



# Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

## Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting

### 16 April 2014 at 7:30 p.m.

### St John's Hall Mortimer

The Annual Meeting of the Parish was held on Wednesday 16 April 2014 in St John's Hall, Mortimer.

**Present:** There were 142 people present.

- Welcome by the Parish Council Chairman:** Cllr Patrick Wingfield welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the process for the evening, especially the format regarding the ballot for the appointment of a Trustee for the Alfred Palme Memorial Field. He also explained that no award for the Stratfield Mortimer Community Award had been awarded for 2014 as no eligible nominations were received.  
The Chairman proposed that J Kirk, the Parish Clerk take the minutes of the meeting and this was unanimously agreed.
- To receive the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meetings held on the 17 April 2013:** The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on the 17 April 2013 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.
- Update on local policing in Mortimer by Sgt Michael Adams:**  
Sergeant Michael Adams the Neighbourhood Sergeant from the Pangbourne and Burghfield Neighbourhood area gave the following report:  
'If you ask a group of people, 'What are the police for?' you will get a wide range of answers. Some will say that the role is about crime fighting, others will say that that it is a broader social role; others will say it is to provide a presence on the street which makes people feel safe. However everybody will agree that they want less crime  
Within the force we are focused on three crimes - burglary, violence and sexual crime. That means that we set targets to both reduce and solve these crimes. The best results are for burglary. Last year there were 20% less burglaries than the year before  
20% of all burglaries are solved in the Thames Valley and while you might think that this should be higher it compares well with other forces and do remember that burglars work very hard to avoid capture. We want to send a strong message to burglars that you will be caught and if so go to prison for a long time.  
Violent crime remained stable last year and TVP solved 48 per cent which again is the best performance for many years.  
The only area where recorded crime is increasing is sexual crime. This is largely due to increased reporting because of national news coverage and greater confidence among victims to come forward to the police.

Mortimer 2013 till 2014

- There were 20 Burglary Dwellings compared with 28 last year
- There were 26 Burglary non dwellings compared with 32 last year
- There were 19 Theft from motor vehicles compared with 25 last year

ASB:

We have seen a drop in ASB calls within the Mortimer area over the last year however we have received a number of calls about ASB in Collage Piece and we are working in partnership with local housing groups our ASB officer to address these issues.

Operation:

Over the last year in Mortimer we have run a number of plain clothes and high-visibility operations in relation to burglary and ASB and a number of arrests have been made.

Speeding:

We have been hard at work trying to reduce the speeding within the Mortimer area and have issued 22 speeding tickets over the year

Drug use on the Fairground:

We have run 4 plain clothed operations to combat an issue raised at the last end of year report of drug abuse on the Fairground.

Within the Mortimer area over the last year we have issued 13 cannabis warnings.'

4. **An election for the appointment of a Trustee (Regulation 3 Trustee) for the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field Trust (3 year term):** Each of the three candidates gave a short address. And at the close of the voting the Chairman announced that a short refreshment break would be taken whilst the count took place. This was conducted by J Kirk the Parish Clerk and Cllr Dudley Ives and was witnessed by the two Alfred Palmer Memorial Field Trustees, Mrs Rebecca Barker and Mr David Gardiner.

After the refreshment break and before the commencement of the next item the Chairman announced the result of the ballot:

Edward Benyon: 59 votes

John Mazillius: 7 votes

Sarah Smith: 86 votes

Therefore Sarah Smith was duly elected as a Trustee of the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field Trust for a period of 3 years.

5. **The Annual Report of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council for the year to April 2014:** Cllr Pat Wingfield, the Parish Council Chairman presented the Parish Council's Annual Report to April 2014.

'As with most years 2013/14 was one of mixed fortunes but the overwhelming sense is that a lot of progress has been made.

Probably the biggest advance has been the build up to and the actual village meeting concerning the creation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the parish. The creation of such a plan will undoubtedly help the area in the longer term. In the short term the major issue was dealing with the parking associated with the station at the bottom end of The Street. While present conditions are not ideal they are an improvement on the situation a year ago.

The Parish Council has also started to bring itself up to date with a new web page and the decision to have its own Facebook page.

The major downside this year has been the need to remove the Mortimer link bus service to the station. This decision was effectively forced on the Parish Council due to the withdrawal of funding by West Berkshire.

A lot of time has been spent on matters relating to the Alfred Palmer Memorial Trust, which regulates the playing field near the Turner's Arms. This led to the need for an election of a Trustee at the Annual Parish Meeting.

We have also been successful in obtaining funding to repair and refurbish the Tennis Courts on the Fairground and this work should take place in the early summer of 2014.

We have been very active in trying to influence the actions and policies of West Berkshire on a whole range of subjects from the NDP, to the reduction of planned service cuts for 2014/15, and agreeing that Garth hall should be included on the right to bid register. This means that if the owners of Garth Hall wish to sell the property they must give the community the chance to put in a bid.

Of course there was a by election for a Parish Councillor in August and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the successful candidate, Tracy Audsley, to the Parish Council.

Needless to say there is a lot more day to day activity that happens within the Parish from such things as looking after the Fairground, including the provision of a Christmas tree, to the maintenance and organisation of matters associated with the Cemetery. All this alongside the month by month activity of commenting on Planning applications. Looking forward we were able to set a budget with a very minor increase in the precept for 2014/15, due to a removal of a grant, while not reducing any services.

All of the above would not have happened without the dedicated efforts of all those involved in Parish Council matters. To all of those I owe a deep debt of gratitude.'

6. **Open Forum/Questions:**

- Several questions were asked about the Alfred Palmer Field and the election of the Trustees as well as questions about the Football Club's use of the field and these were answered by the Trustees and the Chairman of the Council.
- An update was given by Cllr Dennett on the NDP and the Open Meeting and questions were answered.
- The question of a possible cycle route to Burghfield/Willink School was raised and Cllr Lock advised that if they build a cycle route the free school bus to Willink would be removed as a result.
- A discussion about the loss of the Mortimer Link bus to Mortimer Station took place and the Chairman of the Council answered questions of this.

Meeting closed at 8:36 p.m.

The date of the next Annual Parish Meeting is Wednesday 15 April 2015