



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting

held on 14th October 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), P Blagden, A Smith, C Lewis, T Jones, Mrs A Philips, P Challis, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk), and K Lock (District) and 2 members of public.

Apologies: Councillors: K Davies, J Morden, Ms S Harding, A Thorpe.

Declaration of Interest: Cllr A Philips declared an interest in item no 04/161(v), Cllr Puddephatt declared an interest in item no 04/152 (i).

04/149 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of Meeting of 9th September 2004 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

- (04/145) Cllr Blagden thanked the large group of volunteers who had delivered the Parish Council Newsletter to every home in the parish. The Clerk confirmed that a lot of positive feedback had been received.
- (04/148) A business forum meeting is being planned for Thursday 2nd December, which will involve many local businesses.
- (04/138) Further to resignations last month The Chairman reported that due to health reasons Cllr Ruth Weiss had also tendered her resignation, which now makes the total councillor vacancies 4. The Clerk will inform the Monitoring Officer at West Berkshire Council and the existing vacancies have been advertised in the Newsletter with a closing date of 31.10.04.
- (04/134) The Clerk reported that West Berkshire Council have now addressed the overgrown vegetation at Hammonds Heath.
- (04/142(i)) The Clerk confirmed that further to the faulty (then vandalised) safety surface Wicksteed had now repaired this and a letter of apology received from them. A further letter of complaint has been sent to Wicksteed regarding the state of the safety surface around the roundabout (installed December 2003).
- The Chairman reported that further to the meeting with First Great Western Link on the 10th September a response had been received from the Station Master confirming that a Community Notice Board and a Parish Council Notice Board may be erected at Mortimer Station, a notice regarding the use of the bicycle lockers and they are looking into a bus stop sign for the Mortimer Link Mini Bus.

04/150 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock reported that the Electoral Commission has been reviewing the boundaries of the Berkshire Parliamentary Constituencies and has recommended that the parishes of Woolhampton and Englefield be transferred from Newbury to Wokingham, which means that the Sulhamstead Ward is not split between two Constituencies. West Berkshire Council has to raise its recycling figure from 17% to 25% over the next few years and is looking into the feasibility of providing a "recycling village" at Padworth sidings. On planning West Berkshire Council are appointing a Section 106 Officer who will be more proactive in obtaining developer contributions and will be self supporting. They are not meeting Government targets especially on major planning applications so they are considering replacing the 4 area committees and the Planning and Licensing Committee with two Area Committees, i.e. an east and a west meeting every three weeks rather than six weekly.

Cllr Lock asked the Council if they wanted to change the parking arrangements outside Forbuoys back to the original set up as this needs to be agreed so the traffic order can be signed off and the restrictions enforced. The recommendation of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee is that this be held over until after the Parish Council's traffic survey has been carried out.

Cllr Lock was asked to investigate whether the new play area at the Mortimer Hill site could be a teenager area rather than an under 8's play area as this age group is already catered for on the Fairground. He said he would look into this and report back.

- 04/151 **Planning:** In the absence of Cllr Morden the Clerk reported that the Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on the 20th September and 6th October and considered 8 applications:
- 04/02098/HOUSE 79 Stephens Firs. Re-siting of already approved garage. No objection.
- 04/02113/HOUSE 4 Stephens Road. New porch and W.C. to front of existing house, single storey. No objection.
- 04/02123/HOUSE 11 St Mary's Road. First floor rear extension. No objection.
- 04/02073/FULMAJ Mortimer Men's Club. Demolition of rear extensions and all out buildings. Conversion, with new rear extensions to provide 6 no. flats. Erection of 7 no. dwellings in semi detached and terraced form. Erection of new carports, single garage (for 1 Pitt Cottage) and associated parking.
- Support. The Parish Council support the overall concept but with certain reservations:-
1. The road exit/entrance, only 2.5m wide, to and from The Street is dangerous. Any vehicle from the west having to wait in The Street before turning right into the new complex will be unsighted to following traffic.
 2. Consideration should be given to obtaining access to and from Pitfield Lane. Traffic coming out of Pitfield Lane onto The Street will have good line of sight both right and left.
 3. Some concern has been expressed regarding water run off into the ditch to the south and thence to the lower part of the village.
- 04/02176/COMID Wokefield Park. Revised scheme for demolition of existing buildings and erection of replacement training and bedroom space. No objection.
- Adjacent Parish
- 04/02219/HOUSE 5 Groves Lea. Single storey extension for garage and breakfast room. No objection.
- 04/02251/HOUSE 5 Catherine's Hill. Single storey extension to rear. No objection.
- 04/02267/FUL K G Hutts Yard, Pitfield Lane. Demolition of builder's yard and erection of 3 houses and garages. No objection but would suggest that the applicants for conversion of Mortimer Men's Club with 7 additional dwelling (04/02073/FULMAJ) liaise with this applicant to consider a common entrance for both sites onto Pitfield Lane.
- Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:
- 04/01661/FUL 9-11 Victoria Road (two cottages to east of Budgens). Alterations and extensions. Approval
- 04/01858/ADV 60-62 Victoria Road (Spratley's Garage). 6 sets of illuminated letters, 1 hall sign, 2 totem poles, 1 welcome sign, 1 non-illuminated directional sign. Split decision – signs A, B, C, D and I approval, Signs E.F.G.H.I and K refusal. The reasons given were illumination, impact on street scene, harm to neighbouring amenity. The Parish Council was of the opinion that provided the lighting was subdued and the hours of illumination strictly enforced they had no objection.
- 04/01996/FUL MAJ 34 St John's Road (Garth House). Demolition of existing property and re-development to form 14 dwellings.
- Refusal based upon the impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area and the amenity of neighbouring residents. Also concerns related to important trees on the site (see following Tree Preservation Order). The County Ecologist is also concerned that there may be badgers and bats on the site. Besides the Parish Council objecting a further 53 letters of objection were received by West Berkshire Council.
- Appeal Decision
- 03/01683/OUT 4 The Crescent. Retirement bungalow and garage. The appeal has been allowed and planning permission granted. The application to build on this site has been put to Newbury District Council and West Berkshire Council on a number of occasions and has always met with refusal. However, the above application appeared, from the Parish Council's perspective to meet all current Planning Guidance and our own recommendation was for approval, this view has been vindicated.
- Tree Preservation O's
- TPO/201/21.662 Land at West End Lodge, Ravensworth Road. The Tree Preservation Order protects 5 oak and 1 horse chestnut trees on the site.
- TPO/201/21/678 Land at 34 St John's Road (Garth House). The Tree Preservation Order protects 4 beech, 2 oak, 1 ash, 1 silver birch, 5 white beam, 1 purple plum and an unspecified number of alder.

i. Review of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan for Berkshire: Cllr Morden attended a meeting at Newbury on 12th October in respect of the Draft Outline of the Mineral and Waste Plan 2004-16. This was an initial explanatory meeting with a question and answer session. The Berkshire County requirement i.e. all 6 unitary authorities is to provide 1.5m tonnes of aggregate per year (current plan is 2.1m tonnes – therefore a 29% reduction). Approved planning provides sufficient for the next eight years. Until the plan comes forward for comment there is nothing to do at present. Concern was expressed that West Berkshire could end up as one big lake unless proper restoration was enforced and this will be taken on board.

Waste disposal is a more serious concern. E.C. directives will require a much higher percentage of recycling than West Berkshire currently achieve. Some 60% of West Berkshire's waste is industrial and much of this is building demolition material. This will have to be recycled as building aggregate and this can be achieved provided the cost of landfill makes it economic to re-use instead. Curbside recycling creates its own problems. Paper fetched £150 a tone some 10 years ago and is now almost valueless as more and more becomes available (Germany now has a waste paper mountain). Glass is going the same way. Clearly recycling is not a simple solution, landfill never was and incineration creates toxins. A worry for all concerned. One way forward was to reduce the amount of waste by limiting packaging etc. but this will have to be a central Government initiative.

04/152 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

- i. **Update on BT poles Windmill Road:** The Clerk advised that a further letter had been sent to a senior manager in BT asking for a response prior to commencing legal proceedings. No response as yet. Cllr Puddephatt declared an interest and took no part in the discussion.
- ii. **To consider proposal from TRL to carry out a baseline traffic survey:** The Clerk read out a report from Cllr Davies: The initial approach made by Cllr Barber to TRL Ltd (formerly the Traffic Research Laboratory) has been followed up by the Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee, putting forward additional requirements which relate in particular to increased traffic levels expected from the Mortimer Hill development and other development schemes. The Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee recommends that TRL Ltd be engaged to go ahead with a preliminary survey on the lines proposed by them. When the results of this survey are received the intention would be to press West Berkshire Council as highway authority to adopt such proposals in it as acceptable, using Sec. 106 money and other available funds. The Parish Council, however, will need to fund TRL Ltd's preliminary survey, at a cost of £2,300 plus VAT. The Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee propose that TRL Ltd be engaged to carry out this preliminary survey at a cost of £2,300 plus VAT and this was unanimously resolved. **Clerk to action.**
- iii. **Update on Brewery Common Title:** The Clerk reported that further to the registration of title at the Land Registry the available evidence has been forwarded on the Council's behalf by the solicitors (Clark's) together with a Statutory Declaration in due form made by the Parish Clerk on 24th September 2004. A further letter has been received asking for further evidence and this will be forwarded in due course.
- iv. **Travellers Brewery Common:** The travellers eventually moved from the site after The Clerk served a notice on them (with Police escort) asking them to vacate the site. Two 7.5 tonne trucks were filled with rubbish from the encampment and West Berkshire has said that the cost of this will be passed to the Parish Council. The invoice for the legal services has been received which is £385.29 (which would have been far higher if we had to go to court).
- v. **To consider options for enclosing Brewery Common:** The Chairman reported that to try and deter future unauthorised travellers from parking on Brewery Common estimates have been received to enclose the common. The best option at present is for the installation of "Dragons Teeth" (wooden posts) at an approximate cost of £3,000 and it was resolved to proceed with this. **Clerk to action.**
- vi. **Update on Brewery Common gas main:** The Clerk confirmed that a further letter has been sent to West Berkshire Council (acting as legal agent on behalf of the Parish Council) asking if Primeshade Contracts could either pay a realistic figure for an easement or move the gas pipe into the highway. It was stressed that no use should be made of the pipe while the trespass continues.

- vii. **To discuss options for lay-by outside Forbuoys:** The Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee recommend if consideration of the Forbuoys lay-by (as requested by West Berkshire Council) could be deferred (see 04/150 above).
- 04/153 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**
- i. **Report:** Cllr Blagden reported that a local contractor removed the piles of cuttings etc. from the Fairground and the committee have agreed that although this costs £90 a time they would continue to use this method of removal three or four times a year. The monthly maintenance still continues and has made a good start on the ditch at Windmill Road.
The Chairman reported that a request had been received from the Vale of Aylesbury and Garth & South Berks Hunt to use the Fairground Car Park on 27th December. After a lengthy discussion was resolved to accept this request on the following conditions: sight of Public Liability Insurance Certificate, a contract saying they will cover all any damages and payment of the Fairground booking fee. **Clerk to action.**
 - ii. **Update on proposed skate board park:** Cllr Blagden said there was a good response to the stall at the Fun Run on 26th September which resulted in about 35 names of young people who live in Mortimer wanting a skate board park. Additionally about eight adults have offered to help with the project. The first meeting of the project is scheduled for the 21st October. Members of the Recreation Services Team of West Berkshire Council (Lenny & Di) will be carrying out “detached” contact sessions with young people in Mortimer this week to find out what they would like to see in place. Following these initial contacts they will arrange a meeting with the Parish Council and the people working on the project.
 - iii. **Update on Lease to Parish Council from Fairground Trustees:** The Clerk read out a report from Cllr Davies regarding the application to the Charity Commission for an order permitting the grant of a lease of the Fairground. Due to a different officer at the Charity Commission taking over the case and requiring further details this matter has again been delayed. It is hoped to report progress at the next Council meeting. In the meantime a further letter has been sent to the Charity Commission and was read out emphasizing the seriousness of the problem.
 - iv. **Update on Pavilion Project:** Cllr Smith reported that the working party had put together a business plan for the pavilion based upon the original design and this had come out at £1,000,000 so a business plan based on a smaller building is be drawn up. Details of the revised business plan will be presented to the Parish Council at the November meeting for approval prior to presenting it to the Relief in Need Charity at the end of November.
- 04/154 **Cemetery:** Thrive have made a good start on their monthly gardening sessions and have tidied up and organised the compost and bin areas.
- 04/155 **Terms of Reference Communication Committee:** It was agreed to pass this to the Finance and General Purposes meeting.
- 04/156 **Anti Social Behaviour Review:** West Berkshire Council have established a Task Group to undertake the task of understanding Anti Social Behaviour within West Berkshire and wish to hear of any Anti Social Behaviour issues within the parish boundaries. They would like evidence of crime over the past year with details of the outcome etc. **Clerk to action**
- 04/157 **Leisure in the Rural Communities:** The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk attended a meeting with the Recreation Development Team West Berkshire Council who following discussions with the Primary Care Trust is embarking on some new initiatives in rural communities in West Berkshire. Working in partnership with Parish Councils, the aim of the pilot leisure projects is to engage more people in leisure activity within the community. The projects will initially strive to build on the current level of local provision in addition to identifying gaps and areas for developing new activity. Each participating parish will be offered grant assistance over a two year period (up to £2,000) to develop activities together with the support of a dedicated Recreation Development Worker. The overall aim is to develop a basic infrastructure, which will help sustain this new activity and allow local people to participate in leisure pursuits within their communities. The Parish Council has indicated that they would be interested in being considered for the pilot.
- 04/158 **To consider funding venue for computer skills course to be run by WBC:** The Chairman reported that following an article in the Newsletter advertising a Computer Course to be held locally approximately a dozen people have said they would attend a course. It was unanimously resolved that the Parish Council would fund a venue up to £150 for the course if the cost cannot be met by

funds elsewhere i.e. a local business.

04/159 **Internal Audit and update on Parish Council Accounts:** The Clerk reported that Mr Feline, the internal auditor, has conducted a six monthly audit of the Parish Council's Accounts and apart from a very few minor points has said they pass Section 4 of the Internal Auditor's Report. Under the Council's Financial Regulations Cllr Philips has also checked and confirmed the PAYE details for the Council.

04/160 **Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy WBC:** The Government is to introduce the above Act of Parliament from 7th February 2005. The act is one of liberalisation and brings radical changes to the existing licensing law. The 2003 Act repeals a number of Acts, in particular alcohol and entertainment and the supply of food through late night refreshment. The functions are now to be carried out by a Licensing Authority (in our case West Berkshire Council) instead of the Magistrates Court and Parish Councils are to be included in the consultation process (i.e. the licence conditions of an application). The Parish Council has been offered the opportunity to comment upon the policy at its current stage of development by the 31st October 2004 and it was agreed to refer this to Cllr Davies to look at and comment on behalf of the Council.

04/161 **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 £80.00.
 - vii. R M Weavers – grass cutting Fairground – not received.
 - viii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd –payment for Mortimer Link £763.75 inc VAT.
 - ix. BT – phone bill Parish Office £205.68 inc VAT.
 - x. Staples Ltd – stationery £35.65 inc VAT
 - xi. Greenbarnes Ltd – notice board Cemetery – held over.
 - xii. Butlers Lands Estate Ltd – removal of waste Fairground £88.13 inc VAT.
 - xiii. West Berkshire Council – legal fees for removal of travellers Brewery Common £385.29.
 - xiv. Utilize – anti virus renewal 3 years £199.00
 - xv. Engravaservice – new signs for Cemetery/Fairground £123.37 inc VAT.
 - xvi. Dads Shop Limited £153.50.
 - xvii. West Berkshire Council – photocopying charges £78.26 inc VAT.
 - xviii. F Feline – internal audit fee £75.00.
 - xix. P Blagden – printing costs for September newsletter £247.68.
- In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the items for payment were considered together. Cllr Smith proposed that they be paid; Cllr Lewis seconded this. Carried unanimously.

04/162 **Correspondence:**

- i. A number of Circulars/Newsletters were distributed to councillors.

04/163 **AOB/ Future/Agenda Items:**

The Clerk reminded Councillors of the Remembrance Day Parade on Sunday 14th November 2004 and asked if volunteers could come forward to represent the Council.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 10th November 2004 at 7:30 p.m.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 9:40 p.m.

Signed:..... G S Puddephatt (Chairman) Dated:.....