



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on 8th October 2015 @ 7.30 pm

at Mortimer Methodist Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

Present: Cllrs: M. Dennett (Chairman), P. Blagden, J. Bull, A. Butcher, N. Carter, P. Challis, J. Earl, D. Ives, N. Kiley, C. Lewis, M. Lock, A. Philips, A. Richardson and P. Wingfield.
Three members of the public and press.

Cllr. Lewis offered to take the minutes for the meeting and this was accepted.
The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm.

15/183 **Public Questions:** Questions were asked in regard to overgrown vegetation on The Street. It was also pointed out that the solar powered speed warning light had not worked for a considerable time. A District Councillor and the Chairman of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee have already arranged a meeting on 12th October with Glyn Davis (Principal Engineer Traffic Management and Road Safety) of West Berkshire Council.

15/184 **To receive any apologies for absence:** Cllr. A. Colaço was absent.

15/185 **To receive any declarations of interest and dispensations:** None.

15/186 **To resolve to approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 10th September 2015:**
It was resolved that on item 15/179:

1. On the first line 'July' should be amended to 'August / September'.
2. On payments, 2 should be deleted as it replicates 1.
3. On 8 the figure should be £823.36 including VAT.
4. On 20 the figure should be £823.36 including VAT.

The minutes were then approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

15/187 **To receive Acting Clerk's update (for information only):**

1. A S106 payment for £5845.91 has been received in respect of eight 2-bedroom units between 29b and 30 The Bevers; this is the second tranche.
2. The External Auditor (Messers Mazars) have signed the annual return stating that it is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Under other matters, they did draw the council's attention that care should be taken in separating the duties of the Chairman and the Acting Responsible Financial Officer; it is hoped that that this can be permanently resolved in the near future. In accordance with the requirements of the audit, a notice of conclusion of the audit and the certified annual return are being displayed on the Parish Council notice boards (for a minimum of 14 days) to satisfy the necessary publication requirements.
3. The second half of the precept in the sum of £56,426 has now been received.

15/188 **To confirm that SMPC no longer has the General Power of Competence:**

The Chairman confirmed that the general power of competence (as defined in the Localism Act 2011) lapsed after the election in May 2015. As the Council currently

does not have a qualified Clerk, the Council is no longer eligible for this power of competence and expenditure must be under existing powers and Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 15/189 **To receive District Councillors' Reports:** Cllr. Lock expressed concern that the decision by West Berkshire Council to adopt the 2016/17 Home to School Transport Policy would remove discretionary Home to School Transport for Mortimer children in the future. Cllr. Bridgman produced a report which included that the Proposed Submission Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document would be the subject of a West Berkshire special full Council meeting on 5th November at St Bartholomew's School Newbury. Cllr Bridgman had attended a speed limit review meeting at West Berkshire and that a meeting with Glyn Davis of WBC, Cllr Butcher and himself on the road safety issues was scheduled for 12 October.
- 15/190 **To receive an update on road safety within the Parish, including consideration of the School Crossing Patrol Assessment and to decide on future actions:** This report has been received and in summary the traffic and pedestrian usage outside St. John's School does not meet the criteria for a signal controlled crossing point, though it did meet the criteria for a School Crossing Patrol. There was discussion regarding a zebra crossing or for the traffic calming associated with a 20 mph speed limit. It was noted that there may be some section 106 money available. It was agreed that Cllrs. Wingfield and Blagden would prepare a report regarding the options.
- 15/191 **To receive Minutes from the Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group of 4 September, 18 September and 30 September 2015 and minutes of NDP Public meeting of 21 September 2015:** These minutes were received and endorsed. All these are available on the NDP web site. The minutes of 30th September have yet to be approved by the NDP Steering Group.
- 15/192 **To receive a progress report on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and to resolve to:-**
Agree to the NDP document on the NDP web site being submitted to West Berkshire for them to carry out a statutory consultation,
Agree that the Parish Council should publicise the statutory consultation when the dates are known and
Accept the offer of a government grant in the sum of £3351:
 It was proposed by Cllr. Dennett and seconded by Cllr. Earl that the document was fit for the purpose of submission to West Berkshire Council and the Acting Clerk would send a letter of submission; this was unanimously approved. The timescale for the six week consultation will be determined by West Berkshire Council and it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would publicise the dates of the consultation. It was also unanimously agreed and that the government grant would be accepted. Cllr. Wingfield thanked everyone who had been involved particularly Mrs. D Morsley and Mr. T Barber who are non councillor members of the Steering Group. The Council expressed their thanks to the group and to these members in particular.
- 15/193 **To consider a response from the Charity Commission re Garth Hall and decide on future consideration:** The Charity Commission had previously submitted a proposed new trust instrument. The council had objected to this on the basis that the beneficiaries should be locally based. The Charity Commission had reviewed its decision and by a communication dated 2nd October agreed with the Council. It was

agreed that Cllrs. Dennett, Earl, Blagden and Lewis would look at this together with the practical issues of the hall itself and report back to the Finance and General Purpose Committee.

15/194 **To receive minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee of 8 September 2015:**

These minutes were received, endorsed and adopted. It is planned that a further meeting will be held in a fortnight with the aim that there will be proposed new Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for the main Council meeting in November.

15/195 **To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 8th and 25th September 2015:** These have been previously circulated. These were received, endorsed and adopted.

15/196 **To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council:**

15/01772/HOUSE 6 Birchland Close, two storey front and single storey side extensions. Approved.

15/01816/HOUSE 31 St. Mary's Road, side and rear extension, store replacement with garage. Approved.

15/197 **To receive minutes of Communications Committee meeting of 30 September 2015:**

The minutes were received, endorsed and adopted. Facebook is now live and the Council extends its thanks to Mr. David Kilshaw for his invaluable assistance.

15/198 **To receive an update from the working group to consider the future of the part funded PCSO contract from April 2016:** There had been a meeting with the three parishes on 7th October 2105. A further meeting will be held with the parishes and the Police on 11th November. It is important that the Council knows that it is getting value for money before the contract is renewed in April 2016.

15/199 **To consider whether to reinstate Full Parish Council meetings in December and August:** In order to reduce the length of the September and January meetings, Cllr. Dennett proposed and Cllr. Earl seconded that the December and August meetings should be reinstated; 13 for and one against so the motion was carried.

15/200 **To consider whether the Parish Council wishes to hold an event to celebrate the Birthday of Her Majesty:** It was proposed by Cllr. Earl and seconded by Cllr. Kiley that a village wide event, funded by the Council, should be held to celebrate the Birthday of Her Majesty; 13 for and one against so the motion was carried. Cllrs. Earl, Carter and Richardson are to form a working party.

15/201 **Finance – To resolve to agree accounts for payment in October:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr. Dennett declared an interest in item 9. There were two additional items (items 10 and 11). It was proposed by Cllr. Earl, seconded by Cllr. Carter and unanimously agreed that the following payments should be made:

1. Sita UK Ltd (waste disposal Fairground August) D/D £85.26 inc VAT
2. Rialtis Business Solutions (Accounts entry July and August) £252.00 inc VAT
3. C&D Facilities (Grass cutting Fairground, Grass cutting Cemetery September) £823.26 inc VAT
4. JR Secretarial Services (NDP Administrative Support September 2015) £298.00
5. Southern Electric D/D (Electricity charges for meter 1 on Fairground) £14.38 inc

VAT at 5%

6. Southern Electric D/D (Electricity charges for meter 2 on Fairground) £14.38 inc VAT at 5%
7. BT D/D (Business Bill July to Nov) £262.59 inc VAT
8. C&D Facilities (Grass cutting Grazing Area, watering of trees on Fairground) £489.00 inc VAT
9. M D Dennett (Expenses –Custodian mobile phone top up £20.00, fence rails for Fairground fence £24.77 inc VAT) £44.77
10. Dad's Shop (sundries for Custodian) £15.15
11. West Berkshire Council (Parish Office Rent Oct – Dec 2015) £750.00

15/202 **To receive correspondence:** There had been further correspondence regarding the school crossing arrangements and similar responses had been sent.

15/203 **To receive minor matters:**

1. The Remembrance Parade is to be held on 8th November 2015. Cllr Ives requested marshals to help with the road closures.
2. A letter has been received from the Fun Run organisers. There was a timing issue between the end of the fun run and the start of a cricket match. Cllrs. Lewis and Kiley declared an interest. The Acting Clerk will write to those involved.
3. Cllrs. Wingfield and Kiley are attending a meeting to advise Burghfield Parish Council on developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
4. A request for a similar meeting has been received from Tilehurst Parish Council.
5. A large gravestone, slightly out of position, has been erected in the Cemetery. Cllr. Dennett is to write a letter to the funeral directors.
6. Driving from the station up The Street the warning sign by Strawberry Field is covered by vegetation. Hopefully this will be dealt with in the meeting on 12th October 2015 (Minute 15/190).

15/204 **To receive any future Agenda items:** None

The next meeting is on 12th November 2015

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm