



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 13 March 2003 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: L Picking (Acting Chairman), K Davies, Mrs A Philips, Mrs R Weiss, J Morden, J Mazillius, J Gosling, P Challis, M Loader C Lewis, A Thorpe, Ms S Harding, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk) K Lock (District), 1 Members of the Public and 1 member of the Press

Apologies: Councillors: G Puddephatt and R Peters.

Declaration of Interest: No declarations of interest.

03/35 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of 13th February 2003 were approved as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

03/36 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr K Lock reported that West Berkshire's funding from the Government had been capped at 8%. They have increased the Council Tax by 8.5% and overall expenditure will be £143.9 million (the average across the country is 12.9%). The Council Tax at Band "D" is £987.45 and the Police precept has increased by £106.24. Cllr Lock mentioned that the new Council Service Response Centre dealing with inquiries for streetcare, planning, transport, revenues and benefits will open in June. A meeting to discuss what policy West Berkshire is to apply to the commons it owns under the access across commons Act was being held on the same evening. Cllr Lock advised that West Berkshire is contributing £50,000 towards the Environment Agency scheme to re-grade the Foudry Brook. West Berkshire Council is also tracing the course of the ditch from Mortimer Lane to the bridge, the intention when water levels fall is to put a camera along the ditch (part of which is piped) to see where it needs clearing/jetting and then to put in a manhole at the appropriate point. The engineers are to restore the bund opposite the Fox and Horn and the Saddlers on the Beech Hill Road.

Cllr Harding reported that she had received a letter from Thames Water saying the foul water network can cope when the extra houses are built at Mortimer Hill. A condition of the Planning Permission is that no extra surface water will be generated (condition 18). There is a section 38 agreement on surface water, (water generated by each house has to soakaway under that house). Soakaways to be constructed on site (Building Regulations. Cllr Harding said that all the negotiations on Section 106 have now been completed

03/37 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on Thursday 13th February and Monday 3rd March 2003 to consider five applications:

03/00160/HOUSE 54 The Avenue. Extension to form kitchen, cloakroom and utility room. Object – position of proposed substantial extension to front of house is contrary to normal practice and liable to create an undesirable precedent.

03/00149/HOUSE 9 Mortimer Lane. Retrospective application for installation of sun pipes and erection of boundary wall. Object: – position of wall constitutes a potential traffic hazard, limiting visibility of oncoming vehicles on bend in road. A reduction in height would not solve the problem. It should be moved 2 metres from the road verge.

03/00116/FUL 54 Victoria Road (Victoria Arms Public House). A detached annex to the Victoria Arms providing family accommodation. The existing derelict building (ex toilets) to be demolished. No objection subject to the new annex being tied to ownership/tenancy of the licensed premises.

0300182/FUL 8 West End Road (Mortimer Garage site) – Erection of a dwelling, 3 bedroom cottage (see 02/01087/FUL for dental surgery and 6 flats) No objection.

03/00229/HOUSE 27 Croft Road. Rear conservatory and extension to rear dormer. No objection.

The Following Planning Decision has been received:

02/02620/FUL Land at rear of 12 Stephens Close. Proposed 2 bedroom detached bungalow with integral garage and parking – Approved

03/38 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons: No Report.**

- i. **To Consider Litter Bin for St Catherine’s Hill:** This was held over until next month as we are still awaiting information from West Berkshire Council.
- ii. **Planting Programme for Car Park Outside St John’s Church:** West Berkshire are going to re-plant the grassed areas and plant some additional bulbs following the renovation of the car park. It was raised that in spite of the alterations the car park is still used as a “rat run”. The question was also raised as to when the double yellow lines are to be done **Cllr K Lock** is to investigate and report back at the next meeting.
- iii. **Update on Vehicular Access Over Common Land – Brewery/Summerlug Commons:** Cllr Davies said that a letter had been received from West Berkshire Council stating that they definitely own Summerlug Common and that a letter had been sent to the residents committee for Summerlug advising them of this. Cllr Picking also read out correspondence from West Berkshire regarding the status of Footpath 32, which stated that vehicle access was not allowed along this footpath. A further letter has been sent to West Berkshire asking for further clarification.
- iv. **Update on Car Park West End Road:** Cllr Davies read out a letter received from West Berkshire which alleges that West Berkshire Council are the proper landlord of the car park but following the formation of the 6 unitary authorities in 1998 that the land is registered in the name of Berkshire Fire Authority and they hold the Land Certificate. The only way to resolve this is through the courts and we cannot take any further action in the meantime.
- v. **Update on Gas Main, Brewery Common:** This was held over until the next meeting pending further information.
- vi. **Renovation of War Memorial:** Cllr Davies reported that West Berkshire have confirmed that no special arrangements exist re the ownership of the War Memorial therefore it is owned by West Berkshire as it stands on Highway Land. Cllr Davies will prepare a proposal for the next meeting.

03/39 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

- i. **Report from Fairground Sub Committee:** Cllr Philips reported that the Fairground Sub Committee had met on the 3rd March at which the scale of charges for the Fairground from April 2003/04 were discussed: Cllr Philips proposed that the scale of charges for the use of the Fairground as detailed below be accepted. Cllr A Thorpe seconded this:

Tennis

Public Sessions:

Up to 18 years £1 per court per hour, Adults £2 per court per hour.

Bookable at Forbouys, key £5 deposit

Tennis Club:

Junior hours:

Tuesdays 4 – 6 p.m. two courts (4 hours)

Thursdays 4 – 6 p.m. two courts (4 hours)

Sundays 1 – 6 p.m. two courts (10 hours).

Juniors free in return for an annual subscription of £5.

Senior hours:

Tuesdays 6 – 9 p.m. two courts (6 hours)

Thursdays 6 – 9 p.m. two courts (6 hours)

12 x 26 weeks (316 adult hours) plus 32 extra hours for BBQs etc. = 344 hours @ 94p per hour = £323.36.

Home matches to be booked separately and paid for at £2 per hour per court (approx 36 hours - £72).

Football Clubs

All to be charged a nominal £5 per annum

(Plus a copy of their public liability insurance Certificate to be produced).

Other Fairground Charges 2002/2003

Riding Clubs £50 per day, £20 per evening

Fairs £65 per day

Circuses £35 per day

Hunts £50

Community Charity Events £20

Grazing £15 per week (payable in advance)

Copies of insurance certificates will need to be provided with all bookings. The Clerk was asked to remind the fair that all their living accommodation must be kept on the grazing area.

Cllr Philips advised that due to vandalism and in the interest of safety the play area had been closed. The incident has been reported to the Police who have been to assess the play area. PC Henderson from the Community Police Team has asked that anyone with any information on who may be responsible to telephone the Community Police Team on 0118 9766020. Cllr Philips proposed that the Fairground Sub Committee make arrangements for emergency repairs to be carried out to the play equipment in order that the play area can be re-opened as quickly as possible. Cllr C Lewis seconded and was carried unanimously. **Cllr Weiss** is to write to Mortimer Life to advise on the vandalism.

- ii. **To Discuss Repairs to Entrance to Playground:** The Custodian is to repair the entrance to the play area as water is collecting in a large puddle under the gate(s).
- iii. **To Consider Grass Cutting Contract for Fairground:** Cllr Philips reported that the Clerk had obtained 4 quotes for grass cutting the Fairground, ALS Group, Mr Bryce, Grasslands and R M Weavers. The Fairground Sub Committee recommended that the quotation from R M Weavers be accepted at an annual cost of £897.75 plus VAT. Proposed by Cllr A Philips and seconded by Cllr C Lewis. Carried unanimously. **The Clerk** to action.
- iv. **To Consider Providing Extra Litter Bins on Fairground:** Held over until next meeting.
- v. **Mortimer Fairground Trust Report:** Cllr Davies said that no reply had yet been received from the Charity Commission.

03/40 **Cemetery:** No Report

03/41 **Village Custodian's Report:** None submitted this month.

03/42 **Report from Internal Auditor:** The Clerk informed the Council that Mr Feline had carried out his full quarterly internal audit. He had checked all nine items on the checklist and found everything was in order. Cllr A Philips proposed that the invoice to Mr Feline for £50 be paid and was carried unanimously.

03/43 **Parish Council Elections 1st May 2003:** The Clerk confirmed that nomination packs had been received from The Returning Officer at West Berkshire for the elections to be held on the 1st May 2003. The key dates are Monday 24th March 2003 for Publication of Notice of Poll; Tuesday 1st April 2003 (noon) for Close of nominations; Wednesday 2nd April 2003 Publication of Statement of Persons nominated; Friday 4th April 2003 (noon) Deadline for withdrawal of nominations; Thursday 1st May Election Day. It was agreed that **The Clerk** would advertise on the Web Site and Notice Boards of the date of the election inviting candidates to stand.

03/44 **Policing – Warden System:** The Clerk advised that a meeting with Burghfield and Sulhampstead Parish Councils had been arranged for Wednesday 26th March. Cllrs A Philips, R Weiss, G Puddephatt and the Clerk to attend.

03/45 **Flooding Update:** Mr G Mayes reported that he had not received a reply to his letter to West Berkshire Council of the 31st January asking for a copy of the surface water drainage system plans and details of the Foudry House culvert notes. He also had not heard anything from the Environment Agency in Wallingford regarding their discussions with Thames Water. Mr Mayes advised that he had met with Rachel Followell and Neil Whittington of Thames Water (Sewerage System and Effluent) that day. Thames Water informed that their Pumping Station did not fail on the 1st and 2nd January 2003 although the rate of flow was very high indicating surface water in the system. They had said that Thames Water was unaware that sewerage effluent (including toilet paper) had been flowing across the road and gullies and into Foudry Brook on the 1st January. It was noted during the site visit that the road gullies in Grazeley Road were partially blocked with mud from the verges

churned up by parked cars and Mr Mayes asked whether the Parish Council/West Berkshire Council should consider banning cars parked in this location and that the gullies should be cleaned to allow run off from the road to drain into Foudry Brook. Mr Mayes has asked whether the Parish Council could consider purchasing the necessary mapping of the Thames Water Foul Sewer system in the vicinity of Tun Bridge and other parts of the system in Mortimer at a cost of £41.36 per sheet. Cllr J Gosling proposed that Mr G Mayes be authorised to purchase these maps on behalf of the Council and Cllr Harding seconded this. Carried.

03/46 **Update on Parish Plan:** Mr Mayes reported that the Coordination Group had met on the 6th March to sort out actions, policy and contributions. Three working groups studying Community Facilities, Housing and Transport matters have been formed. The third newsletter is currently being delivered by hand and post to all residents, businesses and clubs/schools etc in Mortimer Parish together with a questionnaire relating to the expected future use of Mortimer Station by Mortimer residents and the methods of transport to and from the station. This information would feed into the Parish Council's proposed application for a £10,000 Transport Grant from the Countryside Agency.

03/47 **Appointment of Representative on Mortimer St Mary's Governing Body:** Cllr Picking advised that a letter of application had been received for the above post from Mr Nick Ashton. Cllr S Harding proposed that Mr Ashton be appointed as the Parish Council Representative on Mortimer St Mary's Governing Body, this was seconded by Cllr K Davies and carried unanimously. **The Clerk** to advise Mr Ashton and the Chair of Governors.

03/48 **Request for Part Funding for Hire of Village Hall for Senior Citizen Group:** Cllr Weiss advised that she had been approached by a group of pensioners wishing to set up a social club for example dancing and bingo. They wish to use St John's Hall one afternoon per fortnight at a cost of £48 per month. They are to approach Age Concern and the Relief in Need Charity for support but have asked the Parish Council to consider a request for half the costs up until December. It was proposed by Cllr Weiss and seconded by Cllr Davies that this request be granted. Carried.

03/49 **Mortimer St Mary's Junior School – Change of Category:** The Clerk read out a letter from Mrs M Mayes, Chairman of Governors Mortimer St Mary's School which advised that at a recent meeting of the Schools' Organisation Committee of West Berkshire Council the proposal to change the category of the school from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided was approved from the 1st April 2003. The School will become Mortimer St Mary's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Junior School.

03/50 **Report on Annual District/Parish Conference:** The Clerk informed the Council that she and Cllr Philips had attended the District Parish Conference on the 11th March. The topics covered were

- Future agenda for Parish Councils (including Code of Conduct, modernising the financial regime for Parish Councils, new Ethical Framework, issues for the future including the role of councillors, clerks, area forums and the West Berkshire Partnership).
- Relation of Parish Plans to the Community Plan. A presentation on the importance of community planning and specifically how Parish Plans fit into the West Berkshire Partnership's Community Plan and the Corporate Plan.
- A presentation on Flooding.

03/51 **To Consider Purchase of Anti Virus Package for Computer £95.00:** This was held over until the next meeting.

03/52 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:**

- i. Clerk's Salary.
- ii. Clerk's/Custodian's Tax and NI.
- iii. Clerk's Expenses
- iv. Custodian's Salary.
- v. L Howes – Councillor Training Day September 2002 - £274.00.
- vi. Mortimer Methodist Church – Hire of Hall £126.00.
- vii. Mr F J Feline – Internal Audit Bill £50.00.
- viii. Impact – Accounts Software Package Update - £35.00.
- ix. Mr K Lock (West Berkshire Council) Black Sacks £10.80.
- x. Thames Water Bill for Water Trough Fairground - £6.10.
- xi. Andrew Hazelden – Community Award Plates £280.00.
- xii. The Post Office – Stamps £46.00.

- xiii. Mr T Barbour (Staples) – Printing Parish Plan Newsletter - £158.62 inc VAT.

In accordance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations all the items for payment were considered together. Cllr K Davies proposed that they be paid; Cllr R Weiss seconded this. Carried unanimously.

03/53 **Correspondence:**

- i. A letter from the residents of Orchard Road asking for an interest free loan to repair part of the Avenue. **The Clerk** to respond saying the Council has no power to do this.
- ii. A letter from Mr A Millership about the amount of litter outside the shops near Forbouys. **The Clerk** to send a suitable reply.

03/54 **Any Other Business:**

There was no Any Other Business

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 10th April 2003 at 7:30 p.m.

List of payments made:

Date	Cheque No.	Payee	Amount
13 March 2003	501208	J E Kirk	
13 March 2003	501209	Inland Revenue	
13 March 2003	501210	J E Kirk	
13 March 2003	501211	L O'Rourke	
13 March 2003	501212	L Howes	274.00
13 March 2003	501213	Mortimer Methodist Church	126.00
13 March 2003	501214	F J Feline	50.00
13 March 2003	501215	Impact	35.00
13 March 2003	501216	K Lock	10.80
13 March 2003	501217	Thames Water	6.10
13 March 2003	501218	Andrew Hazelden	280.00
13 March 2003	501219	The Post Office	46.00
13 March 2003	501220	T Barbour	158.62

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 10:35pm