



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on 14th January 2016 @ 7.30 pm

at Mortimer Methodist Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

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

There were 4 members of the public and no press present.

15/254	<p>Public Questions:</p> <p>Mr Richard Coles addressed the meeting regarding a large tree at the start of Strawberry Fields that he understood had a TPO on it, but which was suffering from some fungal disease, his concern is that it had been trimmed today but he was not aware of any report regarding the condition of the tree and proposed actions.</p> <p>The Clerk to investigate and report back.</p> <p>Mr Coles then raised the issue of no minutes being published with regard to the local NAG group meetings and was advised that this was not the Parish Council's responsibility as the NAG was a partnership organisation and this needed to be raised with the Partnership.</p> <p>Mr John Wells raised the issue of Policing in Mortimer and the lack of response to various issues, including one of assault upon his person with ball bearings.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that a meeting had been held with the Neighbourhood Policing Inspector and that a number of issues had been raised and were now being investigated further to establish why matters, in the public perception, appeared to have been mishandled.</p> <p>It was stressed that any concerns, other than 999 calls, needed to be reported using the 101 contact number and, if the call relates to a specific incident, a URN is requested. 101 is an important communication tool for the Police, as every call is recorded and could well provide the information needed 'to complete the jigsaw' regarding a matter under investigation.</p> <p>Mr Wells then raised the lack of up to-date Minutes of meetings on the Parish Council's website.</p> <p>The Chairman and the Clerk both acknowledged that this was a matter of concern and was being worked on to ensure the website was kept up to-date.</p> <p>Mr Jamie Dolton expressed his concerns about speeding in Mortimer, especially along the Street from Strawberry Fields and downhill through the village and the perceived increase in speeding HGV traffic through the village.</p> <p>It was advised that the Parish has been and is now further developing involvement with the West Berkshire Council SID initiative to monitor traffic speeds through the village and that the Police are also aware of the concerns.</p> <p>Mr John Cornwall spoke on behalf of Mr Neil Kiley, who was not present, regarding item 15/259 (ii) on the Agenda relating to the requested changes that Mr N. Kiley had made, as member of the public, to the Mortimer Settlement Boundary at Brewery Common during the Public Consultation period for the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan proposals.</p> <p>He spoke on the findings that the NDP Steering Group had come to on the</p>
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	<p>criteria set out by WBC when considering changes to settlement boundaries and stated that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Regarding WBC criterion (i), in his view, the comment that the houses under consideration for inclusion within the existing settlement boundary are “sporadic and dispersed” was in-correct. ii. Regarding WBC criterion (ii), in his view, strict planning controls are already in place for within the settlement boundary and these could be further strengthened if it was named as an area of character. The concerns about the existing covenants relating to the properties in the area are also, in his view, groundless as any attempt to break the covenants would not succeed. <p>He concluded by saying that Mr Kiley, who had been in the community for some years, only wished to remain in the community, but in a modest bungalow, which he wished to be able to build on the site of his current property following the sale of his existing house and the remainder of the site. Brewery Common, in his view, did fully meet the WBC Criteria for changes to a settlement boundary, even though Spring Lane did not.</p>
15/255	<p>To receive any apologies for absence:</p> <p>Cllrs: N. Kiley and A. Phillips and District Cllr. G. Bridgman.</p>
15/256	<p>To receive any declarations of interest and dispensations:</p> <p>All Councillors declared a pecuniary interest in item 15/277 on the Agenda in that they were all residents within the Community and would have a potential benefit in any discussions in the setting of the precept.</p> <p>As this would impede the transaction of the business of the Council, all Councillors had signed and lodged a request for Dispensation and it was proposed by Cllr M. Dennett and seconded by Cllr. P. Wingfield that such a dispensation should be granted for the purpose of discussing and the setting of the Parish’s Precept request for 2016 – 2017. The motion was AGREED unanimously by all Councillors present.</p>
15/257	<p>To resolve to approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 10th December 2015:</p> <p>The minutes were approved and duly signed by the Chairman following an amendment to Item 15/245 to change “Queen’s reign” to “Queen’s 90th birthday” and to Item 15/246 to delete “and A. Richardson”.</p>
15/258	<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. M Lock then gave a verbal report on several items that had come to her notice after she had submitted her written report as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Funding is available via the Building Communities Together Fund and suggested that The Clerk writes to Andre King to invite her to come to a SMPC meeting to explain the best ways to access funds. ii. Because of the level of savings having to be made by WBC members have been putting forward ideas which could help mitigate some of the proposed savings currently being faced. There is, however, a high probability that Council will have to be increased. iii. Leaders from other Berkshire Councils are going to speak to the Government about not just the cut in grants but the very short timing given. iv. It looked that Mortimer Library would continue but there is now to be an additional budget consultation to include Bus and Library services, this will

	<p>added to the consultation to be run from 15th February to 7th March. The timing of this consultation is usually six weeks but now will only give residents three weeks to respond so we must urge residents to not let the lack of time stop them from expressing their views.</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter asked about the funding shortfall figures that West Berkshire Council were facing, as advised by Cllr. G. Bridgman by email.</p> <p>Cllr. M. Lock advised that they were correct but it was thought that some help would be forthcoming through the £2million settlement grant and the Business Rates.</p> <p>It was confirmed that publication of District Councillors reports on Facebook should only use unabridged items.</p>
15/259	<p>To receive an update report on the Neighbourhood Development Plan</p> <p>The written update report was received and noted, following a verbal summary by Cllr. P Wingfield of the requirements for the Parish Council to submit the NDP to the West Berkshire Council for consultation.</p> <p>Cllr. J. Earl proposed that as the NDP Steering Group had been tasked to deliver the NDP proposal to WBC, they should carry on and do it and provide a normal update report to Council at the next Council meeting. This was seconded by Cllr. M. Dennett and unanimously AGREED.</p> <p>The motion to AGREE to approve the NDP Steering Groups view submitted in a written report, 'Settlement Boundary Change – Consideration of submissions received as part of the formal consultation process', regarding the requested changes to the Mortimer Settlement Boundary submitted by Cllr N. Kiley, as a member of the public, to include land at Brewery Common and by Mr S. Pickles of West Waddy ADP on behalf of the Englefield Estate to include land at Spring Lane was then discussed.</p> <p>Cllr. P. Wingfield gave a summary of the conclusions of the NDP Steering Group in that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They found no convincing reason to support an extension of the Mortimer Settlement Boundary to include these two areas in the settlement boundary when considered against the Settlement Boundary Determination as laid out by West Berkshire Council and the strategic objectives of the Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan proposal. • There would also be a significant risk of expansion above the 110 homes proposed through the 'presumption in favour of development on land within the settlement boundary'. <p>District Cllr. G. Bridgman arrived at 08:25pm</p> <p>Cllr. M. Dennett gave a brief summary of the work done by the NDP Steering Group and advised that the proposed changes would result in changes to the NDP proposal without community consultation and would result in the need for the NDP to be presented for further public consultation.</p> <p>Cllr T. Butcher advised that he had received a number of contacts expressing concern over the requested changes from residents of Brewery Common.</p> <p>Cllr. P. Wingfield proposed that the requested settlement boundary changes for land at Brewery Common and land at Spring Lane be rejected. This was seconded by Cllr. C. Lewis and was AGREED unanimously by the Councillors present.</p>
15/260	<p>To receive Locum Clerk's update (for information only).</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Posted SMPC's feedback response to the WBC 2016/17 Budget Proposals 2 Clarified Councillors Code of Conduct Disclosure of Interests concerns with WBC Monitoring Officer and distributed a Clerk's Advisory Notice 3 Posted Clerk's Vacancy notice to SLCC website 4 Prepared SMPC's 2016/17 draft budget proposals 5 Took over Rialtas accounts package postings 6 Prepared papers for Planning, Communications and F&GP Committees and for Full Council 7 Sent SMPC letter to Thames Valley Police regarding the shared PCSO contract 8 Met with TVP Neighbourhood Policing Inspector to discuss the Public concerns relating to crime in Mortimer <p>The Clerk gave a verbal update on the meeting with Inspector Chris Ward and Sergeant Mike Adams on Monday 11th January 2016, where full discussion took place regarding a number of issues of concern that were raised. A positive outcome was obtained with regard to commitments to improve communications and to investigate some of the issues that were raised to resolve concerns of a possible breakdown in procedures which need looking into.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 The Clerk verbally advised that the Annual Parish Meeting was to take place on Wednesday 27th April 2016. 																
15/261	<p>To receive minutes of Finance and General Purposes Committee of 7th January 2016</p> <p>Received and AGREED as correct, subject to Item 16/2 being amended to include the words "All provided dispensation papers which were resolved to be approved, and signed by the Chairman.</p>																
15/262	<p>To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 21st December 2015</p> <p>Received and AGREED as correct and signed by the Chairman.</p>																
15/263	<p>To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council.</p> <p>The Clerk's verbal report was received and noted.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Application</u></th> <th><u>Address</u></th> <th><u>Decision</u></th> <th><u>Date</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15/02840/HOUSE</td> <td>19, Bilbury Gardens</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>08/12/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/03032/HOUSE</td> <td>40, St Johns Road</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>23/12/15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15/03047/HOUSE</td> <td>12, St Stephens Road</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>23/12/15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Application</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Date</u>	15/02840/HOUSE	19, Bilbury Gardens	Approved	08/12/15	15/03032/HOUSE	40, St Johns Road	Approved	23/12/15	15/03047/HOUSE	12, St Stephens Road	Approved	23/12/15
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15/264	<p>To receive minutes of Communications Committee meeting of 5th January 2016</p> <p>Received and AGREED as correct and signed by the Chairman.</p>																
15/265	<p>To receive an update from the working group on the part funded PCSO contract from April 2016</p> <p>Cllr. D. Ives reported that a letter had been sent to Inspector Chris Ward raising the concerns of the Council over the part funded PCSO contract and a full reply had just been received but there hadn't been time to go into it in detail before the Council meeting.</p>																

	<p>Cllr. Ives made it clear that the contracted roles had changed over the last three years and no longer represented what was agreed and paid for.</p> <p>He also expressed his view that the contract is with Stratfield Mortimer, Burghfield and Sulhampstead Parish Councils and, if Stratfield Mortimer withdrew from the contract, Thames Valley Police could well not renew the contract.</p> <p>A discussion took place raising questions about the total contribution made by the 3 Parishes, what we currently get and what we won't get under the new contract as well as making clear that the initial contract was for an initial 1 year trial period and now seems to have evolved and that there is a need to clearly define what we are going to get under the new proposals and to notify the village.</p> <p>It was requested that the Part Funded PCSO Working Group scrutinises the reply from Inspector Chris Ward, gets the details together regarding the new contract, considers what impact on crime it will have, as well as considering what else could be done instead and reports back to the Council at its next meeting.</p>
15/266	<p>Garth Hall</p> <p>Cllr. M. Dennett advised that the working group needed to meet and would report back at the next Council meeting.</p>
15/267	<p>Her Majesty's 90th Birthday Celebrations</p> <p>Cllr. J. Earl reported that a meeting of the working group was being held on 20th January and he would report back to Council at the next meeting.</p>
15/268	<p>The upgrade programme of Mortimer's existing street lights to low energy (LED)</p> <p>Cllr N. Carter reported that the feedback survey responses had shown that 62% expressed a desire for dimmed/limited or no lighting after a set time at night in the village.</p> <p>The upgrade programme had been completed and the current setting is for lights to be dimmed by 20% overnight from Midnight to 5:30am.</p> <p>It is possible to increase the overnight dimming to 40% of daytime level, if required in Strawberry Fields</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter proposed that this should be requested.</p> <p>Cllr. P. Wingfield declared that he had a personal interest on this as he lived in Strawberry Fields and spoke to advise that there really needed to be consultation with the residents of Strawberry Fields, which could be done by a simple leaflet drop giving 2 weeks for feedback.</p> <p>The motion, including the proposed consultation, was seconded by Cllr. A. Richardson and was AGREED by 11 votes and 1 abstention.</p>
# 1	<p>It was AGREED that the meeting should be extended by a further ½ hour from 9:30pm in order to conclude the remaining business.</p>
15/269	<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 and it was unanimously AGREED that the following payments should be made:</p> <p>1 Sita UK Ltd – Waste disposal Fairground December £93.79</p>

	<p>2015 D.D. inc. VAT</p> <p>2 Burghfield Parish Council – West Wing Hire Charge 19/01/16 £30.00</p> <p>3 Bell Cornwell – NDP Partner advice upto 31/10/15 inc. VAT £1,677.00</p> <p>4 Claire Connell – Internal Audit Services year ending 31/3/16 £240.00</p> <p>5 West Berkshire Council – West End Car Park rent December 2015 £10.00</p> <p>6 Rialtas – Data entry work 2nd December 2015 inc. VAT £252.00</p> <p>7 Festive Lights – Christmas Tree Lights, Cable and Controller 23/11/15 inc. VAT £52.90</p> <p>8 Parish Online – Annual Subscription for mapping services 11/1/16 – 11/1/17 £84.00</p> <p>9 Haydn Selwyn-Jones T/A BMS Associates – Locum Clerk Fees for December 2015 £1,551.00</p> <p>10 BT – Business Services charges 25/12/15 D.D. inc. VAT £269.44</p> <p>11 Dads Shop – Custodian's tools and equipment expenses Nov 15 – Dec 15 inc. VAT £40.10</p> <p>12 Chairman's reimbursable expenses Nov/Dec 2015 inc. VAT £112.65</p> <p>13 SLCC – Clerk Vacancy Advert £300.00</p>
15/270	<p>To receive an update report on the Willink Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Cllr. T. Butcher advised that there was nothing to report</p>
15/271	<p>To receive an update report on the Burghfield and Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group.</p> <p>Cllr. T. Butcher advised that there was nothing to report</p>
15/272	<p>Co-option of a new Councillor</p> <p>Following the lack of any request for an election to fill the Councillor vacancy following the sad death of Cllr. A. Colaço the co-option of a new councillor was discussed.</p> <p>The Clerk advised the process required, which was then discussed.</p> <p>The question was asked by Cllr. T. Butcher as to why it differed from the process used the last time Councillors were co-opted and was advised that this was the required process under Statute Legislation and had been verified with legal officers at West Berkshire Council and advisors at SLCC.</p> <p>It was AGREED that the Clerk should post the vacancy, as required, so that candidates could be interviewed at the Council meeting on 10th March.</p>

15/273	<p>To receive Correspondence (for information only)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Reply to SMPC letter regarding the PCSO contract 2 Two applications for the role of SMPC Parish Clerk and RFO <p>Received and noted</p>
15/274	<p>To receive Minor Matters (for information only)</p> <p>Cllr. P. Challis raised the issue of the hedge in The Street and urged that it needs to proceed to avoid further delays due to the bird nesting season.</p> <p>Cllr. M. Lock and Cllr. D. Ives agreed and would progress matters.</p> <p>Cllr P. Challis also advised that there were various Cemetery items to discuss and requested a meeting of the Cemetery Committee be called to discuss.</p> <p>The Clerk and Cllr. P. Winfield to arrange.</p> <p>District Cllr. G. Bridgman advised that the initial analysis of the Local Government Finance Settlement announced just prior to Christmas has meant that West Berkshire Council will have to save an additional £8.1m on top of the £10.8m already planned.</p> <p>Representations are being/have been made to the Department for Communities and Local Government by WBC, Berkshire Councils together and our MPs, but whether this will do anything to affect the numbers, or allow a less abrupt transition is not known.</p> <p>Approaches to Parish and Town Councils are being planned to perhaps consider work that could be undertaken at Parish/Town Council level instead of at WBC level.</p> <p>Cllr. N. Carter advised that a representative from Action for the River Kennett would be on site on Monday 18th January to discuss the weir/fish ladder work.</p>
15/275	<p>To receive any future Agenda Items</p> <p>None</p>
15/276	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public</p> <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. M. Dennett, seconded by Cllr. N. Carter and unanimously AGREED by the Councillors present.</p>

<u>Part II</u>	
15/277	<p>2016/2017 Budget</p> <p>The 2016/2017 budget was presented and discussed.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr M. Dennett, seconded by Cllr. N. Carter and AGREED by 11 votes and 1 abstention to accept the proposed 2016/2017 budget and precept request subject to a review of the presentation of the reserves by the Clerk and Cllr. A. Richardson.</p>
15/278	<p>To receive an update on a confidential employment matter.</p> <p>Cllr. T. Butcher provide a verbal update report, which was received and AGREED unanimously.</p> <p>It was also AGREED unanimously that the professional fees for employment advice should be paid.</p>

The next meeting is on 11th February 2016

The meeting closed at 10:15 pm