



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held online on Tuesday 1st December 2020 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors:

CLlr. M. Dennett (Chairman), CLlr. G. Bridgman, CLlr. N. Carter, CLlr. S. Hill, CLlr. D. Kilshaw, CLlr. C. Lewis, CLlr. D. Morsley.

Officers:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

There were no members of the public and no member of the press in attendance.

Part I

20/053 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

20/054 To receive any apologies for absence

None.

20/055 To receive any declarations of interest

None.

20/056 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 3rd November 2020
RESOLVED with three abstentions that these minutes be approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.

20/057 Clerk's Report

1. To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 3rd November 2020 and other updates.

Actions from Last Meeting

1. The Fly Posting and Advertising Policy was approved at Full Council on the 12th November 2020. The review of other policies is still ongoing.

Other updates

1. The survey regarding councillor's IT issues is in progress and should be available in December.

The report was received.

20/058 Items to be taken into private session

To determine which items, if any, of the Agenda should be taken with the public excluded

It was agreed that agenda item 20/060 5. Budget should be taken into Part II.

20/059 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Strategy Working Party

Cllr. Morsley gave a verbal report and the following noted:

- A meeting is being held with the Trustees of the APMF to consider other ideas resulting from the consultation including the fitness equipment.
- The first phase of work has been undertaken on the tumulus on Stephens Firs and it is hoped that a bench and information board can be supplied for the area from s106.

2. Newsletter

Work is progressing on the newsletter with delivery aimed for before Christmas. This will potentially be the 19th/20th of December but a decision will be taken on Thursday 3rd December. Delivery will be, if possible, via the Scouts – Cllr. Kilshaw to check - or via the volunteer system, although this will require approximately 2 weeks notice. **ACTION: CLLRS. KILSHAW and DENNETT/CLERK**

20/060 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Project Management Consultant

- a. Appoint a project management consultant for Council projects that need that expertise**
- b. Agree that the first project to commence will be the widening of the footpath to St Mary's school**
- c. Authorise the Clerk, the Chairman and the Chairman of SWP to continue the recruitment process for the Project Manager and to bring a recommendation to the January F&GP and then to January Full Council.**

Cllr. Dennett presented a paper and further to a discussion it was noted:

- The correct term is not footpath but footway or pavement.
- A Project Manager (PM) will be appointed on a project by project basis and employed on fixed cost terms.
- A PM is required to oversee the project(s) due to lack of expertise of the Council.
- Whilst the footway projects are not the usual remit of the Parish Council, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is provided to the Council for infrastructure that the Council may not otherwise consider, or the village may not otherwise get.
- Notification has been received from West Berkshire Council (WBC) that additional CIL money is currently available and that SMPC could apply for a grant to assist with the costs of a CIL project. The closing date for applications is the 10th January 2021.
- It will be the remit of the Project Manager to advise on the costs and feasibility of widening parts of the footway along The Street enabling the Council to take

decisions accordingly that meet budget requirements. In addition, the PM will liaise with West Berkshire Council and other third parties, including contractors but not undertake the work themselves.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution as stated.

Seconded by Cllr. Lewis.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

2. BT Phone Box

- a. To consider the purpose and management of the adopted phone box and agree other actions.**
- b. To receive, consider and RESOLVE the signing of the agreement and authorise the payment of the fee of £1.00**

Cllr. Bridgman proposed 1) that the phone box is adopted and used for the purpose of a defibrillator, subject to confirmation by Full Council if considered necessary by the Chairman and Clerk and 2) the agreement is signed and the £1 paid.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

3. Pillbox

To receive and consider the Notice for Tenant and Declaration and RESOLVE the signing of the Declaration.

The Notice for Tenant and Declaration was considered.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the Notice for Tenant and Declaration be signed.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

4. CIL Consultation

To AGREE to publish on the SMPC website the other ideas put forward by the public during the CIL consultation last February along with the Council's initial comments.

Cllr. Carter presented the comments received from the consultation and the proposed responses by SMPC. These are a means of updating people about the consultation and keeping people informed.

Cllr. Carter proposed that the comments and responses be published on the SMPC website.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett.

AGREED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

5. Budget

To receive, consider and APPROVE the draft budget for circulation to Council members.

Moved to Part II.

20/061 Items for information only

Minor Matters

Cllr. Morsley reported the following:

- The final decision on the station car park is still formally awaited as agreement is still needed on one condition.
- A meeting on the MOR006 reserved land is taking place on Thursday 3rd December with all interested parties.

Cllr. Lewis raised concern regarding the number of issues that are being highlighted to the office by members of the public and amount of office time taken in managing these. This

was briefly discussed, but it was felt that members of the public are encouraged to engage with the Council and the Council has a role to play accordingly. Councillors with an area of expertise could assist the office with drafting responses and consideration may need to be given to additional increased office resources.

20/062 Finance

1. Accounts to 31st October 2020

To receive and APPROVE the Income and Expenditure Report and the Balance Sheet.

APPROVED unanimously.

2. Internal Control

To receive and note the report for the period 1st April 2020 – 30th September 2020.

The report was received and noted.

3. External Auditor's Report

To receive the report for presentation to Full Council on the 14th January 2020.

It was noted that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was posted on the website and noticeboards on Friday 27th November prior to the deadline of the 30th November.

The report was received for presentation to Full Council. **ACTION: CLERK**

20/063 Communications

To identify items for communicating

The following were identified for inclusion the newsletter:

- CIL.
- Pillbox.
- BT Phone Box.
- Appointment of consultants to assist with the footway projects.

20/064 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

- Additional CIL grant from WBC.
- SMPC representatives on outside bodies.

20/065 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, items identified at 20/058 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

RESOLVED unanimously

20/066 Items for Consideration and Resolution

5. Budget

To receive, consider and APPROVE the draft budget for circulation to Council members

The draft budget papers were considered and discussed. Amendments to the draft budget were noted and will be made accordingly. As per the agreed budget process, the draft budget papers will be issued to councillors, as confidential documents, for comment. The final budget and precept will be finalised at the next Finance and General Purposes meeting on the 5th January 2021, for recommendation to Full Council on the 14th January 2021.

Close

The meeting closed at 21.37pm.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5th January 2021.