



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd July 2019 @ 7.30 pm at the Parish Council Office, 27 Victoria Road (behind the Library), Mortimer. RG7 3SH

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. J. Bull, Cllr. N. Carter, Cllr. C. Lewis, Cllr. D. Morsley.

Clerk:

Mrs. L. Hannawin

Asst. Clerk:

Ms. B. O'Reilly

Public/Press:

No members of the public and no members of the press present.

Part I

19/21 Public Questions

None

19/22 To receive any apologies for absence

Cllr. G. Bridgman

19/23 To receive any declarations of interest

None

19/24 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting on 4th June 2019.

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 4th June 2019 be **APPROVED** as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19/25 Tennis Courts

To receive a report on the tennis court electronic gate system and AGREE further actions:

Further to a report given by the Asst. To the Clerk, the following points were noted:

- The pay and play price is fixed at one rate and on initial investigation it does not seem possible to be able to charge different rates for different age groups i.e. adults and juniors.
- Each transaction is charged at 1.3% plus 20p.
- It is possible to run promotions.
- Currently, up to 5 bookings per user can be made at any one time and up to a few minutes before the selected slot or up to 3 weeks ahead.
- Advanced settings enable bookings to be made on the hour, the half hour and quarter past and quarter to the hour.
- Currently, bookings can be cancelled for a full refund up to 24 hours prior to the start time.
- Mortimer Tennis Club (MTC) sessions have been blocked out and entrance for their members will be via an allocated code. MTC will retain one key for emergencies.
- The system is very intuitive, but a user's guide will be written.
- Statistics will be available.

It was **AGREED** to:

- Aim for the system to go live by the beginning of August.
- Promote the new system via the SMPC website and Facebook page and posters around the village and on the tennis courts.
- Provide notes for Budgens to be handed out.
- Allow users, cancelling within 24 hours of the time slot to rebook. This would be done via the office.
- Charge a flat rate fee of £5 per court per hour but run promotions aimed to encourage junior play during school holidays.
- Write and formally thank Budgens for managing the manual bookings.

ACTION: ASST. CLERK

19/26 Income and Expenditure Report

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report for the two months to 31st May 2019 for presentation to Full Council on 11th July 2019:

Cllr. Bull queried the balance of the current account regarding the transfer of funds to other accounts. This will be reviewed.

The Income and Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet for the two months to 31st May 2019, were **APPROVED** unanimously.

ACTION: CLERK

19/27 AGAR

To receive an update on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR):

The AGAR and supporting papers have been submitted to the external auditors, PFK Littlejohn and an acknowledgement has been received. The relevant documents for the Notice of Public Rights have been posted on the website and village noticeboards. The

inspection period runs from 21/06/19 – 01/08/19 and includes the statutory first 10 days of July.

19/28 Internal Auditor

To APPROVE the engagement of the Internal Auditor for 2019/20:

The Clerk confirmed that the fee for the internal audit for 2019/20 will be £480.00.

The engagement of C. Connell as internal auditor for 2019/20 was **APPROVED** unanimously.

19/29 Standing Order and Code of Conduct

To review the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct for presentation to Full Council on Thursday 11th July:

The Code of conduct was reviewed, looking at the need for co-opted members without voting rights to follow the Code of Conduct, which would require them to sign the Register of Interests.

NALC's Legal Topic Note 7 provides the following guidance:

- Non-councillors do not have voting rights except under 5 important exceptions.
- One of those exceptions is the management of land owned or occupied by the Council.
- The Code of Conduct applies only to those with voting rights.
- Non- councillor members must comply with the Council's Standing Orders.

In addition, it was noted:

- that committees can co-opt members of the public to undertake tasks. Such co-optees are not voting members and co-option will cease when the task is complete.
- West Berkshire Council (WBC) will shortly be reviewing the Code of Conduct with the aim to achieve a model Code of Conduct, Gifts and Hospitality Protocol and Social Media Protocol, for all parishes within the district. This will assist in having consistent standards responses on Code of Conduct and related issues.

It was **AGREED** unanimously to recommend to Full Council that:

- No changes are required to the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders, but the Committee Terms of Reference should be amended to clarify the five exceptions. Should any co-optee fall under one of these exceptions they must agree to the Code of Conduct and complete the Register of Interests.
- Members of the public who have been co-opted to undertake a particular task are not required to agree to the Code of Conduct and do not have to sign the Register of Interests.
- SMPC should consider adopting the WBC's model Code of Conduct, Gifts and Hospitality Protocol and Social Media Protocol when available

ACTION: CLERK

19/30 Communications Policy

To receive an update on the Communications Policy:

No update was received.

19/31 Record Retention

To receive and APPROVE the Record Retention for presentation to Full Council on Thursday 11th July:

The Record Retention Policy was received. It was noted that in holding financial records for a minimum of 6 years for audit purposes, the 6 years should commence from when the accounts have been signed off and this should be reflected in the policy.

Subject to the amendment stated, the Record Retention Policy was **APPROVED** unanimously for presentation to Full Council on Thursday 11th July.

ACTION: CLERK

19/32 Correspondence

To review correspondence received on the following and AGREE further actions:

Emergency Planning

A Parish Emergency Plan provides actions to support the community by using community resources, enabling the emergency response to be prioritised as necessary. It was noted:

- SMPC have previously looked at devising a Parish Emergency Plan but when training failed to materialise and with differing opinions, it was put on hold.
- Social media is a useful resource and provides relevant information and assistance in a timely manner when required.

It was **AGREED** unanimously that any contacts or potentially useful data should be kept on file.

Smokin' Street Food

Smokin' Street Food is a mobile pizza van and have requested a Monday evening pitch on the Fairground Car park.

It was **AGREED**, with 1 abstention, that the request should be denied at this current time, but the proposal should be included in any relevant future consultation ran by SMPC.

ACTION: CLERK

19/33 Members Bid

To consider ideas for the current round of Members Bid for presentation to Full Council:

Suggestions were as follows:

- Fitness equipment
- Grey water
- Recycling bins for events held on the Fairground
- A water fountain

Full Council members will be asked for further suggestions.

It was noted that having potential ideas already agreed and costed would enable a prompt response to future Members Bid rounds. Ideas should be generated as part of the project plans being overseen by the Strategy Working Party.

19/34 Mortimer Pre-School

To receive an update on Mortimer Pre-school's use of the tennis courts:

The update was received.

It was **AGREED** unanimously that Mortimer Pre-school can use the courts for up to two hourly sessions a week at a rate of £10.00 an hour.

ACTION: CLERK

19/35 Matters Arising for Information Only

None

19/36 Matters for Communication

None

19/37 Future Agenda Items

- Consideration of projects identified by the Strategy Working Party.

19/38 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, for the items on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.

It was **AGREED** unanimously to exclude members of the public and press from the meeting at Part II, Items 19/39 and 19/40 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.

Part II

19/39 Risk Register

To review the Risk Register:

The changes agreed at F&GP on the 4th June have been made. Risk regarding FOI requests and GDPR beaches were discussed.

The Risk Register will be recommended for approval at Full Council, with the review dates being addressed during the year.

19/40 Passing of a Senior National Figure

To receive a report on the protocol of the passing of a senior national figure and AGREE further actions:

Further to the report received, the actions to be taken were **AGREED** unanimously and will be recommended to Full Council.

ACTION: CLERK

Close

The meeting closed at 9.25pm