



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 9 October 2003 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), L Picking, Mrs R Weiss, A Smith, C Lewis, A Thorpe, K Davies, T Barber, T Jones, B Taylor, P Challis, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk) and Mr N Ashton (Parish Council Governor St Mary's School).

Apologies: Councillors: J Morden, Ms S Harding, Mrs A Philips, P Blagden and K Lock (District)

Declaration of Interest: Cllr Puddephatt declared an interest in 03/184(xii).

03/171 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of 11th September 2003 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising: Cllr Thorpe reported that the Anti Social Behaviour Survey had been carried out by himself and Cllr Blagden 59 reports were received the main cause for concern being criminal damage/vandalism and litter/rubbish. The completed survey form has been returned to the Home Office.

03/172 **Report from District Councillors:** The Clerk read out the Cllr Lock's District Councillor's Report in his absence. He reported on the GCSE results in the district saying that Willink has showed an increase from 56% to 65% of pupils gaining at least 5 subjects at Grade C or above. He said that West Berkshire Council had recently had a presentation from Chief Superintendent Sullivan, who is the Area Commander for the Newbury Division who admitted that the 44% rise in the Police Precept this year had gone largely to central funding and had only added 2.3 equivalent policemen to his area. At 1.1 police per 1000 residents we have the lowest ratio of police to population in the Thames Valley let alone the whole country. Chief Superintendent Sullivan admitted that Pangbourne (our area) is the busiest sector in the Newbury Division. 1.1 police per 1000 residents equates to over 150 personnel in all, but due to shift working, plus training, holidays and sickness only about 1/3rd are on duty at any one time. A new Community Meals service started on 22nd September and is run by Apetito and aims to provide hot meals 7 days per week and replaces Meals on Wheels. The winter salting network for 2003/4 has been confirmed comprising of approx. 400 kilometres of highway each day. In Mortimer West End Road from the junction by the Church to St Catherine's Hill has been added to the primary network.

03/173 **Report from the Parish Council Governor St Mary's Junior School:** Mr Nick Ashton, Parish Council Governor St Mary's Junior School gave the Council an up-date on the previous 12 months. The key points were sadly Paul Dowdell, a Governor for many years died earlier in the year. He said that this year's results were very good and the school performed above the national and West Berkshire average. During the year there was a Harvest Thanksgiving Service in St Mary's Church, year 6 trip to the Isle of Wight, "The Christmas Angel" school production, Drugs Awareness Week, Summer Ball at Wokefield Park, Year 5 trip to Somerset, Confirmation of Voluntary Status, Sports Day and Family Fun Day. Leavers Service. The financial year has been difficult with the school only just being able to balance the books mainly due to pupil numbers falling. On a positive note, since Aided Status has been confirmed, discussions with the Oxford Diocese have been promising for funding for urgent needs. Despite the short term financial situation, due to strong indications of pupil increases in a couple of years, the Governors have decided to continue with plans to introduce an extra classroom and an IT suite. Initial capital funding will come from the developers of Mortimer Hill.

03/174 **Planning:** Cllr Morden said that the Committee met twice since the last Council Meeting on the 11th September and the 24th September.

03/01265/OUT

4 The Crescent. Demolition of existing garage and workshop, construction of retirement bungalow and garage. No objection notwithstanding previous objections to development on this site revised planning guidance regarding required area of amenity space is now met and objections on the grounds of over development are no longer

- valid.
- 03/01785/HOUSE 25 Victoria Road. Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension. No objection.
- 03/01265.FUL Aborn Parade, West End Road. Change of use from store to flat. This is the same proposal upon which the Parish Council commented on 4th July 2003 except that a pitched roof is shown instead of a flat roof. **Object:**
1. "Change of Use" implies that there is an existing building not a derelict site requiring a complete re-build from foundations up.
 2. The approval for the change of use of the adjacent shop premises to flats (00/00200/FUL) was granted on the express understanding that this area was to be used for parking and amenity.
 3. New foundation work will impair the viability of the adjacent mature trees subject to a T.P.O.
- The earlier application 03/00532 for a 3 floor extension, i.e. ground floor flat with 2nd floor maisonette above refused by West Berkshire C Council is now before the Planning Inspectorate on appeal.

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

- 03/01670/HOUSE The Coppers, Birch Lane. Creation of new access of Birch Lane and construction of a detached garage. **Refusal**
- 03/01636/HOUSE 1 Railway Terrace. Side and rear extensions and detached single garage. **Approval.** West Berkshire Council have commented on the neighbour's right of access across the rear of this property pointing out that this is a civil matter and not therefore a material planning consideration.
- 03/01586/HOUSE 11 Croft Road, Mortimer. Garage conversion and new garage. **Approval.**

Cllr Morden advised in his report that the ongoing concern regarding the wall to the front of 9 Mortimer Lane for which West Berkshire Council have refused permission, on the grounds of danger to the public highway, is the subject of an appeal. He says that some concern has been expressed regarding the roof height of the new dental surgery (Mortimer Garage Site, West End Road). The Building Inspector has now measured the roof and assured the Parish Council that the planned height of 11m is not being exceeded. He also commented that the quality of the work is to an impressively high standard.

Work appeared to have stated on 11 Croft Road before approval has been given and bearing in mind the Parish Council's comments on the adjacent mature trees West Berkshire Council were notified and work has stopped.

Cllr Morden reported that this focused on Tree Preservation Order's in general and the Tree Officer has been asked to provide the Parish Council with a comprehensive list and map of all T.P.O's, thereby protecting trees from acts of vandalism instead of trying to act in haste, often too late.

03/175

Roads, Footpaths and Commons:

- i. **Update on Vehicle Access Across Brewery Common:** Cllr Davies reported that the government has now relaxed the restrictions on Local Authorities granting rights in land at less than market value in a newly produced document (General Disposal Consent 2003). It was agreed that the whole matter be deferred while the implications of this are considered further.
- ii. **Update on Vehicle Access Windmill Common:** Cllr Davies reported that as yet nothing further has been heard from the solicitors concerned.
- iii. **To Discuss Installation and Purchase of Barriers – Windmill Common:** Cllr Davies reported that no representations had been received by the deadline date (30th September) from adjoining owners and the installation of barriers can now be put in hand.
- iv. **Update West Berkshire Council – Revised Parking Restrictions:** Cllr Davies reported that West Berkshire Council have now issued a draft order which appears to take no account of the Parish Council's views. He proposed that we make official representations to the draft order urging that those views be now taken into account and send copies to The District Councillors and the Chief Executive of West Berkshire.
- v. **Letter from Taylor Woodrow re 3 Hammonds Heath:** The Clerk has arranged a meeting, as requested, for the 13th November between the Parish Council and Peter Mason, Senior Technical Manager (Planning & Architecture), of Taylor Woodrow to inform the Council of their company's proposals for the future of the site at 3 Hammonds Heath.
- vi. **Letter Requesting Pedestrian Crossing Outside Budgens:** The Council considered a letter from the Manager of Budgens requesting support for a pedestrian crossing between the two stores. It was resolved to advise the District Council of the Parish Council's concern over safety issues outside Budgens and for the need for a review of traffic calming

in other parts of the village reminding them of the promised traffic calming measures from the S107 agreements from the various new developments.

03/176 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

- i. **Children's Play Area Update:** Cllr Weiss reported that the Fairground Committee met on 7th October at the Fairground to assess that matters arising from the Rospa Report. Some of the work has already been actioned i.e. a new roundabout has been ordered and the Committee is to meet again on November to discuss the options. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Lewis could action the repair of the playarea fence up to a figure of £2,500 (quotation for £1,325 from J Clarke already agreed minute number 02/235).
- ii. **Report from Fairground Committee:** See above.
- iii. **Parish Council Lawn Mower:** Cllr Smith reported that space in the cricket pavilion has now been made to store the Parish Council's lawn mower and that he would contact the custodian to make the arrangements.
- iv. **Update on Rear Access from King Street to Fairground:** Cllr Davies reported that the position has now been clarified to all the affected residents.

03/177 **Cemetery:**

- i. **Update on Work in the Cemetery:** Cllr Thorpe reported that work had started on the Memorial Garden and he will report progress at the next meeting.

03/178 **Update – Neighbourhood Warden Scheme (Three Parishes Security Warden):** The Clerk read out a letter from Jim Graham, Chief Executive West Berkshire Council on Neighbourhood Warden Schemes in which he said that following the meeting earlier in the year with Burghfield, Stratfield Mortimer and Sulhampstead Parish Councils discussions are still underway within the Safer Communities Partnership. Following a meeting between WBC and the Safer Communities Partnership in June a sub group was tasked with developing a proposal to expand the existing Greenham Warden Scheme, which has been in operation since September 2002. This is financed through funding obtained through the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit of the ODPM with match funding from Sovereign Housing which is due to end in March 2005. A recent report from the sub group said that there is currently insufficient funding to facilitate the development of warden schemes in other parts of West Berkshire during 2003/04. The report also proposed that in order to highlight other areas in West Berkshire that would benefit from the Warden scheme, a measure of some or all of the following criteria could be used by the Crime and Disorder GIS Analyst:

- Number of complaints to WBC concerning litter, fly-tipping, graffiti and vandalism.
- Number of complaints to WBC concerning neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour.
- Number of abandoned vehicles reported to Police or WBC.
- Number of complaints to Environmental Health of nuisance or other environmental issues.
- Number of used needle collections.
- Number of property voids and rate of property turnover
- Number of calls to the police recorded on their Command and Control System.
- Total recorded crime per 1,000 population including burglary, theft of/from vehicles, violent crime and criminal damage.
- Number of racially aggravated crimes.

Cllrs Taylor and Barber agreed to carry out an investigation into the proposed 3 parishes Warden Scheme and report back at the next meeting. Parishioners need to be urged to report incidents to the Police (and obtain a crime reference number), West Berkshire or the Parish Council so that the correct numbers of complaints are recorded.

03/179 **Update on Application for a Transport Grant:** The Clerk reported that the amendments to the Grant Application Form have now been completed and the grant form will be submitted to the Countryside Agency within the next few days.

03/180 **Parish Plan Up-date:** Cllr Barber thanked members of the Parish Council for attending the meeting between the Parish Plan Group and the Parish Council to discuss the draft action plan and all the points that will need to be signed off/adopted by the Parish Council and West Berkshire Council. A further meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 15th October to finalise the points before the plan is written. The final Open Forum held on the 4th October in the Methodist Hall for parishioners to comment on the action plan was attended by 58 people who gave some very useful feed back.

- 03/181 **Flooding Update:** Cllr Lewis reported that he had attended a meeting on the 25th September between: two members of Thames Water, The Environment Agency, Cllr Morden, The Clerk, Mr G Mayes and Mr B Cole to discuss the flooding of The Street by Sewage effluent Mr Mayes had opened that meeting by outlining the situation at the bottom of The Street on 1st January 2003 when sewage flooded across the road and into Foudry Brook. Thames Water confirmed that the pumps had not failed on that day although the flow was higher than for which the pumps and sewer pipes are designed. Following a lengthy discussion it was summarised that Thames Water are responsible for the maintenance of the main sewer but property owners are responsible for the condition of the pipe from their house to the tee on the sewer and for the cost of repairs found necessary. Thames Water can carry out CCTV studies to determine abnormal leakage into the main sewer or if high flows from household feeder pipes occurs but such a study will take 18 months to complete. There are no plans do a study at present but they might need to if the Trunkwell House extension, Beech Hill (63 bedrooms) goes to the next stage. The system would be studied by TW following a request from WBC planners under a 106 Agreement. If the system were polluting the Brook by discharging effluent because of under capacity the Environment Agency would require TW to upgrade the system at their cost. It is difficult to prove whether the extra flows that occur in wet weather are due to seepage to the main sewer from groundwater, roof water, cellar dewatering or apron gullies/manholes connected illegally to the foul sewer system. **The Clerk** was asked to follow up the following actions. Check with WBC Planners re the status of the Beech Hill Planning & 106 Agreement. Check with WBC Highways re the location and construction of the flood bunds, non return valve/flap on the surface water culvert and advise property owners of the need to check whether their roof water down pipes, patios, apron gullies and cellar pumps discharge to legal soakaways or to manholes on the foul system which is illegal. Thames water offers a discount on the sewage water rate if owners can prove that surface water outlets are connected to a soakaway.
- 03/182 **Expending the Use of Speed Indicator Device (SID) Training Sessions:** Further to last month's action the Clerk advised the Council of the workings of the SID Device and of the councillor training available in November and Cllrs Smith, Barber and Blagden are to attend. **The Clerk** to action.
- 03/183 **Report from NALC Annual Conference 2003:** Cllr Puddephatt gave a feedback on the three day NALC Conference he attended in Cardiff. He said that it focused mainly on Quality Parish Status and it is evident and obvious that there will be benefits and powers to Parish Councils with this status. This is to added to the Agenda for the next meeting.
- 03/184 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:** Cllr Puddephatt declared an interest in 03/184(xii).
- 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 & Churchyard £497.85 inc VAT.
 - vi. Bridgewood Landscape Services – Grass Cutting Alfred Palmer Field – Not Submitted.
 - vii. R M Weavers – Grass Cutting Fairground - £131.88 inc VAT.
 - viii. Utilize Ltd – Anti Virus Software £114.56 inc VAT
 - ix. J Clarke – Repair of Rocking Horse £80.00.
 - x. West Berkshire Council – Quarterly Photocopying Charge £81.50
 - xi. Playground Management Ltd (RoSPA Report) £135.13.
 - xii. British Telecom £183.05 (inc VAT).
 - xiii. Community Council for Berkshire – Subscription £75.00.
 - xiv. P Blagden – Parish Plan Expenses £55.49
 - xv. R Weiss – Parish Plan Expenses £24.04.
 - xvi. P. Sinclair – Parish Plan Expenses £8.00.
 - xvii. The Royal British Legion Poppy appeal £20.00.
 - xviii. St John's Hall Management Committee- Parish Plan Expenses £25.00.
 - xix. Dads Shop Ltd £93.15.

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

03/185 **Correspondence:**

- i. Letter re condition of Footpath No 10 (passed onto WBC for action)
- ii. WBC – “Don't let your hedge be a hazard” leaflets.
- iii. WBC – Finding a needle or Syringe leaflets.
- iv. A number of circulars and Newsletters (which were distributed to councillors)

03/186 **Any Other Business:** There was no Any Other Business.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 13th November 2003 at 7:30 p.m.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 9:45 pm