



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 12 June 2003 at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt, L Picking, Mrs A Philips, J Morden, P Challis, C Lewis, A Thorpe, K Davies, T Barber, T Jones, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk) and 1 Member of the Public

Apologies: Councillors: Mrs R Weiss, Ms S Harding and K Lock (District)

Declaration of Interest: Councillor A Philips declared an interest in items 03/104(ii) and 03.115(v).

03/98 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 8th May 2003 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

The Clerk advised that she had received confirmation from the Monitoring Officer of safe receipt of all the Declarations of Acceptance of Office and Registers of Interests for all members of the Council.

03/99 **To Consider Co-Option of 3 New Parish Councillors:** Cllr Puddephatt advised that prior to the Meeting three Councillors had been interviewed with a view to co-option onto the Parish Council. These were:

Pete Blagdon. Proposed by Cllr Puddephatt and unanimously agreed.

Bill Taylor: Proposed by Cllr Davies and unanimously agreed.

Adrian Smith: Interviewed by Finance & General Purposes Committee and recommended by them. Proposed by Cllr Puddephatt and unanimously agreed. **The Clerk** to inform each applicant of their success in being co-opted onto the Council, also inform the Monitoring Officer that we no longer have any vacancies.

03/100 **Report from District Councillors:** The Clerk read out Cllr Lock's report in his absence. He said that 16-22 June is National Glass Week and West Berkshire is trying to remind residents of the importance of recycling because last year although the Council recycled 2,500 tons of glass it is estimated that about 1,000 tons was still thrown away. A new Contact Centre is to be opened on 20 June at Market Street Office of West Berkshire Council. The Boundary Commission has published proposed Constituency boundary changes, which will apply to the General Election after next. They are proposing that the parishes of Sulhampstead, Beenham, Englefield, Theale Village and Aldermaston be moved in to Wokingham. Cllr Lock thinks that it is unlikely that the increase in the electorate in Berkshire will be sufficient to justify an extra MP for the County. Following a Meeting between Cllr Harding, M Bowler of West Berkshire Highways Department and Cllr Puddephatt of the Parish Council to discuss the Mortimer Traffic Order which established the new parking scheme in the village is subject to minor amendments and details of these will be sent to the Parish Council shortly.

03/101 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met once since the last Council Meeting on 22nd May 2003 to consider four new applications and an amendment to Newbury District Council Planning Consent 14666 12 July 1995 – work commenced 29.6.2000 – foundations prepared and inspected – no further work carried out. 20 West End Road (old Barclays Bank Chambers) extension on two floors to the rear. Minor amendment – fire escape doors to be revised and staircase therefore to be revised also. No objection but West Berkshire Council should take the opportunity to remind the applicant of the “Dumbartonshire” condition regarding the repair and maintenance of the adjacent stretch of St John's Road. An agreed scheme must be in place before new extension is occupied.

03/00864/HOUSE

8 Mortimer Lane. Single storey rear conservatory. No objection.

03/00978/HOUSE

9 Mortimer Lane – Retrospective installation of sun pipes. This retrospective application initially included the 2m wall to the front of the property adjacent to the road. This was refused and the applicant invited to submit a retrospective application

- 03/01044/REM for the sun pipes only. No objection.
Land adjacent to 14 The Avenue. Approval of reserved matters for a detached chalet style dwelling with integral double garage – residential. No objection but wish that approval should include condition that the fence from road frontage to point “A” on Drawing No. 020709-23 should be replaced with new fence following removal of dead tree.
- 03/00805/FULMAJ Adjacent Parish. Trunkwell Mansion House Hotel, Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill. 3-storey extension for 42 hotel rooms to the rear of the existing property. Object. The proposed disposal of the foul sewage into the main sewer poses a serious threat to the properties in the lower section of “The Street” and “Grazeley Road” Stratfield Mortimer. Recent flooding in this part of the parish (October 2000 and January 2003) has indicated that storm water is entering the foul sewer and pump opposite the “Fox and Horn Public House” which has been unable to cope resulting in new sewage invading the properties fronting these two roads. Thames Water may indicate that the Mortimer Sewage Works has adequate capacity but this ignores their inability to deliver the sewage to the works when storm water is invading their foul sewage pipe. The Parish Council reserves their right to speak on this application because of its importance locally.

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

- 03/00710/HOUSE 52 Windmill Road. Rear extension for bedroom, ensuite and family room. Recommendation approval.
- 03/00650/HOUSE 14 Victoria Road. Single storey rear extension to kitchen. Recommendation approval.
- 03/00663/HOUSE Pond House, Kiln Lane. Infilling under balcony and addition of external staircase. Recommendation approval.
- 03/00629/HOUSE 64 The Avenue. Rear extension to provide new dining room. Recommendation approval.
- Hampshire C.C. Hanson Aggregates – Welshmans Road. Permission granted for construction of additional silt lagoon at Budds Firs.

i. Update on New Development Road Names: Cllr Morden advised that the Parish Council have written to West Berkshire Council regarding.

1. The development at the old Mortimer Garage site, West End Road. It has been suggested “Crichton Court” in memory of Ruth Crichton and in recognition of her work for the village..
2. The development at the old “Carpenters Arms” site. Windmill Court as suggested by the developers is clearly a non-starter. They have suggested “Miller Court” but the Parish Council has objected to this and put forward the suggestion “Carpenters Court”.
3. Future development at Mortimer Hill: West Berkshire Council have suggested naming the roads after the land owners of the site – Keeble/Weiss/Lambton. The Parish Council have objected and suggested names that perpetrate the long history of the site as a fruit farm (1959 or earlier), Blackberry Way, Strawberry Fields, Tayberry Close, Cherry Close and Asparagus Avenue all with “Mortimer Hill” appended.

03/102 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Davies reported that the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee met on the 24th May and visited Windmill Common to discuss the siting of barriers and No Motorcycling Signs to try and reduce the amount of misuse of its land by motorcyclists. Three possible sites for suitable barriers (i.e. the ones that would not obstruct pedestrians) has been suggested, although one site is on West Berkshire Council land and permission will need to be obtained from them. **The Clerk** is to write to West Berkshire and also contact Ringway to obtain suitable fixings for the signs. Cllr Davies also said that it had been brought to the Committee’s attention that the property of 15 Longmoor Lane is using a portion of Windmill Common to drive and park vehicles and that as this is an offence under Sec 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 it was unanimously agreed that the Clerk advise the owners of this. A letter was sent to West Berkshire Council asking for a Repair Notice to be served on 3 Hammond Heath as it has fallen into disrepair.

- i. **Update on Vehicle Access Across Brewery Common:** Cllr Davies confirmed that West Berkshire are still awaiting information about the likelihood of further guidance from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as to whether Easements can be granted outside of the Act.
- ii. **Update on Brewery Common (Gas Main):** Cllr Davies confirmed that the resolution regarding the formal signing of documents passed by the Council on the 8th May 2003 had been sent to West Berkshire Council and that hopefully they may now proceed with this Easement from Transco.
- iii. **Traffic Calming:** Cllr Davies read out a proposed letter to West Berkshire Council reminding them that the promised traffic calming measures for St Catherine’s Hill was still

long outstanding (following the £1,000 planning obligation from Entric Services Limited in July 2001) also repeating that there is no justification for including this work in the planning gain for the Mortimer Hill Development.

- iv. **Graffiti – To Discuss Removal:** Cllr Puddephatt reported that further to numerous telephone calls/letters to West Berkshire Council regarding the removal of the graffiti a reply has been received which said 4 different solvents had now been used in an attempt to remove the paint with little success and that the solvent was beginning to damage the sign face by dissolving the reflective material and there is nothing else that can be used. They also said that there was not enough money in the budget to replace the signs. The Clerk then reported that the Custodian had that day purchased some graffiti remover from Dads Shop and had successfully started to remove all the paint from the signs with no damage. It was agreed that he should continue and it was appropriate that the bill for the solvent would be sent to West Berkshire.
- v. **Rights of Way – General Condition Survey 2002:** Cllr Davies advised that a summary of the Rights of Way – General Condition Survey 2002 had been received for Stratfield Mortimer and that a copy will be held in the Parish Office. Also received was a signposting/waymarking questionnaire, which will be completed and returned stating:
 - 1) no change in materials, colours etc of signposts is required;
 - 2) number of each registered footpath should be added;
 - 3) One or two councillors might be ready to help in replacement work..
- vi. **Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 – Provisional Map Issue for Central Southern England:** Cllr Davies advised that the Countryside Agency have supplied an extract of the provisional map above which reflects the changes that have been made to the draft map as a result of the public consultation.

03/103 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Philips reported that a Fairground Meeting had been held on the 22nd May at which the Play area was visited and discussed. The committee have suggested that a notice be placed in the play area saying that the play equipment is for under 16's only (**Clerk to action**). It was agreed to await the promised report from Rospa and then get quotes for the repairs. Also discussed was the environmental project on the Fairground and Cllrs Weiss and Barber have agreed to take this over and will report back with their recommendations.

- i. **Children's Play Area Annual Inspection Report:** Cllr Philips reported that the report had been received the day before and that a further Fairground Meeting was to be held to look at the report in detail and will report back at the next meeting.
- ii. **Grass Cutting Grazing Area:** The Clerk reported that after consulting with two councillors a decision was taken to have the grass cut in the Grazing Area, which was very high, prior to two major bookings the following weekend. This caused much discussion as arguably the grass should not be cut until after the 15th July although the Charity Commission have advised the Trustees to maximise the income from the Grazing Area. Cllr Davies proposed that the invoice for £293.75 including VAT to Quentin Jacob be paid and Cllr Thorpe seconded this.

03/104 **Cemetery:** Cllr Thorpe advised that some owners of graves have not been keeping them in conjunction with the Cemetery Regulations and it was unanimously agreed that letters should be sent to these owners asking them to comply with the regulations or that the Parish Council will enforce the rule. The Cemetery Committee have asked that the seat at the Cemetery be moved (from under a tree) and Cllr Thorpe is to obtain quotations for this and report back at the next meeting.

- i. **Spraying the paths in Churchyard and Cemetery £124.00 plus VAT:** Cllr Philips declared an interest and took no part in the discussion. Cllr Thorpe advised that the paths in the Churchyard and Cemetery had been sprayed in accordance with the agreement with the PCC. Cllr Davies proposed that this be paid as per budget and Cllr Picking seconded this.
- ii. **Moles:** Cllr Thorpe advised that there is a problem with moles in the Cemetery and that the Custodian will deal with them.

03/105 **Application for a Transport Grant to help towards mini buses to Mortimer Station:** The Parish Council has expressed a desire to apply for a Transport Grant of £10,000 to fund a pilot scheme for additional mini bus journeys to and from the station. The application form has been completed and it

was agreed (by majority) that this should be signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council and submitted to the Countryside Agency as soon as possible.

- 03/106 **Update on Flooding:** Mr G Mayes has advised the Parish Council that he had eventually received a reply from West Berkshire Council to his letter of January 2003 and 9th May. They confirm that £50,000 would be available to carry out a CCTV survey (of the surface water drainage) and to rebuild the flood bund outside the Fox and Horn Public House in 2003/4 regardless of the Environment Agency's position. This is worrying, as the two organisations should build the funds at the same time and to an agreed height. The CCTV survey was carried out on 20/22 May by Clearwater Ltd (contractors for West Berkshire Council) and a blockage of gravel and brick was found between the Fox and Horn and the Foundry Brook outfall. The surface water drain is a large arched brick culvert and the blockage/damage was probably caused when the pump station and the new lay-by was built. Mr Mayes stated that Thames Water have indicated that they do not intend to do anything in the near future to alleviate the sewage flooding in the lower Street, which they say is due to overloading of the system by the inward leakage from groundwater. The additional sewage flows from Beech Hill if the construction of the additional 42-bedroom hotel at Trunkwell House goes ahead. It was agreed that **The Clerk** would write to West Berkshire Council, Thames Water and The Environment Agency regarding the above.
- 03/107 **Update on Parish Plan:** Mr Mayes reported that the questionnaire was distributed by hand or post to all domestic properties in the parish for completion by all people over 11 years of age. Approximately 1500 were delivered and to date about 500 have been returned. There will be a newsletter produced within the next couple of weeks and an **Open Forum Meeting on Saturday 12th July in the Methodist Hall between 9.30 to 13.00 hours.**
- 03/108 **Report from Finance & General Purposes Committee and Resolution to be Considered by the Council:** Cllr Puddephatt advised that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 3rd June to interview Mr A Smith with a view to co-opting him onto the Parish Council (see 03/99 above), to discuss the above resolution, to verify the Parish Council Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2003 and complete the Statement of Assurance (See 03/110 below). Cllr Puddephatt proposed the following resolution as an addition to Standing Order 18: "The Clerk may after approval of the Chairman or Vice Chairman authorise expenditure on behalf of the Council to meet the reasonably incurred cost of the following up to a limit of £1,000 per month plus VAT regardless of whether there is a budgetary provision: 1. Carrying out any repair, replacement or other work; 2. Expenditure on health and safety matters; 3 Attendance on appropriate courses or similar events. The Clerk shall report the expenditure to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter and it shall be included in the Minutes of the next full monthly Council meeting. Cllr Lewis seconded and it was unanimously agreed. Carried.
- 03/109 **To Consider Quotations from Allianz Cornhill Insurance for Additional Cover:** The Clerk advised that Allianz Cornhill Insurance had submitted quotations for additional cover as follows:
1. Libel and slander – officials at an annual premium of £46.20. Proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Philips and unanimously agreed.
 2. Councillors Fidelity Guarantee at an annual premium of £79.80. Proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Picking and unanimously agreed. **The Clerk** to action. It was decided to hold over the quotation to increased cover of £10,000 on the play equipment until the current work is completed.
- 03/110 **To Approve and Confirm that the Accounts for the Year 2002/2003 Present Fairly the Financial Position of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council:** The Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 3rd June 2003 to review the accounts for 2002/2003 and recommended approval. Copies of the accounts and Audit Return for the Year Ended 31st March 2003 were circulated to all members. The Chairman read out the Statement of Assurance that says "We acknowledge as members of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council our responsibility for the preparation of the accounts and confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Council's accounts for the year ended 31 March 2003." Cllr Thorpe proposed that the accounts for the Year 2002/2003 be approved and Cllr Challis seconded this and it was unanimously agreed. **The Clerk** is to send off the Annual Return to the External Auditor (Messrs Hacker Young) and display Notices of Appointment of date of the electors' rights for the annual return on the Parish Council Notice Boards to advise any interested person that the accounts are available for inspection (on application to The

Clerk) from the 19th June to the 17th July 2003.

- 03/111 **Vacancy for Parish Council Representative on the Governing Body of St John's Infant School:** The Clerk advised that the Chairman of Governors has written informing her that Mrs M Mayes comes to the end of her current 4 year term of office as the Parish Council's nominated Governor at St John's School and does not wish to stand for another term. **The Clerk** is to advertise the position with a view to interviewing at the next Parish Council Meeting.
- 03/112 **To Consider Sending Delegate(s) to NALC Conference, Cardiff and Highway Code for New Councillors 2 Day Training Course at the University of Gloucester:** Cllr Picking proposed that Cllr Puddephatt attends the NALC Conference in Cardiff on the 3/5 October at a cost of £110 plus accommodation and travel costs. Cllr Lewis seconded this. **The Clerk** to action.
Cllr Davies proposed that if any of the 3 new co-opted members wish to attend the 2 day training Course at the University of Gloucester on the 27/28 June 2003 at a cost of £100 plus accommodation (approx. £50) and travel they should be authorised to do so. Cllr Challis seconded this. **The Clerk** to action.
- 03/113 **Update on Possibility of Providing a New Car Park at Mortimer Station:** Cllr Puddephatt informed the Council that he had had a meeting with Mr McDermott of Englefield Estates, 2 representatives from West Berkshire Council and Cllr Harding (District Council) to investigate the possibility of the Parish Council providing an additional car park for approx. 50 – 100 cars on the other side of the track. West Berkshire Council is to come back with suggestions regarding the entrance etc and at that stage a further meeting will be arranged. Cllr Lewis proposed that the Parish Council continue to investigate this possibility. Mr Thorpe seconded this and a majority carried it.
- 03/114 **Update on the Three Parishes Security Warden:** Cllr Philips advised that she and The Clerk attending a further meeting on the Three Parishes Security Warden which was attended by representatives of all three parishes and the Chief Executive of West Berkshire Council Mr J Graham. Mr Graham is hopeful that West Berkshire Council might be able to support this as a pilot scheme and is to take this forward to a meeting in June.
- 03/115 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:** Cllr Philips declared an interest in item 03/115 (v).
- i. Clerk's Salary.
 - ii. Clerk's/Custodian's Tax and NI.
 - iii. Clerk's Expenses.
 - iv. Custodian's Salary.
 - v. Ian Philips – Grass Cutting Cemetery and St Mary's Churchyard - £497.85 inc VAT.
 - vi. Bridgewood Landscape Services – Grass Cutting Alfred Palmer Field - £160.00.
 - vii. R M Weavers – Grass Cutting Fairground - £98.88 inc VAT.
 - viii. P Blagden – Printing Parish Plan - £469.29.
 - ix. Frasers Office Supplies Ltd – Stationery - £126.82 inc VAT.
 - x. The Post Office – Stamps £46.00.
 - xi. CPRE Membership Renewal £25.00.
 - xii. Thames Water – Water Trough Fairground £5.37.
 - xiii. Dads Shop Ltd - £15.30.
 - xiv. West Berkshire Council – Election Expenses - £44.25.
 - xv. Quentin Jacob – Grass Cutting Grazing Area Fairground £293.75 inc VAT.
 - xvi. F Feline – Internal Auditor Fee £50.00.
 - xvii. D G Nickless – Sign writing Community Award Board £40.00.
 - xviii. West Berkshire Council - Willink Leisure Centre Contribution £6,956.18.
- In accordance with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations all the items for payment were considered together. Cllr Thorpe proposed that they be paid; Cllr Davies seconded this. Carried unanimously.
- 03/116 **Correspondence:**
- i. West Berkshire Council Letter advising that Cllr Keith Lock is Chairman of West Berkshire Council for the year 2003/04, Cllr Sue Farrant Vice Chairman and Cllr Royce Longton Leader of the Council
 - ii. West Berkshire Council – Road Maintenance Programme for 2003/04.

iii. Advice of a Seminar on the AWE Aldermaston Nuclear Weapons Facility on 20 June 2003.

iv. A number of Circulars/Newsletters were distributed to councillors.

03/117 **Any Other Business:**

There was no any other business.

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

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 10:40 pm