane. Balcony to rear of new extension – approved.

Mr Morden reported that the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan had been examined and confirmed that the Turks Lane Site (Long View House) had been deleted from the plan. Mr Morden read out two letters of complaint regarding the new house in Mortimer Lane, as the line of the front wall appears to be a traffic hazard. Mr Lock confirmed that he has contacted the Planning Department asking for the Enforcement Officer to pay a visit.

02/204 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** No report.

- i. **Letter re The Use of Motorbikes on Windmill Common:** Mr Peters asked that this be held over until the next meeting after the Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee has met to discuss this.
- ii. **Abandoned Car – Car Park West End Road:** Mrs Kirk advised that the details of the abandoned car have been passed to West Berkshire Council.
- iii. **Brewery Common:** Professor Davies advised of the need to identify houses that enjoy access over the Council's Commons with a view to advising them about the July 2003 deadline for applying to The Parish Council for an easement over the common. The Committee will investigate this further and report back at the next meeting.

02/205 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Mrs Philips informed that 12 people helped at the Litter Pick on the 13<sup>th</sup> October and that 12 sacks of litter were collected and some bushes were pruned. Mrs Philips said it is hoped to hold another litter pick in the spring.

- i. **To Consider Providing Extra Litter Bins on Fairground:** It was decided to discuss this at the next meeting after costings have been obtained. **Mrs Philips** to action.
- ii. **Application from John Lawson's Circus:** Mrs Kirk advised that John Lawson's Circus had written saying that they are currently planning their tour for the Autumn of 2003 and would like to visit Mortimer as they haven't visited the village since 1999. **The Clerk** is to contact them and offer the grazing area.
- iii. **Mortimer Fairground Trust Report.** Prof. Davies reported that he had received a telephone call from the solicitors who say a written reply will be sent very soon.

02/206 **Cemetery:** Mr Gosling reported that an oak tree had blown down in the recent storms, which Mr Mazillius is attending to. The tree will need to be replaced at a later date.

- i. **Letter from Mr A D F Tucker re Cemetery Regulations:** Mr Gosling read out a letter received from Mr Tucker regarding the Cemetery Regulations recently sent to him. **The Clerk** to reply accordingly.
- ii. **Reply from Wokefield Parish Council re St Mary's Churchyard:** Mr Gosling read out a letter received from Wokefield Parish Council regarding the contribution to St Mary's Churchyard and say that they will seek further clarification.
- iii. **Cemetery Package £125.00 + VAT:** Mr Gosling said that he had looked into Impact's Cemetery Manager PC Package at a cost of £125.00 plus VAT. It was decided that **The Clerk** would ask Mr Powers at Impact for a demonstration disk to ascertain if it would be helpful for the Council to purchase this software.

02/207 **Update on Parish Plan:** Mr G Mayes, Chairman of the Parish Plan Group, recapped and up-dated the Council on the Parish Plan to date. He reported that both Mr Puddephatt and Mrs Kirk had attended a Co-ordinating Group Meeting the night before at which the data from the cross referencing group were looked at. The draft application form has been sent to the Community Council for Berkshire for comment. If the grant application is successful this will give the Parish Plan Group funds of up to £5,000 plus £1,700 to collect the necessary data, analyse it and prepare the report by October 2003. To retain the current momentum it is the Group's intention to produce a third newsletter in early January and hold a full drop in meeting at the end of January 2003 to discuss and distribute assignment on selected projects to interested people. Mr C Lewis then proposed that Mr Puddephatt sign the Grant Application to the Countryside Agency on behalf of the Parish Council

this was seconded by Mr A Thorpe. This was duly signed. **The Clerk** to action.

- 02/208 **Issues Raised from Parish Plan Initial Questionnaire:** Mr Puddephatt brought to councillors attention the list of a number of issues raised from the questionnaires sent out to all parishioners from the Parish Plan group which mainly fell into three categories: Develop village community, transport and housing. It was decided that **The Clerk** would liaise with councillors and collate a list of responses.
- 02/209 **Report from Internal Auditor:** Mrs Kirk reported that the Internal Auditor, Mr F Feline, had carried out an interim internal audit and found the accounts to be correctly accounted for. He did draw attention to the lack of a risk assessment by the Council to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to manage all identified risks. This was discussed and **Mr J Mazillius** is to look at the risk assessment requirements and report back at the next meeting. Mr Feline also stated that he could not see that a proper budgetary process was evident. The Financial Officer has now set up the precept budgets on the Council's Account Package and distributed up-to-date accounts showing these.
- 02/210 **Report from Finance & General Purposes Committee:** Mr Puddephatt reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had met on the 6<sup>th</sup> November and had reviewed the budget /accounts and the Standing Orders. Mr Puddephatt proposed that the Council adopt the recommendations for the National Salary Award for Council Clerks for SCP 21 for The Clerk, to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002; Prof K Davies seconded this.
- 02/211 **Standing Orders & Risk Assessment Requirements:** Mr Puddephatt advised that both the Standing Orders and Risk Assessment Requirements need to be in place before the Council adopts the Freedom of Information Act. Draft Standing Orders were circulated to all Councillors who were asked to submit any changes so they may be adopted at the December Meeting. The Risk Assessment Requirements were discussed in 02/209 above.
- 02/212 **Front Page Web Editor:** Mr Puddephatt advised that as the Council's website is being well used (between 146 and 176 hits weekly) and that more information will need to be stored on the website for the Freedom of Information Act it would be advisable to have a new web editor as at present this is achieved using word. After some discussion Mr Puddephatt proposed that Microsoft FrontPage 2002 be purchased at a cost of £109.00 plus VAT. Mr C Lewis seconded this. **The Clerk** to action.
- 02/213 **Freedom of Information Act 2000:** Professor Davies advised about the Freedom of Information Act. The core classes of information that must be provided at this stage are the Council's internal practice and procedure (Minutes of Meetings for 2 years, Procedural Standing Orders, the Council's Annual Report to Parish Meeting). Code of Conduct (Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Members Register of Interest and Register of Members Interests Book), Periodic Electoral Review (information concerning changes to the electoral arrangements for the parish Council) and Employment Practice and Procedure (terms and conditions of employment and job descriptions). A draft Declaration Form has been prepared and the Act needs to be adopted at next month's meeting.
- 02/214 **Report on the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society of Local Council Clerks:** Mrs Kirk referred to her written report (circulated to all Councillors) on the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society of Local Council Clerks.
- 02/215 **SLCC "Working with Your Council" Home Study Course:** Mr Puddephatt advised that as part of the requirement for Council's to achieve Quality Council Status as laid down in the Rural White Paper is to have a qualified clerk. To help clerk's obtain this status the SLCC have obtained a £2m grant from the Countryside Agency to improve training and together with the University of Gloucestershire have launched a new home study course called "Working with Your Council" to help support clerks in their local Council role at a cost of £130.00. He said that The Clerk is willing to undertake the training course and Professor K Davies proposed that the course be purchased and Mrs R Weiss seconded this and it was unanimously agreed. **The Clerk** to action.
- 02/216 **Letter from Mortimer St Mary's Junior School re School Crossing Patrol:** Mr Puddephatt read out a copy of a letter sent from St Mary's School, Chair of Governors to West Berkshire Council which asks for the reinstatement of a school crossing patrol to safely cross the children over the road. **The Clerk** to send supporting letter to West Berkshire Council.
- 02/217 **Eastern Area Forum – Topics for Next Agenda:** Mr Puddephatt read out a letter from West Berkshire asking for topics for discussion for the next Eastern Area Forum Meeting.
- 02/218 **The Stratfield Mortimer Community Award 2003:** Mr Puddephatt advised that posters asking for

nominations for next year's Community Award have been put up. The closing date for nominations is 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002 and these should be sent to The Clerk.

- 02/219 **To Discuss Change of Specification re Heater for Office:** Further to Minute Number 02/196 last month the specification for the office heater has changed from 3.4kw to 2.5kw and revised quotations were obtained. Three revised quotations were received from reputable local firms, which were £595.00, £516.00 and £347.00. As The Council are subject to best value audit regulations Mr A Thorpe proposed that the quotation for £347.00 be accepted. Professor K Davies seconded this and was unanimously agreed. **The Clerk** to action.
- 02/220 **Vacancy for Custodian:** Mr Puddephatt advised that Mr Leslie O'Rourke had been interviewed for the position of Village Custodian and Mr C Lewis proposed that he be offered the position. Professor K Davies seconded this. Mr Puddephatt thanked Mr J Mazillius for his all his hard work in the past and for offering to stay until April if it had been necessary. There will be a month's handover period. **The Clerk** to action.
- 02/221 **Vacancy for New Councillor:**  
Mr Puddephatt advised that two councillors had been interviewed for the Parish Council Vacancy prior to the Parish Council Meeting. After a long discussion it was decided not to fill the vacancy by co-option at the present time because of the short term until the local elections in May. **The Clerk** to advise applicants.
- 02/222 **To Agree Payment to Host Europe Internet Ltd for renewal of the Web Hosting and Domain Name £105.69 inc VAT:** Proposed by Mr C Lewis and seconded by Mrs A Philips.
- 02/223 **To Agree Payment to BALC for Electronic Copy of Standing Orders £14.98:** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Professor K Davies.
- 02/224 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:**
- i. **Clerk's Salary:** Proposed by Prof K Davies and seconded by Mr C Lewis.
  - ii. **Clerk's Tax and NI:** Proposed by Mr M Loader and seconded by Mr J Morden.
  - iii. **Clerk's Expenses:** Proposed by Mr M Loader and seconded by Mr J Morden..
  - iv. **Custodian's Hours and Expenses:** Not submitted this month.
  - v. **Ian Philips – Grass Cutting Cemetery/Churchyard £478.50 inc VAT:** Mrs Philips declared an interest. Paid as per contract.
  - vi. **Bridgewater Landscape Services – Grass Cutting Alfred Palmer Field £80.00:** Paid as per contract.
  - vii. **Shaw & Son – Cemetery Registers £160.28 inc VAT:** Proposed by Mr J Gosling and seconded by Mrs A Philips
  - viii. **Sign Wise – Remembrance Day Signs £82.84 inc VAT:** Proposed by Mr L Picking and seconded by Mrs A Philips. The Mortimer Scouts have the signs for safe keeping.
  - ix. **Mrs A Philips – Reimbursement for Litter Pick Equipment £9.00**
  - x. **Royal British Legion – Poppy Wreath £18.100:** Proposed by Mr J Morden and seconded by Mr C Lewis.
  - xi. **Thames Water – Water Trough Fairground - £7.36:** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr C Lewis.
- 02/225 **Correspondence:**
- i. Sarah Robertson, Newbury Weekly News asking if anyone in Mortimer might be willing to act as a correspondent for Parish Council Meetings. There would be a small payment and expenses.
  - ii. Letter from Head Girl, Willink School re cycle path between Mortimer and Burghfield Common to be put on Agenda next time.
  - iii. West Berkshire Structure Plan Sustainability Appraisal. To be held in the Parish Office.
  - iv. West Berkshire Partnership Community Plan 2003-2008 Consultation Document
  - v. West Berkshire Winter Service Policy and Plan for 2002/03.
  - vi. Open Spaces Newsletter.
- 02/226 **A.O.B.** There was no Any Other Business.
- 02/227 **Addendum**  
**To Agree Payment to Mr F Feline for Internal Audit Services £150.00:** Proposed Mr R Peters and seconded by Prof K Davies.

- 02/228 **To Agree Payment to BALC for K Davies & J Kirk to attend Employment Law Training Event on 30.11.02 at a cost of £25.00:** Proposed by Mr L Picking and seconded by Mr R Peters.
- 02/229 **To Agree Payment to J Clarke for Work on Fairground £38.00:** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr J Mazillius.
- 02/230 **Letter From West Berkshire re Parish Council Election Costs:** Mr Puddephatt read out a letter from The Elections and Registrations Manager, West Berkshire Council advising of the estimated costs for next year's elections for over 2,500 electors to be £3,000.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2002 at 7:30 p.m.

List of payments made:

Date	Cheque No.	Payee	Amount
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501163	Host Europe Internet Ltd	105.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501164	BALC	14.98
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501165	Mrs J E Kirk	
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501166	Inland Revenue	
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501167	Ian Philips	478.50
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501168	Bridgewood Landscape Services	80.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501169	Shaw & Sons Ltd	160.28
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501170	Sign Wise	82.84
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501171	Mrs A Philips	9.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501172	Royal British Legion	18.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501173	Thames Water Utilities Ltd	7.36
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501174	Mr F J Feline	150.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501175	BALC	25.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501176	J Clarke	38.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501177	SLCC	130.00
14 <sup>th</sup> November 2002	501178	Mrs J E Kirk	

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 22:20