



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 10th April 2008 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: K Davies (Chairman), P Blagden, P Challis, S Clark, A Colaço, D Ives, N Kiley (from 8:55pm (08/58), M Lock, J Morden, D. Morsley, A Philips, A Thorpe, I Titman-Reade, and the Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors: T Shorrocks, A Smith.

Declaration of Interest: None.

The Chairman introduced the newly co-opted councillor Danusia Morsley.

08/47 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of 13th March 2008 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

08/35 Further to 08/35 the witness statements have been distributed to residents to complete but more statements are still required so that the claim to register this path as a public right of way can be made to WBC. A flyer has been produced and will be distributed to all residents in the area around the path and a poster will be displayed on the notice boards.

08/36 Burnett's Fun Fair. Further to minute no 08/36 (ii) Burnett's Funfair has decided not to visit Mortimer this time presumably because of being restricted to the grazing area.

08/41 Cllr Blagden requested that the completed actions on the current Action Plan be minuted (please see 08/55 below).

08/48 **Report from District Councillors:** District Councillor Keith Lock reported that West Berkshire Council Highways and Engineering Department has now issued a list of works planned across the District over the next two years to improve drainage and flood defences. This list for Mortimer this year includes cleansing the highway drain in The Street and ditch clearance in Pitfield Lane and improving the drainage system north of the village next year.

08/49 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met once since the last Council Meeting on the 3rd April 2008 when 3 plans were considered.

08/00332/HOUSE 7 Windmill Road. Single storey rear extension. No objection.

08/00480/HOUSE 56 The Crescent. Replacement of single storey rear conservatory. No objection.

08/00502/HOUSE 1 Damson Drive. Rear conservatory. No objection.

The following Planning Officers recommendations have been received from West Berkshire Council:

08/00098/FULD 9-13 Victoria Road (Budgens). Mixed use development, retail on ground floor and 7 residential units on the first floor. Permission granted.

08/00106/FULD 17 Campbell's Green. New 3 bedroom end of terrace property. Permission granted.

08/00124/HOUSE 15 St Mary's Road. Proposed first floor front, single storey side and two storey rear extensions. Permission granted.

08/00157/HOUSE 25 St Mary's Road. New single storey garage, workshop, garden room and greenhouse to replace existing. Permission granted.

08/00289/FULD 33 St John's Road. Erection of 2 bedroom bungalow to rear of current property. Permission refused.

08/00297/HOUSE 33 St John's Road. Erection of single storey garage. Permission refused.

Affordable Housing - Rural Exception Site: Cllr Morden reported that he has spoken with Alison Read of the Rural Housing Trust regarding the Parish Council reviving the search for a Rural Exception Site. She confirms that West Berkshire Council will be letting rented housing through 'choice based letting'. This means that the available properties will be advertised district wide and applicants will be required to complete a comprehensive questionnaire, however:-

1. Priority will be given to persons resident within the parish, working in the parish or strong parish connections stretching back at least three years.
2. If all properties are not filled by (1), persons with strong parish connections of less than 3 years will be considered next.

3. Only if there are still vacancies after (1) and (2) have been satisfied will out of parish applicants be considered from the choice based letting list.

It is still not clear to what extent 'under occupancy' will be allowed i.e. a couple without children in a two bedroom let., Both the Rural Housing Trust and Councillor Morden's view is that to insist that such applicants can only be accommodated in a one bedroom let is unreasonable. In the event, highly probable, that a child is born suitable two bedroom accommodation within the parish is unlikely to be available at the appropriate time requiring the couple to move out of the village. A meeting is to be arranged with Alison Read of the Rural Housing Trust to clarify the position before bring the matter back to the full council.

08/50 **Update on proposed Station Car Park:** During the absence of Councillor Kiley at this point in the meeting the Clerk reported that the planning application is ready to be submitted to West Berkshire Council. Cllr K Lock recommended that a pre-application meeting is arranged with West Berkshire Council before planning permission is submitted.

08/51 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** No report. Cllr Challis reported three minor items which the Clerk will report to Streetcare.

08/52 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Blagden reported that the tennis court fence has suffered significant criminal damage. On three sides of the courts several steel supports had been cut at ground level and removed, all three straining wires had been cut and this has left large sections of the fence very loose and in an unsafe condition. Cllr Blagden advised that this has been reported to the Police. He, the Chairman and Clerk have met with a contractor to arrange for the temporary installation of heras fencing to make the affected areas safer, It was agreed that the Clerk has authority to arrange for the temporary fencing and obtain quotations for a new substantial fence.

Cllr Blagden reported that he has received advice from the West Berkshire Countryside Officer and he recommends chipping the piles of green waste on the Fairground and using it around trees and on any wet patches on trodden paths. The Clerk was asked to action. The survey for the flora and fauna report on the Fairground is to be started within the next month.

It has been reported to West Berkshire Council who own the woodland at Summerlug that the area is looking unkept and they have agreed they will look at it and tidy it up.

i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** In the absence of Cllr Smith the Clerk reported that the play area is in good condition.

ii. **Update on Sub-Lease to CIC:** The Chairman reported that the he has checked the draft sub lease and draft building regulations and that the Parish Council are now ready to proceed with signing the sub lease once the newt problem has been sorted out.

08/53 **Cemetery:** Cllr Clark reported that the new drain has now been installed but some reinstatement work is still outstanding. Further quotes are being arranged for other works in the Cemetery.

08/54 **Communications Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that the next Newsletter is scheduled to go out at the end of May.

08/55 **Update on Refreshing the Parish Plan:** Cllr Blagden reported that the working party had met on the 8th April and reviewed the Action Plan dated November 2006. Further to Minute Number 08/41 some of the main completed actions to date on the Action Plan are: Village Design Statement, Community building on the Fairground, feasibility study into street lighting, reduction in speed limit on The Street and the introduction of SID (speed indicator devices), additional funding for the Mortimer Link Bus, Youth Shelter, 2 combination goals for the Fairground, safe route to St Mary's School, part-funded Police Community Support Officer, on-street parking improvements, possible provision of a new railway station car park, social housing from the Rural Housing Trust.

08/56 **Update on Community Policing/BMNAG:**

Community Policing: Cllr Ives reported that the next three monthly meeting is scheduled for 22nd April 2008.

BMNAG: The last meeting was held on the 1st April 2008 but no Police Inspector or Sgt attended. It was a long meeting which did not cover much ground. The Parish Council will consider sending a letter to NAG expressing disappointment. The Mortimer Police Office is due to open in July 2008 and still needs volunteers to man it.

08/57 **Update on SMPC Annual Insurance Renewal (premium £820.80):** The Clerk advised that she and the Chairman met on Tuesday 8th April 2008 and reviewed and checked the insurance schedule from Allianz Insurance Plc for the period 1st June 2008 to 1st June 2009. They

confirmed that they are satisfied with all aspects of the renewal notice. It must be noted that it continues to be an essential requirement that an independent technical examination is made annually of all play equipment.

08/58 **Finance: To agree accounts for payment for March:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. The Chairman proposed that they be paid; and this was carried unanimously.

- i. Clerk's Salary.
- ii. H.M. Revenue and Customs (Tax and NI).
- iii. Clerk's Expenses.
- iv. Custodian's Salary.
- v. RBWM (Pension).
- vi. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900 inc VAT.
- vii. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone Parish Office) direct debit £24.99 inc VAT.
- viii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £8.36 (Forbuoys Ltd (papers) £8.01 and £2.00 service charge).
- ix. British Telecom (quarterly line rental Parish Office) Direct Debit £59.46 inc VAT
- x. Thames Valley Police Authority (PCSO part funding) Not yet received.
- xi. BALC (Berkshire Association of Local Councils) annual subscription £735.99.
- xii. Allianz Insurance Plc £820.80.
- xiii. ICCM (Institute of Cremation & Cemetery Management) annual subscription £75.00
- xiv. Kiley Associates Ltd (Print Room - printing of plans for new station car park) £7.90 inc VAT.

08/59 **Correspondence:**

- Letter from West Berkshire Council advising that S106 contribution monies of £22,000, £4,885.66 and £8,545.86 will be sent to the Parish Council towards the provision of improvements of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council's Public Open Space. This will be passed in the first instance to the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting on the 1st May 2008 to consider action.
- Letter from West Berkshire Council enclosing Overview and Scrutiny Commission Flooding Review Report. Copy will be held in the Parish Office and is also available on West Berkshire Council website.
- Agenda for Kennet and Pang Valley Area Forum Meeting 23rd April 2008 at Beenham.
- Letter re West Berkshire Health and Well Being Partnership Network Event 16th April 2008 at Shaw House, Newbury.
- West Berkshire Safer Communities Partnership Team Newsletter.
- Letter from West Berkshire re Planning Road show dates during May and June (various locations). Cllrs Morden, Ives, Kiley, Philips and the Clerk will attend the meeting on the 4th June at the Calcot Centre, Tilehurst.

08/60 **Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- The Clerk advised that the Parish Council's Auditors, Mazars, have set the external audit date of 31st July 2008 for the accounts ended 31st March 2008.
- Margot Pyman memorial seat to be presented by her sister, Mrs Hilary Swan.
- Whether the McColls 'Booze Buster' Sign requires planning permission.

Date of Next Meeting (AGM): Thursday 8th May 2008 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 9:12 pm