



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 10 April 2003 at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), L Picking, R Peters, Mrs A Philips, Mrs R Weiss, J Morden, J Mazillius, J Gosling, P Challis, 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: M Loader, K Davies.

**Declaration of Interest:** Councillor G Puddephatt declared an interest in item 03/70 (vii) British Telecom.

03/55 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

**Minutes:**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2003 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters Arising:**

03/38(ii) Ms Harding reported that the cost of the renovations to the car park outside St John's Church had cost the District Council £28,000. The renovations included drainage and re-surfacing. It was the view of some Parish Councillors that not much had been achieved for the cost.

03/56 **Report from District Councillors:**

Ms Harding reported that the double yellow lines would be completed very soon. The lay-by outside Forbuoys is to be re-lined and if cars still continue to park on the pavement bollards will be erected. She confirmed that the tactile paving installed around the village was as a result of European legislation and this had to be funded by West Berkshire Council as they had received no money from the government or Europe towards it. Ms Harding was asked why coloured road surfaces had been carried out in Stephens Road and on the road to Burghfield Common (via Brewery Common). A comment was passed that several times the Parish Council had asked West Berkshire for coloured road surfaces to be installed on the two main roads in the village as a traffic calming measure but had always been told that it was too expensive yet it had been installed on two minor roads. Ms Harding was also asked to chase West Berkshire as to when the graffiti on the road signs was going to be removed. The developer for the Mortimer Hill development will only make a small contribution towards a new car park at the station but not third party land. Ms Harding asked the Parish Council whether they wanted to approach Englefield Estates regarding the fields on the other side of the railway track to be used as an additional car park. As neither Thames Trains or West Berkshire Council are interested in carrying this forward the Parish Council said it was interested in possibly applying for planning permission to make a car park. This was proposed by Councillor G Puddephatt and seconded by Councillor A Thorpe. **Councillor Puddephatt** to action.

03/57 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March and Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2003 to consider seven applications:

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| 03/00236/HOUSE | 10 Spring Lane – Extension to sides and rear. Object – over development of site. Endeavouring to squeeze too much accommodation onto a small bungalow site to the detriment of neighbours. The additional space may be intended for business purposes.  |
| 03/00324/HOUSE | Starvale, Mowbrays Hill – conservatory. No objection.   |
| 03/00355/CERT  | Woodside, Mortimer Lane. Certificate of Lawfulness for an existing use for use of land as part of 9/10 Mortimer Lane and subsequently Woodside, Mortimer Lane. No objection.  |
| 0300328/FUL    | Aborn Parade, 53 West End Road. Change of Use to A3 (take away food).<br>Object:<br>1. Contrary to District and Parish policy to permit Take Away Food Outlet beneath existing residential accommodation.<br>2. Imposing of cooking smells to adjacent hairdressing salon and residential flat both adjacent and above. |

3. Lack of parking provision. Flat residents currently use the lay-by at night.
  4. Proposed "Fume Exhaust" immediately below flats walkway.
- 03/00384/HOUSE 20 Victoria Road. Additional 2 bedrooms over existing lounge to rear and new side garage. No objection.
- 03/00566/HOUSE Eastrop, The Street – proposed porch on side elevation. Object – the Parish Council have no objection in principle to the proposed porch but are of the opinion that it should be constructed of matching materials to the existing cottage. The proposed materials are incompatible with the cottage and detrimental to the street scene.
- 03/00532/FUL Aborn Parade, West End Road. Proposed Flat and Maisonette.  
Object:
1. This is a full 3-storey building completely out of keeping with the village scene (permission granted by Bradfield R.D.C. some 40 or so years ago). To increase the frontage bulk of an inappropriate building will further dominate the street scene.
  2. Over development of site.
  3. Revision of parking arrangements already approved (00/00200/FUL) will reduce the new ground floor flats amenity area.
  4. Overpower the adjacent chalet bungalows immediately to the west of site.
  5. Impair the viability of the adjacent mature trees which are subject to a T.P.O.

**The Following Planning Decisions have been received from West Berkshire Council:**

- 03/00132/FUL 8 West End Road (Mortimer Garage). Amended plans for 3bed cottage at rear of site. Recommended for approval.
- 03/00229/HOUSE 27 Croft Road. Rear conservatory and extended rear dormer. Recommended for approval.
- 02/02620/FUL Land at rear of 12 Stephens Close. Proposed 2 bedroom detached bungalow with integral garage and parking. Recommended for approval.  
Appeal decision received from The Planning Inspectorate. Land adjacent to Lane House, Mortimer Lane (The Old Apple Store). Appeal against West Berkshire Council (01/02375/FUL) refusal for redevelopment and change of use to Class B1. Appeal dismissed.  
Adjacent parish application. Wokefield Park. Councillor Morden reported that it is proposed to replace the post war training, support and residential space including 41 delegate bedrooms on a footprint of 1629m2 with a new building for training and residential accommodation of 39 study bedrooms and 16 staff bedrooms on a footprint of 2007m2. The existing facility is poor and the new building on 2 floors plus dormer accommodation is increasing from 41 bedrooms to 54 and at a time when Thames Water are being ambivalent regarding the capacity of the Sewage Treatment Works to cope with the Mortimer Hill development and current flooding with sewage content in The Street. Councillor Morden suggested that Parish Council object to this planning application on sewage treatment grounds and this was unanimously agreed. **Councillor Morden** to action.  
It was noted that a windsock had been erected at the Thames Water Pumping Station at the bottom of The Street and **The Clerk** was asked to investigate whether planning permission is required.

03/58 **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. **Update on No Motorcycle Signs Windmill Common:** Councillor Peters that the "No Motorcycle" signs had now been received and the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee would meet to discuss where and how the signs should be sited and also investigate again the possibility of installing stiles and kissing gates. Some of the sites previously suggested are not on Parish Council Land. Motorbikes cannot be stopped from using a byway if the motorbike is legal.  
The Chairman then adjourned the meeting and allowed a member of the public to speak. The Council were advised that her house backed onto Windmill Common and that the byway and footpaths attracted motorbikes that were not registered and probably not insured. The riders of the motorbikes are a danger to users of the footpaths. The member of the public was then informed that even though the Parish Council owns the land it is a Police issue if the bikes are uninsured and illegal and members of the public are urged to contact the police. **The Clerk** is to also contact the Police.  
The Meeting then proceeded.
- iii. **Update on Gas Main, Brewery Common:** Councillor Davies (not present at the meeting) suggested that a resolution regarding the signing of documents be passed so that it may be

sent to the solicitors acting on this case. It was decided to circulate the proposed resolution to all councillors for discussion at the next meeting.

iv. **Renovation of War Memorial:** Councillor Puddephatt asked councillors to make a decision on:

1. Whether the Council supported the cleaning of the War Memorial and whether this should be put in hand as soon as reasonably possible at the Parish Council's Cost. The Clerk had obtained an up-dated quotation from A F Jones in Reading of £963 plus VAT for the cleaning of the memorial. Councillor Gosling proposed that the Council pay for the cleaning of the war memorial. Councillor Lewis seconded this. **The Clerk** to action.

2. Councillor Puddephatt advised councillors that a further quotation had been received from Hutts Builders for a cobbled area 4 feet wide at a cost of £4,721.50 plus VAT. After a lengthy discussion it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council does not support the works of improvement and surroundings to the war memorial and think it undesirable so to do. **The Clerk** to advise The British Legion and Hutts Builders of this decision.

03/59 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Councillor Philips reported that John Clarke had very quickly rectified the vandalised areas of the play area to a high standard at a cost of £538.82 and that it had been re-opened after only a few days. The Clerk advised that the custodian was going to apply the wet pour in the Children's Play Area the next day. The Clerk was asked why the fair's accommodation was not in the Grazing Area and the reason given was that the Grazing Area had been booked the next Sunday for a horse show. The Clerk was asked to ensure that two bookings for the Fairground were not made together in future.

i. **Fairground Refurbishment Project:** Councillor Lewis stated that the pavilion project had not progressed in the last 12 months. The costs have gone up and the income has dropped. The promised money from Bryants Homes of £75,000 from the Mortimer Hill Development has not materialised. An appeal is to be made at the Annual Parish Meeting to try and get people to help the small committee pushing this project forward.

ii. **Mortimer Fairground Trust Report:** The Clerk reported that no reply had yet been received from the Charity Commission. **The Clerk** is to send a chaser letter to Charity Commission.

Councillor Harding said that as the Cricket Club have had to pay out large sums of money to repair the current cricket pavilion perhaps the Parish Council could discuss ways of assisting the Cricket Club with their finances. Councillor Puddephatt proposed the above be discussed with the Cricket Club. Councillor Mazillius seconded this and was carried unanimously. **Councillor Puddephatt** to action.

03/60 **Cemetery:** No Report

03/61 **Report from Parish Council Representative on Relief in Need Charity:** Councillor Picking (the Parish Council representative on the Relief in Need Charity) reported that following the meeting of the Charity on the 27<sup>th</sup> March the Trustees have agreed to extend their commitment for another 12 months (until the end of March 2004). If by that date there is no definite go ahead the Charity will regard itself as released from its present commitment

03/62 **Parish Council Elections 1<sup>st</sup> May 2003:** Councillor Puddephatt advised that sadly four councillors had decided not to stand for re-election this year and thanked Councillors John Gosling, John Mazillius, Roger Peters and Maurice Loader for their efforts over many years. This has left 3 vacancies and two new councillors have been nominated these are Tennant Barber and Tony Jones and due to in-sufficient candidates standing there will not be an election held in this Parish on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2003. The Returning Officer advises that the Parish Council has until Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2003 to co-opt suitable people to fill the three vacancies. If the Parish Council fails to fill the vacancies then West Berkshire District Council may then exercise its power to order a fresh election to fill the remaining vacancies. It was agreed that **The Clerk** would put posters on the notice boards and on the web site to try to attract suitable candidates.

03/63 **Policing – Warden System:** Councillor Puddephatt reported that a meeting had taken place with representatives from Burghfield and Sulhampstead Parish Councils and that a proposal had been agreed to take forward investigating the Policing Warden System. A joint letter has been sent to all the District Councillors and to The Chief Executive of West Berkshire. Councillor Puddephatt read out the Chief Executive's reply saying that a meeting will be arranged in the near future between the

Parish Councils, the Chief Constable, Area Commander and himself. Councillors Puddephatt, Lewis, Picking, Philips and Weiss are interested in attending the meeting.

03/64 **Flooding Update:** Mr Mayes reported that the Parish/District Council need to the drainage from Mortimer Hill via Monktons Brook and the lakes/ponds in the grounds of Abbeycroft and the stability of the embankments if increased run off is passed down that drain. Mr Mayes has now received the drawings from Thames Water. These digitised maps and tables cover most of The Street. They show the foul sewers and fresh water mains but private connections are not shown. Mr Mayes fees that Parish Council action is now required as Thames Water are saying that they have no plans for further action as the problem is outside their control which he disputes since the sewage was flooding across the Grazeley Road before The Street flooded on the afternoon of the 1<sup>st</sup> January, the overloading of the foul sewer must therefore be caused by water leaking into the pipes from the Foudry Brook or from high groundwater and not from rainwater down pipes and other illegal connections. This is Thames Water's responsibility. It was reported in last month's minutes that that West Berkshire Council and the Environment Agency are prepared to spend £50,000 on cctv testing of the drains from Monktons Brook to the Tun Bridge outfall. Mr Mayes asked to be kept informed of West Berkshire's plans even though he had not had a reply to his letters of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January. He recommends that the testing and the reservoir stability survey referred to above needs to be conducted before any new planning development is sanctioned including Mortimer Hill.

03/65 **Update on Parish Plan:** Mr Mayes reported that when the third newsletter was delivered to all residents a Questionnaire relating to the expected future use of Mortimer Station by Mortimer residents and the methods of transport to and from the station. Only 92 replies have to date been received (about 5% of households) to which it was delivered. There is clearly a large number of households (1500) who do not wish to use the station, either because they use the bus to Reading or drive all the way, or because they find parking at the station too difficult and insecure. The large number of people who have not replied makes the analysis difficult to interpret and biased. and the small numbers saying they would like to use the trains off peak on weekdays (from 7am to 11am and from 3.30pm to 7pm) make it difficult to justify increasing the number of mini bus trips and affects the Parish Council's plan to apply for a Transport Grant of £10,000 from the Countryside Agency to help subsidise the buses. Spare questionnaires can be obtained from The Library and Parish Office.

03/66 **Quality Parish Conference Report/Quality Parish Status:** Councillor Puddephatt advised that he and The Clerk had attended the launch of the Quality Parish initiative at the Bedford Hotel London on the 19<sup>th</sup> March. The concept of "Quality" town and parish councils was first outlined in the Rural White Paper in 2000. The proposals aimed to develop a framework for partnership working and equip local councils to take on a stronger role for the benefit of the local community. Alun Michael MP announced the details of the "Quality" parish initiative, which the Government has developed in the light of the responses to the consultation. The scheme has been developed jointly by Defra and ODPM along with the Local Government Association, the National Association of Local Councils and the Countryside Agency. The scheme sets some straightforward tests that parish councils have to pass before they are awarded "Quality" Parish Status. These tests for accreditation require a "Quality" Council to (a) have initially at least 80% of its seats filled by candidates who stood for election, (b) have a suitably qualified clerk (c) hold at least 6 Council meetings each year, (d) publish annual reports (e) provide regular information to residents on parish activities and (f) produce properly prepared and audited accounts. County panels will assess applications. The scheme also includes a model charter where all parish councils are encouraged to negotiate with principal authorities to set out how these tiers of local government can promote partnership working. Once granted "Quality" status local councils will be in a position to give their communities a better deal on local services and a stronger voice in decisions affecting peoples day to day lives. Councillor Puddephatt confirmed that the clerk has undertaken the required training course, which she hopes to complete in the new year. The councillors then confirmed unanimously that they were interested in Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council becoming a Quality Parish Council.

03/67 **To Consider Purchase of Anti Virus Package for Computer £95.00:** Councillor Picking proposed that an annual anti virus package be purchased for £95.00 from Sophos. This will include constant updates and free upgrades to the virus engine. Councillor Philips seconded this and it was unanimously agreed. **The Clerk** to action.

03/68 **Legacy to Parish Council Late S D Beards £1,000:** Councillor Puddephatt read out a letter from Mr

J Perry (Executor) for the estate of the late Mr Beards. The letter confirmed that Mr Beards lived in Mortimer for 20 years before moving to Three Mile Cross. He played football and captained the cricket team. Mr Beards has left a legacy to the Parish Council of £1,000 to be used for general amenities for the village. It was decided to hold this over until the next meeting to give councillors time to come up with suitable suggestions.

03/69 **Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2003:** The Clerk reminded councillors of the Annual Parish Meeting.

03/70 **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. Ringway Services – 10 No Motorcycle Signs £293.75 inc VAT
- vi. West Berkshire Council - Annual Dog Bin Emptying Charge £365.12 inc VAT
- vii. BT – Telephone Bill Parish Office £176.84 inc VAT
- viii. BALC – 2003/04 Annual membership Fee £794.19
- ix. J Clarke – Repairs to Play Area (following vandalism) £538.82
- x. West Berkshire Council – Quarterly Photocopying Charge £49.55
- xi. Dads Shop £120.94 inc VAT

In accordance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations all the items for payment were considered together. Cllr C Lewis proposed that they be paid; Cllr L Picking seconded this. Carried unanimously.

03/71 **Correspondence:**

- i. Notes from Mrs J Blagdon, (who attended on behalf of the Parish Plan Group) on the Eastern Area Forum were read out these included information on a presentation from Police Inspector Talbot on policing policy and anti social behaviour, youth services in the east of the area, a presentation on disabled access. In the Business Section a petition for the footpath in The Street. There will not be a continuous path from the War Memorial to the station on the south side of The Street because this would involve acquiring land and there is no money available for this. Instead, they will update the two existing footpaths making them safer and provide a safe crossing place. When asked if this meant a pelican or zebra crossing the reply was "no" just some kind of road marking and speed restrictions. Pangbourne Parish Plan was presented to the forum for approval.
- ii. Letter from West Berkshire Council (Recreation Development Worker) saying that the summer playscheme initiative had been scrapped (saving West Berkshire Council £68,000). They thanked the Parish Council for their commitment to the scheme over the years. This means that there will not be a summer playscheme held at St Mary's School, Mortimer this year.
- iii. Parish Council Representative on St Mary's Board of Governors Report and Head Teacher's Report. These were read out to Councillors and are available in the Parish Office.

03/72 **Any Other Business:**

Councillor Mazillius said that although he was not standing at the election he was prepared to carry on the Parish Council representative on the AWE Liaison Committee and Councillor Gosling said he was prepared to carry on as the Parish Council's representative on the Clarks Educational Charity.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2003 at 7:30 p.m.

List of payments made:

Date	Cheque No.	Payee	Amount
10 April 2003	501221	J E Kirk	
10 April 2003	501222	Inland Revenue	
10 April 2003	501223	Spoiled Cheque	
10 April 2003	501224	J E Kirk	
10 April 2003	501225	L O'Rourke	321.74
10 April 2003	501226	Ringway Highway Services Ltd	293.75
10 April 2003	501227	West Berkshire Council	365.12
10 April 2003	501228	B.T.	176.84
10 April 2003	501229	BALC	794.19
10 April 2003	501230	J Clarke	538.82
10 April 2003	501231	West Berkshire Council	49.55
10 April 2003	501232	Dads Shop Limited	120.94

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