



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on 10th December 2015 @ 7.30 pm

at Mortimer Methodist Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

Present: J. Earl (Vice Chairman), P. Blagden, J. Bull, A. Butcher, N. Carter, P. Challis, D. Ives, N. Kiley, C. Lewis, M. Lock, A. Philips, A. Richardson.

There were 6 members of the public and no press present.

15/229

Public Questions:

Mr David Kilshaw addressed the meeting on behalf of the **Save Our Buses** group regarding their concerns at the West Berkshire Council Budget Proposals 2016/17 – Mortimer – Willink School which proposes withdrawing the current bus services in favour of a proposed alternative Walking Route.

He made clear the depth of concern within the community with 350 members joining SOB over a period of three weeks urging the retention of the current bus services as:

- a. The proposed Walking Route is not safe as noted and demonstrated when 150 people walked the route on 23rd November 2015.
- b. No available cycle route.
- c. Not reasonable to expect parents and children to walk the distance the route requires twice a day.
- d. The walking route passes along 2 x major national speed limit roads with a crossing point at 1 busy junction. There is strong concern that this is not suitable and a danger to life as there are no suitable refuge points and this danger was clearly demonstrated by the accident at the junction of Goring Lane and Hollybush Lane on Wednesday 9th December 2015 where one car ended up across the point where children would have been if waiting to cross.
- e. The impact of the number of walkers has not been accounted for with regard to the condition of the off road areas of the proposed walking route.

(Please note that Mr Kilshaw's comments have been submitted in writing and are available if requested.)

Ms Viv Harris expressed her concerns about the issues created for parents of more than 1 child and having get them to and from different schools at the same time, as is the case for a number of the parents whose children attend Willink School.

She also pointed out that the proposed Walking Route was impassable if Forestry work was being carried out in the woods and due to flooding following heavy rain. She also made the point that back in 2006, when this was being considered, the previous decision by WBC to continue with the bus service as there was no safe alternative walking route available and the Council had a Statutory Duty to provide safe Transport.

Mr. Thomas Maynard commented regarding increased crime in area (burglary of tools) – what are the police doing about it? The Clerk requested that he send through details so that discussions can take place with the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

15/230	<p>To receive any apologies for absence:</p> <p>Cllrs: M. Dennett (Chairman) and P. Wingfield and Cllr. G. Bridgman (West Berkshire Council)</p>
15/243	<p>It was AGREED to bring forward this item for discussion whilst members of the public were present</p> <p>To consider West Berkshire Council's Budget Proposals for 2016 and agree consultation response – closing date 14 December 2015</p> <p>Home to School Transport – Mortimer – Willink School</p> <p>The public response was very much in-line with that of the Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council and our District Councillors.</p> <p>In their response to this proposal District Cllrs. G. Bridgman, M. Lock, C. Jackson-Doerge and I Moran had, along with making some initial observations, comments on the safety of the identified route for a physically able accompanied child, expressed their concerns over 4 specific areas of the proposed Walking Route:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Longmoor Lane b. Junction of Goring Lane and Hollybush Lane c. Hollybush Lane d. Cycling <p>In view of these observations, comments and concerns, their view was firmly that the identified route does not meet West Berkshire Council's Statutory Safety Standard and, until a safe Walking/Cycling route is established, the bus service should be retained.</p> <p>(A copy of their report is available if required)</p> <p>A discussion then took place and:-</p> <p>Cllr. M. Lock expressed her concerns that the proposed walking route was impassable at times when Forestry work was taking place in the woods.</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter reported that at a recent meeting with Willink School the issue of the lack of facilities to store wet and muddy coats and boots used by the children was a real potential problem.</p> <p>He also raised the issue that in wet weather where the path goes up or down a slope, the path is almost impassable due to the slippery conditions.</p> <p>The question as to whether the unavailability of the proposed route at certain times and in certain weather conditions flouted the District Council's statutory obligations under the education ACT if routes were un-sustainable was also raised.</p> <p>In reply to this latter point, Cllr. C. Lewis cautioned that the Council needed to remain A-Political and to work within the role of the Parish Council.</p> <p>Cllr. A. Phillips, having pointed out that 233 children were being transported by the Mortimer – Willink service, of which 103 needed to be provided with transport under the current Statutory Regulations, raised the question as to whether parents could privately take over the contract for the buses, which are proposed to be withdrawn, using the discounted fares. Both Cllrs. N. Carter and M. Lock indicated that this would not be possible as the contract would be 'wound up'.</p> <p>Cllr T. Butcher questioned the wisdom of statements regarding breach of statutory obligations under the Education Act without proper consideration, as such a view could be incorrect.</p>

	<p>Nothing further was added and Cllr. J. Earl proposed that the Council's response to the consultation should be based on the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 4 areas of safety and acceptability raised by our District Councillors b. Footpath not always being available due to forestry work c. Willink School facilities not able to cope with the wet clothing and boots d. Footpath not suitable and often impassable due to rain and flooding. <p>Cllr. A. Richardson seconded the motion and it was AGREED unanimously.</p>
15/231	<p>To receive any declarations of interest and dispensations:</p> <p>None.</p>
15/243 cont.	<p>To consider West Berkshire Council's Budget Proposals for 2016 and agree consultation response – closing date 14 December 2015</p> <p>Public Transport – withdrawal of 75 – Beech Hill to Newbury bus service</p> <p>Cllr. M. Lock advised that she had referred to her opposition to the withdrawal of this service as it is the only direct link between Mortimer and Newbury.</p> <p>Cllr. C. Lewis raised his concerns that the Council should not appear negative on all matters.</p> <p>Cllrs. A. Richardson, P. Challis and T. Butcher all made the point that this service was the only direct route to Newbury for those in east of the WBC area, it was depended on by many and withdrawal would create significant problems and restrictions on those needing to go to Newbury to visit WBC, hospitals and other services.</p> <p>Cllr. J. Earl proposed that the Council's response to the consultation should be based on the impact to our parishioners raised above.</p> <p>Cllr. P. Challis seconded the motion and it was AGREED unanimously.</p> <p>Rural Highways Grass Cutting – reduction of grass cutting cycle from 3 to 2 cuts annually</p> <p>Cllr. T. Butcher proposed that the Council should not oppose this proposal subject to all necessary statutory and emergency work being promptly carried out.</p> <p>This was then discussed and seconded by Cllr. N. Kiley and AGREED unanimously.</p>
15/232	<p>To resolve to approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 12th November 2015:</p> <p>The minutes were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.</p>
15/233	<p>To receive Acting Clerk's update (for information only).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The Acting Clerk advised that, having been in post for only 2½ week, there was little to report other than that Cllr. M. Dennett had now handed over most of the day-to-day work. 2 One item of concern was reported regarding the dumping of scrap cars and drug dealing taking place in some areas of the Parish. This had been reported to WBC and contact was being made with our Neighbourhood Policing Team to discuss. 3 Cllr. J. Earl proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr. M. Dennett for all the hard work that he had put in during the last 8½ months covering the Clerk and RFO's roles which was unanimously AGREED.

15/234	<p>To Receive District Councillors Reports:</p> <p>Both Cllrs. M. Lock and G. Bridgman had submitted written reports which were received.</p> <p>Cllr. C. Lewis questioned as to whether Stratfield Mortimer was getting a 'fair share' of project funding to which Cllr. M. Lock admitted that maybe not as thinking was primarily Newbury, Thatcham and Reading community progression centric.</p>																																	
15/235	<p>To receive a progress report on the Neighbourhood Development Plan</p> <p>Cllr. P. Wingfield's written report was received and noted.</p>																																	
15/236	<p>To receive minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee of 2nd November 2015 – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12th November 2015</p> <p>Received, AGREED as correct and signed by the Chairman.</p>																																	
15/237	<p>To resolve to adopt revised Standing Orders as recommended by Finance and General Purposes Committee – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015</p> <p>Received and proposed to be adopted by Cllr. J. Earl. Seconded by Cllr. N. Carter and AGREED unanimously.</p>																																	
15/238	<p>To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 8 October, 4 November and 9 November – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015 and 1 December 2015</p> <p>Received, AGREED as correct and signed by the Chairman.</p>																																	
15/239	<p>To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015 and to date</p> <p>Cllr. N. Kiley's verbal report was received and noted.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Application</u></th> <th><u>Decision</u></th> <th><u>Date</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15/02344/NONMAT</td> <td>Refused</td> <td>30/09/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/0206/PACOU</td> <td>Refused</td> <td>05/10/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/02260/HOUSE</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>06/10/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/00806/FULD</td> <td>Refused</td> <td>08/10/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/01778/FULD</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>08/10/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/02154/HOUSE</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>08/10/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/02186/FULD</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>19/10/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/02146/HOUSE</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>02/11/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/02285/FULD</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>11/11/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/02721/HOUSE</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>24/11/15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Application</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Date</u>	15/02344/NONMAT	Refused	30/09/15	15/0206/PACOU	Refused	05/10/15	15/02260/HOUSE	Approved	06/10/15	15/00806/FULD	Refused	08/10/15	15/01778/FULD	Approved	08/10/15	15/02154/HOUSE	Approved	08/10/15	15/02186/FULD	Approved	19/10/15	15/02146/HOUSE	Approved	02/11/15	15/02285/FULD	Approved	11/11/15	15/02721/HOUSE	Approved	24/11/15
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15/240	<p>To receive minutes of Communications Committee meeting of 22 October – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015 and 1 December 2015</p> <p>Received, AGREED as correct and signed by the Chairman.</p>																																	
15/241	<p>To receive an update from the working group to consider the future of the part funded PCSO contract from April 2016 – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015 and to-date</p> <p>Cllr. D. Ives presented the working groups report, which highlighted that the PCSO role had clearly changed from the agreed role of preventive to reactive.</p> <p>Following discussion it was AGREED that the Council needed to wait for the</p>																																	

	<p>new contract proposals and costs, but to place a provisional item in the 2016/2017 for the share of a PCSO. This to be reviewed at the February 2016 Full Council meeting.</p> <p>It was also AGREED that Cllr. D. Ives should draft a letter for the Clerk to send to Inspector Chris Ward outlining the Council's concerns and expectations.</p>			
15/242	<p>To receive a report on the Willink Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee meeting of 21 October 2015 – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015</p> <p>Cllr. T. Butcher presented a written summary report which was received and noted.</p>			
15/244	<p>To receive minutes of the Burghfield and Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group meeting of 27 October 2015 – deferred from last Full Council meeting 12 November 2015</p> <p>Cllr. T. Butcher advised that there was nothing fresh to report.</p>			
15/245	<p>To receive an update from the working party regarding the event to celebrate the Birthday of Her Majesty</p> <p>Cllr. A. Richardson verbally outlined that a programme of fun, games, activities and music was under discussion to celebrate the event on Saturday 4th June 2016.</p> <p>Cllr. C. Lewis asked if a budget was in place for this and was advised that a budget item was being included in the draft budget for 2016/2017.</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter advised that a tree was being planted to celebrate the Queen's reign.</p>			
15/246	<p>To consider and agree response to the status of the upgrade programme of Mortimer's existing street lights to low energy (LED) and proposal to reduce the over-night dimming level</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter reported that WBC had started the upgrade programme of existing lights on 30th October 2015.</p> <p>The news lights would be controlled from a central control room in Newbury and could be switched of between controlled hours at night if required.</p> <p>It was proposed that a letter should be sent to WBC requesting this, but Cllrs. A. Phillips and A. Richardson raised concerns about lack of parish consultation on this matter and reductions in safe visibility for pedestrians and motorists.</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter, having commented that the proposal had been outlined in the recent Newsletter and on Facebook, but would look into these concerns and report back.</p>			
15/247	<p>To consider and agree the temporary appointment of Mr H Selwyn-Jones as Locum Acting Clerk for Stratfield-Mortimer Parish Council for a period of up-to 3 months</p> <p>This was considered and the motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Earl, seconded by Cllr. M. Lock. and unanimously AGREED.</p>			
15/248	<p>Finance – To resolve to agree accounts for payment in December 2015</p> <p>In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, the following items for payment were considered together. It was proposed by Cllr. J. Earl, seconded by Cllr. N. Carter and unanimously AGREED that the following payments should be made:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">1</td> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Sita UK Ltd – Waste disposal Fairground November 2015</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding-left: 20px;">£93.79</td> </tr> </table>	1	Sita UK Ltd – Waste disposal Fairground November 2015	£93.79
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	<p>D.D. inc. VAT</p> <p>2 SLCC – Renewal of Clerk’s annual subscription 1st Jan > £210.00</p> <p>3 D. Morsley – 3 x Correx signs from SignWise for NDP inc. £72.00 VAT</p> <p>4 H Selwyn-Jones – Locum Clerk work 23rd – 30th Nov. £525.00</p> <p>5 The Benyon Trust – St Mary’s Mortimer Burial Ground Misc. £62.00 Rental 25/12/15</p> <p>6 Thames Valley Water – Recreation Ground Trough 26/8/15 £6.27 – 21/11/15 DD Items arrived after Agenda was sent out</p> <p>7 JR Secretarial Services – War Memorial copy typing £102.50 23/11/15 – 01/12/15</p> <p>8 JR Secretarial Services – NDP Admin Work 01/11/15 – £76.00 23/11/15</p> <p>9 Oakdale Services – 1850 December Newsletters £427.00</p> <p>10 Oakdale Services – 200 Carol booklets + 1 x Poster inc. £74.00 VAT</p>
15/249	<p>To consider and agree the appointment of Cllr. Phil Challis to fill the place on the Planning Committee left by the sad death of Cllr Austin Colaço</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr J. Earl that Cllr. P. Challis becomes a member of the Planning Committee, seconded by Cllr. N. Carter and unanimously AGREED with Cllr. P. Challis abstaining.</p>
15/250	<p>To consider and agree whether to appoint or not another Councillor to fill the place on the Communications Committee left by the sad death of Cllr Austin Colaço</p> <p>It was AGREED to defer a decision until after a new Councillor is voted in or co-opted to the Council</p>
15/251	<p>To receive Correspondence (for information only)</p> <p>None to report other than NDP consultation responses which need to be forwarded to Jane Rabbiosi</p>
15/252	<p>To receive Minor Matters (for information only)</p> <p>Cllr. P. Bull reported that 420 trees had been planted on the Fairground</p> <p>Cllr. P. Challis raised the issue of the hedge in The Street and Cllr. M. Lock advised that the job had been given a number by WBC and she will chase.</p> <p>Cllr. A. Richardson reported that there had been encouraging positive feedback on the Christmas Tree on the Fairground.</p>
15/253	<p>To receive any future Agenda Items</p> <p>Cllr P. Challis advised that there were various Cemetery items to discuss and requested a meeting of the Fairground; Trees and Amenities; Cemetery; Roads Footpaths and Commons Committee be called to discuss.</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter requested that a timetable item be put on the agenda for the signing off of the NDP</p> <p>Cllr. C. Lewis left the room</p>
#1	<p>A motion to exclude the Public and Press from the meeting and move into Part II due the confidential nature of the items to be discussed was proposed by Cllr. J. Earl, seconded by Cllr. P. Blagden and unanimously AGREED by the Councillors present.</p>

<u>Part II</u>	
#2	Cllr. C. Lewis returned to the room To receive any declarations of interest and dispensations: None.
#3	To receive an update on an employment issue. Cllr. T. Butcher provide a verbal update report, which was received and noted.

The next meeting is on 14th January 2016

The meeting closed at 9:32 pm

DRAFT