



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 10th June 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), P Blagden, K Davies, T Barber, B Taylor, A Smith, A Thorpe, C Lewis, T Jones, Mrs A Philips, Mrs R Weiss, J Morden, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk), K Lock (District).

Apologies: Councillors: P Challis, Ms S Harding.

Declaration of Interest: Cllr A Philips declared an interest in item no 04/104 (v).

04/91 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 13th May 2004 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

There were no Matters Arising.

04/92 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock reported that West Berkshire Council's Executive decided that £150,000 had to be saved from their budget and that concessionary fares would be a flat rate of £30 and this would have hit outlying areas like Mortimer in the £61.50 band. After a lot of objection they have now decided to alter the band C covering Mortimer and other outlying areas to £60. West Berkshire has a Youth Offending Team (YOT), which works with the Police and various voluntary groups to try and reduce youth crime and prevent individuals becoming hardened criminals. The West Berkshire Partnership has announced that £25,000 is being made available to Parish Councils who wish to apply for grants in connection with their Parish Plans. The question of the wooden posts at the lay-by by the new bund on the Grazeley Road was discussed Councillor Lock agreed to take up the issues with West Berkshire Council.

04/93 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on the 24th May and 8th June and considered 14 applications:

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|----------------|---|
| 04/00697/FUL | 60-62 Victoria Road. Proposed taxabri canopy with internal lighting (to be erected at rear of workshops. No objection. |
| 04/01016/HOUSE | Silverhaze, Ravensworth Road. Proposed replacement garage and store. No objection. |
| 04/01027/HOUSE | St Catherines, Sweetzers Piece. First floor extension. No objection |
| 04/01072/FUL | Land adjoining 44 St John's Road. Demolition of garage and construction of two detached houses and garages. No objection. However St John's Road is unmade and Kingfisher Developments (Southern) Ltd should be required to make a contribution to its maintenance as a condition of approval |
| 04/01094/FUL | St John's School, The Street. Shelter with raised deck. No objection. |
| Retrospective | |
| 04/01094/HOUSE | 35 Groves Lea. Demolish existing conservatory and construction of single storey rear extension. No objection. |
| 04/01135/HOUSE | The Aviary, The Street. Conservatory. No objection. |
| 04/01137/HOUSE | The Laurels, Ravensworth Road. Two storey rear extension to form garage, living room, kitchen, 2 bedrooms and bathrooms. No objection. |
| 04/01189/HOUSE | 27 King Street. Two storey rear extension. Demolish rear single storey part of outbuildings. No objection. |
| 04/00687/HOUSE | 84 The Avenue. Extension over existing garage to provide bedroom and ensuite bathroom. No objection. |
| Amended | |
| 04/00961/FUL | 7 West End Road (Nat. West. Bank). Construction of external ramp and two lights to façade for D.D.A. compliance. |
| 04/01164/HOUSE | 3 King Street. Single storey rear/side extension. No objection. |
| 04/01135/HOUSE | The Aviary, The Street. Conservatory. No objection. |
| Amended | |
| 04/01189/HOUSE | 27 King Street. Demolition of rear single storey part of building together with various outbuildings and construction of a two storey extension. No objection. |
| Amended | |

Recommendation under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:

04/00541/OUT 33 West End Road (next to Car Park). Residential development with means of access only to be considered. Refusal on grounds of insufficient information.

Land at Fairfield Caravan Park, West End Road: Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Section 215 a notice has been served on Mr. C. Ball, Mr ML Ball and Mr R J Turner to remove 17 vehicles (registration numbers listed), two further vehicles without registration numbers, various vehicle parts, builders waste etc. The notice is to take effect from 15th June 2004 and the listed items to be removed within one month of that date.

- i. **Supplementary Planning Guidance:** The draft SPG follows very closely the criteria observed by the Planning Committee in commenting on Planning Applications within the Parish. The Parish Council has therefore informed West Berkshire Council that it welcomes the formal adoption of the Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- ii. **Berkshire Structure Plan 2001 - 2016:** The 6 unitary authorities have been working together to draw up this somewhat belated Structure Plan. Cllr Morden has attended 3 meetings and so far there is only a broad outline covering all planning aspects, dwellings, transport, minerals etc. It is only when The Berkshire Structure Plan is broken down into its six unitary parts that any useful input can be directed to West Berkshire Council. No doubt West Berkshire Council will be looking far and wide to find sites for its housing allocation but in view of the number of housing units already completed and the proposed Mortimer Hill site to come, this parish could be fairly said to have done its part. Any further encroachment on green field sites within the parish will be vigorously opposed.

04/94 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

- i. **Update on new Kissing Gates at Windmill Common:** Cllr Davies reported that McVeigh Parker have installed two of the replacement gates but were stopped by installing the third by a person claiming authority of Englefield Estates (Englefield Estates have subsequently confirmed that this is not true). The Contractors have been instructed to install the third gate as soon as possible. Further correspondence has taken place between the Parish Council and Mr and Mrs Porter, tenants of Englefield Estates, regarding the request for removal of the kissing gate in the North West Corner of the Common but a letter has been sent saying the gate is to remain.
- ii. **Update on BT Poles Windmill Road:** The Clerk confirmed that as instructed at the previous meeting a letter had been sent to BT asking for a site meeting before applying to the Court for a legal determination. To date no reply has been received.
- iii. **Update on Traffic Management and S106 Agreements:** Cllr Harding is chasing WBC for copies of the relevant S106 Agreements and a committee meeting to discuss this has been arranged for Monday 14th June.
- iv. **Update on Car Park West End Road:** Cllr Davies reported that further to a site visit by himself, Cllr Morden and Cllr Thorpe it would appear that the strip of land in question regarding the encroachment of land on the western boundary of the car park appears to be land of the Electricity Board (path originally providing access to their substation) and not in the ownership of the car park. Following a request from West Berkshire Council who asked the Parish Council to surrender their Lease on the car park a letter has been sent in reply urging them to determine who the freehold owner of the car park is (by pursuing an enquiry at the Land Registry) which will indicate who is the Parish Council's landlord and then the Lease on the car park can be considered further.
- v. **Update on Brewery Common Ownership (letter from Solicitors):** Cllr Davies reported that a letter had been received from the Parish Council's solicitors advising the Council to apply to the Land Registry to register the title

of Brewery Common as it would in their opinion be very difficult to convince a third party (for example in relation to a land transaction) of the Parish Council's title in the face of the view taken by the Land Registry. Cllr Davies recommended that as the Council has a determination in the Council's favour by the Commons Commissioner dated 1973 that this would be sufficient proof as it was extremely unlikely that the Council would ever consider selling, leasing or mortgaging the Common and that further legal expense at this point in time would be a waste of public money. It was therefore unanimously resolved that the Council will not apply to the Land Registry to Register the Title of Brewery Common.

04/95 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

- i. **Report from Fairground Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that at the meeting of the Fairground Trees and Amenities Committee held on 26th May 2004 he had been duly elected as Chairman of that Committee. He gave a report of the Committee which included progress with the maintenance programme and that further to advice from the Pang & Kennet Valley Countryside Project a "newt corridor" (un-mown strip of grass) between the two ponds had been established to give greater protection to the Greater Crested Newts. Following a misunderstanding with the residents of Windmill Road the Committee has agreed to establish a documented maintenance strategy and Cllr Blagden has visited the residents whose properties face the Fairground to discuss the aims and objectives of the work being done by the Committee with a view to keeping them better informed. The Clerk informed the Council that a lot of vandalism had taken place on the play equipment, newly mended fence around the play area and three of the newly purchased litterbins. New parts for the play equipment have been ordered, the fence mended and that a re-assessment of the litterbins provided would be carried out.
- ii. **Update on New Pavilion:** Cllr Smith advised that members of the Pavilion Working Party had divided up into two sections 1. Fund raising and 2. The technical aspect of the design etc. Several avenues of fundraising are being pursued and that Cllr Smith is attending a one-day regional conference on funding and managing community projects on Thursday 17th June. The working party are scheduled to meet next on the Wednesday 16th June and Cllr Smith will report back at the next meeting.
- iii. **Update on Lease to Parish Council from Fairground Trustees:** Cllr Davies confirmed that the Council's solicitors (Anthony Collins) negotiating with the Charity Commission on behalf of the Parish Council have confirmed that after some delay the necessary order is being drafted and should be ready in 2/3 weeks' time.
- iv. **To Consider Skateboard Petition:** The Chairman reported that a petition had been received from two young people of the parish asking the Council to consider a skateboard park. It was agreed to look into this further and this was passed to the Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committee to action.

04/96 **Cemetery:** Cllr Thorpe reported that the garden of remembrance had been weeded but unfortunately this had prompted a letter from Mr Tucker saying that some of his plants had inadvertently been removed. A letter of apology has been sent to Mr Tucker with the offer that the Council purchase a rose or similar plant in memory of his mother and place it in the garden of remembrance. A Cemetery Committee Meeting has been arranged for 28th June 2004.

04/97 **To Approve and Confirm that the Accounts for the Year 2003/2004 present fairly the financial position of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council:** Copies of the accounts and Audit Return for the Year Ended 31st March 2004 were circulated to all members at the May meeting. The Chairman read out the details contained the eight points in Section 2 - Statement of Assurance Section of the Local Councils in England and Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31.3.04 and the declaration which said "We acknowledge as Members of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council our responsibility for the

preparation of the Statement of Accounts and confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to Section 1 - The Council's Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2004." This included the End of Year Bank Reconciliation and the Details of Variation Comments Sheet.

Cllr Puddephatt proposed that the accounts for the Year 2003/2004 be approved and Cllr Davies seconded this and it was unanimously resolved. The Chairman and RFO duly signed the accounts.

The Clerk is to send off the Annual Return to the External Auditor (Messrs Hacker Young) and in accordance with Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 display Notices of Appointment of date of the electors' rights for the annual return on the two Parish Council Notice Boards to advise any interested person that the accounts are available for inspection (on application to The Clerk) from the 30th June to the 28th July 2004. The Chairman offered a vote of thanks to the Clerk for managing to complete the accounts within the tight timescale.

- 04/98 **Warden/Police Meeting with WBC & TVP 30th June 2004:** Cllr Taylor reported that he attended a meeting on 25th May hosted by Thames Valley Police for community representatives. Thames Valley Police are following a National Reassurance programme aimed at dealing with quality of life issues in local communities. This involves forming Neighbourhood Action Groups and establishing good communications between the community and the police via the Action Group to tackle "signal" crime (anti social behaviour). Pilot schemes, including the one in Burghfield have been encouraging. The meeting on the 30th June is intended to provide information to the Council about local policing and the possibility of warden services for the parish, with financial implications if it goes ahead. All councillors are urged to attend.
- 04/99 **Update on New Car Park at Mortimer Station:** Cllr Davies advised that he, Cllr Harding and the Clerk had a site meeting with Mr Stuart Clark of West Berkshire Council's Highway and Engineering Department. A letter has now been received from West Berkshire Council confirming the required distance from the railway bridge for access to the proposed car park. A further meeting with the Estates Manager of Englefield Estates (the owner of the land) has been arranged for Friday 18th June to talk through the next stage.
- 04/100 **Update on Mortimer Link Mini Bus Service:** The Chairman reported that a meeting had taken place between Mr A Cotton, Managing Director of Stewarts Buses, himself, the Clerk and Mr G Mayes. Both parties signed the agreement between the Parish Council and Stewarts of Mortimer Limited for the Mortimer Link additional bus service. The other action points were to re-consider the time of the Saturday bus as it is little used at present, look into a notice board at Mortimer Station and a prepaid ticket system. Reading Buses have asked if the Parish Council (transport grant) would be interested in displaying the Mortimer Link timetable in the new bus stop flags and timetable case for a financial contribution. **The Clerk** to investigate.
- 04/101 **To Consider forming a Communications Committee:** The Chairman proposed that in order to regularise the old Parish Plan Communications Group that a Parish Council Communication Committee be established which could co-opt members of the Parish Plan Group. The Committee would produce Parish Council newsletters, welcome packs for new residents etc. It was unanimously resolved that a Communications Committee be established and Cllrs Blagden and Weiss were nominated from the Council. It was agreed that they would return to the next meeting with a proposal for the compilation and distribution of the Council newsletter.
- 04/102 **To Consider Appointing a Village Gardener:** The Chairman stated that there are areas of land around the village that are not tended by anyone and that could be attended to by the Parish Council, in addition to areas such as the garden of remembrance, the area outside St John's Church etc. He is to investigate this further and report back.
- 04/103 **Local Authority Governor of Mortimer St Mary's C of E Voluntary Aided Junior School:** The Chairman advised that the minor authority representative on the governing body of St Mary's School had stood down. Because the school is now a voluntary aided school there is now no requirement for a minor authority representative (although not realised during the consultation period). Mrs Mayes, the Chairman of Governors has proposed to provide the Council with a quarterly report on what is happening on the governing body and in the school in order to maintain communication and dialogue between the Council and the school.

04/104 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. Ian Philips – Grass Cutting Cemetery & Churchyard £497.85 inc VAT.
- vi. Bridgewood Landscape Services – Grass Cutting Alfred Palmer Field £160.00.
- vii. R M Weavers – Grass Cutting Fairground £137.17 inc VAT.
- viii. Thames Water – Water Trough Fairground £15.45
- ix. SLCC - Purchase of updated "The Clerks' Manual" £24.00.
- x. SLCC - Working With Your Council Update Pages £12.50.
- xi. SLCC - One Day Regional Conference Fee (Funding and Managing Community Projects), Cllr Smith £30.00.
- xii. Wicksteed Leisure Ltd. New Slide £8,853.45 – Not sent (invoice not received).
- xiii. BALC – Training Day Fees Cllr Taylor and Clerk £26.00.
- xiv. F Feline - Internal Auditor End of Year Accounts Fee £75.00
- xv. CPRE - Subscription Renewal £25.00.
- xvi. McVeigh Parker & Co Ltd - Installation of Kissing Gates £293.75 inc VAT (only to be sent upon completion of the work)
- xvii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd - Payment for Mortimer Link for May £705 inc VAT.
- xviii. Dads Shop Limited £117.04 inc VAT.
- xix. Kompan Ltd - Spare parts for vandalised play equipment £52.53 inc VAT
- xx. Open Spaces Society - Annual Subscription £30.00.
- xxi. Anthony Collins Solicitors - Interim bill for Fairground Lease £616.88 inc VAT.
- xxii. Staples - Stationery £12.75

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

04/105 Correspondence:

- i. Letter of thanks received from Mrs Cole regarding the Parish Council's help in successfully achieving the flood bund.
- ii. Letter of thanks from the Governors of St Mary's School for the Parish Council's contribution towards the renovation of the tower clock.
- iii. Letter of thanks from the Kennet Valley Countryside Project for the Parish Council's contribution towards the work of the project.
- iv. A number of Circulars/Newsletters were distributed to councillors

04/106 AOB/ Future/Agenda Items:

Cllr Blagden advised that the Speed Indicator Device (SID) would be used in the village during the week commencing 14th June 2004.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 8th July 2004 at 7:30 p.m.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 10:10 p.m.