



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 12 December 2002 at 7.30 p.m.

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

Apologies: Councillors: Ms S Harding, J Gosling, M Loader, R Peters

02/231 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

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

Matters Arising:

- 02/206(i) Mrs Kirk read out a further letter from Mr Tucker regarding the Cemetery Regulations and this has been passed to the Cemetery Committee who will report back at the next meeting.
- 02/126 Mrs Kirk read out a reply from West Berkshire to The Chair of Governors, St Mary's School in which they say they do not consider that a crossing patroller is required but that they will continue to monitor the situation and asking St Mary's to inform them of any incident that causes further concern.

02/232 **Report from District Councillors:**

Mr Lock reported the following on local matters. The roadside wall at the new house in Mortimer Lane has caused loss of visibility, the wall was erected without planning permission and the builder has been told to apply retrospectively. The likely outcome is a reduction of the wall to 1 meter on an appeal. The wrong direction sign at the roundabout on The Street pointing to Mortimer in the direction of Beech Hill has been removed and new signs will be erected. The application for a house at Aborn Parade has been withdrawn and demolition is about to begin at The Carpenters Arms. Mr Lock reported that officers have advised that they are content that the objections for the Village Parking Scheme can be met, most of the design work has been done and discussions are taking place with a contractor about drainage etc. and the whole thing should be signed off in early January with completion before the end of March. The present yellow lines painted recently were due to an oversight but when the second lines are added the original lines will not need repainting. Negotiations are continuing on Mortimer Hill and there is a petition for a continuous footpath on the south side of The Street. The national tests for key stage 2 (age 11) children have been published and West Berkshire and St Mary's have done well, the comparisons in percentages are as follows: He advised that he had a meeting with the 4 residents of the care home section at Windmill Court and their relatives and confirmed that the Council has agreed to sell that part to Sovereign Housing to convert to flats for supported independent living. The Sovereign Board is expected to give the go ahead in January. Thames Valley Police have announced that they are redeploying 280 personnel into front line duties but Newbury's share is 14 (Reading 58). The Audit Commission have announced the results of their Corporate Performance Review have been received and West Berkshire has been judged as "fair" and received 2 out of 4 marks for the way they work and 3 out of 4 for service delivery.

Mr A Thorpe drew attention to the potential threat to rural post offices including Mortimer in regard to the new regulations concerning the payment of pensions and benefits. He emphasised the importance of requesting payment through the Post Office in order to continue viability and to use the village shops and resources otherwise they will disappear.

02/233 **Planning:** Mr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met just once since the last Council Meeting on Thursday 21st November 2002 to consider six applications:

- 02/01767/OUT Land adjacent to 14 The Avenue. Outline planning application for detached chalet dwelling with integral double garage. AMENDED PLAN (see comment 6th September 02). No objection in principle but reserve right to object to full application if drive not moved to north in order to avoid vehicles being driven within metre or two of neighbours kitchen window.
- 02/02154/HOUSE 22 King Street. Single storey rear extension to be used as conservatory. No objection.
- 02/02280/HOUSE Five Oaken Cottage, Reading Road. Alteration and extension. No objection but highways must ensure that sufficient turning area is available to enable all vehicles to leave the property in a forward direction, this to include fuel delivery as this is an accident black spot and no vehicle should be allowed to remain stationary on the highway at this point to make deliveries.
- 02/02391/FUL 23 Stephens Close. New dwelling. No objections subject to:
1. Restriction of building hours.
2. No materials, skips etc. to be left on road.
- 02/02381/FUL Gardeners Cottage, Mowbrays Hill. Detached garage. No objection but previous experience has shown that this area is a fire hazard and building a substantially timber frame building so close to woodland is a risk.
- 02/02401/HOUSE At this point Mr J Morden declared an interest (adjacent property) and withdrew and Mr A Thorpe took the Chair.
Hollybank Cottage, St Mary's Road. Single storey extension with integral garage.
Object:
1. Over development of site.
2. 6 earlier applications to extend the main property between October 1990 and October 1991 met with 5 refusals, one being upheld on appeal, before Newbury District Council approved the final application but indicated that the site was now fully developed and any further extension would be deleterious to neighbouring properties.

The Following Planning Decisions have been received:

- 02/01974/HOUSE 11 Fairfield Park, West End Road. Retrospective application for addition of a main bedroom and hallway – approved.
- 02/01767/OUT Land adjacent to 14 The Avenue. Outline planning for a detached chalet style dwelling with integral double garage – approved.
- 02/01974/HOUSE 12 Fairfield Park, West End Road. Single storey replaced existing entrance porch, utility room, conservatory (retrospective) – approved.
- 02/02166/ADV 56 Victoria Road (Mann & Co). Shop Sign – approved.
- 02/02090/FUL 56 Victoria Road (Mann & Co). Ground floor extension with terrace over and external staircase, demolition of garage and adaptations to toilet block. Alterations to shop front – approved.
- 02/02261/HOUSE 22 St Mary's Road. New catslide porch to front, two storey rear extension - approved.

Tree Inspection: Land at Stephens Firs following a letter to West Berkshire Council from D Hodges, 3 Stephens Firs the said trees were visually inspected. There is no evidence of significant defects and only minor work is required to reduce risk of falling branches. Responsibility - either WBC or Sovereign Housing Association to be determined.

Tree Preservation Orders:

- Land at The Avenue following representations and objections to The Order, which were considered by the Area Planning Sub Committee on the 20th November 2002. The Tree Preservation Order has now been formally confirmed.
- Land at West End Road (adjacent to Aborn Parade) following representations and objections to The Order, which were considered by the Area Planning Sub Committee on the 20th November 2002. The Tree Preservation Order has now been formally confirmed.

02/234

Roads, Footpaths and Commons: In the absence of Mr Peters Mr Puddephatt reported that the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee met on the 25th November 2002. Mr R Peters was elected Chairman

- i. **Letter re The Use of Motorbikes on Windmill Common:** Mr Puddephatt reported that the Committee discussed this. Their findings were that there is a Byway across Windmill Common and so long as the motorcycles are taxed and insured for use on the road they are entitled to use the right of way. If they are not taxed and insured their use would be a matter for the Police. Access to Windmill Common for these motorbikes appears to be:

1. From Windmill Road along the Byway
2. From Windmill Road along footpath 26/27 by Windmill Court

3. From Longmoor Lane along an unofficial footpath.
4. Through the woods from the area of Five Oaken along footpath 27.

These access routes were looked into at a further meeting of the Committee on the 1st December and the following proposals were made:

1. From Windmill Road along the Byway. So long as any vehicle using this access is road legal they are allowed to do so.
2. From Windmill Road along footpath 26/27 by Windmill Court. For this access it was suggested a kissing gate be installed, this would allow pedestrian, wheelchair and pushchair access and hopefully deny vehicular access.
3. From Longmoor Lane along an unofficial footpath. This is an unofficial access well used by pedestrians, dumpers of rubbish and occasional vehicular access. For this access it was suggested that a conventional stile with additional fence rails be installed to completely cover the space between the two oak trees and the fence.
4. Through the woods from the area of Five Oaken and College Piece along Footpath 27. For this access it was suggested installing a conventional stile with additional fence rails to completely cover the space between the bank, tree and fence.

Mrs Kirk had also obtained two quotations for No Motorcycle Signs from Ringway Services and these will be passed back to the Committee for consideration. It was decided to investigate the above suggestions and ask the Committee to obtain quotations for the styles etc and report back at the February Meeting.

- ii. **Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 – Vehicular Access Across Common & Other Land:** Professor Davies said that the Parish Council must warn owners of property adjoining Brewery and Summerlug Commons of the timescales for the Easements. He read out a suggested draft letter and it was unanimously agreed that this should be sent, registered post, to all affected property owners. **The Clerk** to action.

- iii. **To Consider Litter Bin for St Catherine's Hill:** This was held over until the next meeting
- 02/235 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Mrs Philips reported that the Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committee met on the 10th December Mrs A Philips was elected Chairman. The quotation to repair the fence around the play area was discussed (see below). A proposal to construct a proper surface for footpath No 37 from Victoria Road to Windmill Road (3ft wide, tarmac with concrete edging) was discussed; but Professor Davies pointed out that as this is a public footpath its ownership will almost certainly be vested in West Berkshire Council as highway authority. The Committee are looking into the question, including various grant options. Mrs Philips proposed that, in principle, expenditure on the footpath be budgeted for in the next financial year, this was seconded by Mr G Puddephatt and unanimously agreed.

- i. **To Consider Providing Extra Litter Bins on Fairground:** This was held over until the next meeting.
- ii. **To Discuss Quotation to Straighten or Replace Broken Bow Tops around Play Area:** Due to vandalism a quote was considered by the Committee for straightening, replacing as necessary and strengthening the bent or broken bow tops of the Play Area railings at a cost of £1,325.00. Mrs A Philips proposed that the estimate be accepted and this was seconded by Mr J Mazillius and unanimously agreed. This is unbudgeted expenditure but funds are available in the Fairground budget. **The Clerk** to action.
- iii. **Correspondence from Cricket Club re funds for Cricket Pavilion:** A letter has been received from Mortimer Cricket Club asking whether the new Pavilion will be started in the new season as the Cricket Club need to make urgent repairs to their current building. They also ask if they can have access to the Fairground through the new car park barriers and asked that the grass cutting of the outfield could be improved for the coming season. **The Clerk** to advise them that the Parish Council are not going to be able to start the Pavilion in the near future, to arrange for a key for the barrier through the Clerk or Custodian and that the grass cutting contract will be looked into when the contracts are due for renewal in the spring. The Cricket Club is also to be asked if they could tidy up items from the outside of the pavilion.
- iv. **Custodian – Maintenance of Lawn Mower and Storage of Equipment:** Mr Mazillius advised that the lawn mower needs a service and that the new custodian needs somewhere

to store it. **The Clerk** to investigate.

- v. **Mortimer Fairground Trust Report:** Professor Davies reported that he had received an interim reply from the solicitors. Further discussion is deferred to the next meeting of the Council.

02/236 **Cemetery:**

- i. **Cemetery Package £125.00 + VAT:** Held over until next meeting.
- ii. **To Consider Further Grass Cut for St Mary's Churchyard & Cemetery £478.50 inc VAT:** Mrs A Philips declared an interest and took no part in the discussion. Mr L Picking proposed that we ask the contractor to cut the grass once more. Mr J Mazillius seconded this.

02/237 **To Adopt Standing Orders and Financial Regulations:** Mr L Picking proposed that the Council adopt the previously circulated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations; this was seconded by Prof. K Davies and unanimously accepted.

02/238 **Financial Risk Assessment:** Mr Mazillius made some recommendations regarding the Council's financial risk assessment, which will be passed to the next Finance and General Finance Meeting for consideration.

02/239 **Committee Budget Requirements for 2003/04 Precept:** Mr Puddephatt advised Councillors that Committee Budget Requirements are needed by the end of December so that these may be considered when setting the precept.

02/240 **To Adopt Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Publication Schemes:** Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council acknowledges the duty placed upon it by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. The Council resolves to adopt the Model Scheme for Local Council (Core Classes Only). The Clerk then signed the Declaration Form and will send copies to the Information Commission and place copies on the Parish Council Notice Boards and Website stating that documents within the core classes are available to view, but all requests must be in writing with 20 days' notice.

02/241 **Restoring and Renovating War Memorial:** Mrs Kirk reported that further quotations for restoring the war memorial had been obtained by Air Vice Marshal Newton and that separate quotations are being obtained for restoration work. Consideration should be given to getting the war memorial listed but this would need to be looked into further. Ownership is probably vested in West Berkshire Council if the war memorial stands on highway land. Mr Puddephatt proposed that the Council agree in principle to have the war memorial cleaned and continue to investigate options regarding the restoration work. Prof K Davies seconded this and was unanimously agreed.

02/242 **Update on Parish Plan:** Mr Puddephatt advised that a grant of £5,000 has now been granted by the Countryside Agency for producing a Parish Plan. There will be an Open Forum Meeting on Saturday 25th January 2003 at 9.30am to launch the next phase of the work. The aims of this meeting are to get as many people to attend as possible and bring everyone in the parish up to date with progress, to obtain the views of all who attend to develop the ideas put forward so far. He asked if Councillors would find it beneficial to attend or participate in the Open Forum in January and after a show of hands a number of Councillors said they were willing to attend.

02/243 **Flooding Update:** Mrs Philips advised that West Berkshire Council had met with Mr G Mayes and Mr B Cole to obtain as much information as possible on the drains etc. She advised that there had been a problem with the delivery of sand, bags and the hopper and **The Clerk** is to investigate.

02/244 **Vacancy – Representative of the Parish Council on Mortimer St Mary's School Governing Body:** Mr Puddephatt advised that as Mrs Heather Prior is moving from the village in January she has resigned from her position as the Parish Council's representative on Mortimer St Mary's Governing Body. The Clerk advised that the vacancy has been advertised on the notice boards and at St Mary's School.

02/245 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:**

- i. **Clerk's Salary** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr C Lewis.
- ii. **Clerk's Tax and NI :** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Mr C Lewis.
- iii. **Clerk's Expenses:** Proposed by Mr J Morden and seconded by Mrs A Philips.
- iv. **Custodian's Hours and Expenses:** Not submitted this month.
- v. **SLCC Annual Subscription £60.00:** Proposed by Mr L Picking and seconded by Mr A

- Thorpe.
- vi. **Impact – Renewal of Annual Support Service for Accounts Package £55.00:** Proposed by Mrs A Philips and seconded by Prof K Davies.
- vii. **M Oke – Installation of Heater Parish Office £347.00:** Already agreed as per quotation.

02/246 **Correspondence:**

- i. A number of circulars were distributed to councillors.

02/247 **A.O.B.** Mr Mazillius read out a statement by Mr J Gosling (the Council's representative on Clark's Educational Foundation). The Trustees of the Charity formally objected to the change of status of St Mary's School from voluntary controlled to voluntary aided until the ownership of the school and grounds were agreed. The Trustees believe, on the evidence of documents in their possession, that they own the school and part of the grounds. The Trustees wish to state that they have no objection to the change of status as such, but as trustees have to ensure that the assets of the charity are safeguarded.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 9 January 2003 at 7:30 p.m.

List of payments made:

Date	Cheque No.	Payee	Amount
12 th December 2002	501180	Mrs J E Kirk	
12 th December 2002	506481	Inland Revenue	
12 th December 2002	501182	Mrs J E Kirk	
12 th December 2002	501183	The Society of Local Council Clerks	£60.00
12 th December 2002	501184	Impact	£55.00
12 th December 2002	501185	Michael Oke	£347.00

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