



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 9 December 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), P Blagden, P. Challis, S Clark, K Davies, T Jones, C Lewis, J. Morden, G Parry, Mrs A Philips, P Scrase, T Shorrocks, A Smith, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk) and 2 Members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors: A Thorpe, Ms S Harding and K Lock (District).

Declaration of Interest: None.

04/178 Minutes and Matters Arising:

Minutes:

The Minutes of Meeting of 11 November 2004 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

- The question was raised about the laying of the gas main outside St John's School and whether it should be done in term time. As it has already been started and the fact that the contractors will also be on leave in the Christmas holidays it was decided to allow it to continue.
- The Chairman advised that he and the Clerk had visited J Hannaw of I-next (a local web site design company) who have agreed to kindly design a new web site for the Parish Council.
- Cllr Blagden circulated minutes of the Mortimer Business Forum Meeting held on Thursday 2nd December which 9 businesses attended.
- (04/158) The Clerk advised that Sarah Morland has arranged for a six week follow up computer course to start in the New Year. This may cost £50 more in addition to the funds agreed as she is trying to find a bigger venue.

04/179 Co-Option of new Councillors: Following the application and interview of 10 very strong candidates by the agreed panel The Chairman recommended for co-option the following: Graham Parry, Phil Scrase, Tom Shorrocks and Steve Clark. It was unanimously resolved that they be co-opted onto Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council.

04/180 Report from District Councillors: In the absence of Cllr Lock the Clerk read out his report. There has been a review of the local minerals plan, which will be subject to a public enquiry in 2006. It seems that West Berkshire will be expected to provide 1.5 million tons of sand and gravel per annum up to 2016. This is actually less than the 2 million tons under the current plan. The first meeting of the new Kennet and Pang Valley Forum was held at Brimpton on 6th October. Inspector Talbot from Thames Valley Police at Pangbourne reported that crime locally had dropped by 18% in the last year. He also confirmed that despite an increase in Police numbers we are not getting any more locally and "beat" policing is not coming back. They are concentrating on "neighbourhood" policing, which targets areas where crime is regularly reported. West Berkshire schools have done well in the latest round of school tests, which covered Key Stage 2, and in English WBC schools are 6th out of 150 education authorities in England. At St Mary's 44 children took the tests and the percentages gaining level 4 or higher were: English 77%, Maths 77% and Science 93%. At Windmill Court Sovereign Housing have agreed to replace the old "care home" with 6 x 2 bed flats equipped to support independent living for people who are frail. They have also agreed to buy the former staff house at market value and agreed that if they ever want to sell off Windmill Court the cash received will be reinvested in "social housing". This is only likely to happen in the long-term future when Windmill Court needs replacing.

04/181 Planning: Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on the 17 November and 2 December.

04/02635/FULMAJ

Garth House, 34 St John's Road. Demolition of existing property and re-development to form 14 dwellings (all 3 bedrooms) together with access, parking, landscaping and amenity space.

	Object:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This part of the parish has by and large retained its Victorian character and the 1890's Garth House should be retained and adapted within the existing fabric to form self contained flats. 2. Notwithstanding the reduction in eaves and ridge height (see 04/01996/FULMAJ) the proposed development of 14 dwellings on the southern edge of the settlement boundary will be intrusive from the adjacent open rural land and out of keeping with the village scene. 3. An addition of 14 dwellings indicates an increase of 30-40% in traffic movements onto the western arm of the unmade, unadopted St John's Road. This will cause severe deterioration. The S106 agreement would not cover the long-term maintenance of the road. 4. Access to the site is inadequate and does not conform to highway requirements for a development of this scale.
04/02417/HOUSE	Lane House Cottage, Mortimer Lane. Single storey detached garage. No objection.
04/02510/FUL	Windmill House, Victoria Road. Ground and first floor extension to existing offices. No objection - condition all building materials, skips etc. to be kept off adjacent roads.
04/02593/ADV	Spratleys Garage, 60-62 Victoria Road. 1 non-illuminated totem type sign. No objection.
04.02628/FUL	St Catherines, Sweetzers Piece. New 3 bedroom house with garage.
	Object:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over development of site. The proposed property is over large for the plot. 2. Out of keeping with the street scene.
04/02634/RESMAT	Colt House, Sweetzers Piece. Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 2 dwellings.
	Object:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over development of site. Whilst accepting that the site is adequate for two new properties the proposal is overlarge and will dominate the street scene. 2. Out of keeping with adjacent properties.
04/02680/HOUSE	18 Spring Lane. Conservatory to rear of property. No objection.
04/02468/FUL	Amended Plans, 3 Hammonds Heath. Re-siting of double garage. No objection.
04/02553/HOUSE	70 Windmill Road. Two storey rear extension and replacement of flat roof with a pitched roof.
	No objection in principle but subject to:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To avoid overlooking, a condition that the windows in the east elevation are obscured glass, which cannot be altered without permission. 2. The officer must be satisfied that access to the rear of No 72 is maintained and that the new build does not compromise the foundations of the adjacent property.
04/02692/HOUSE	25 Victoria Road. Double tandem garage and store.
04/02723/FUL MAJ	Mortimer Men's Club. Conversion of existing club into 6 flats, demolition of outbuildings and erection of 6 semi detached dwellings. Carports and parking for 21 vehicles.
	Support: The Parish Council support the overall concept but with certain reservations.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The road exit/entrance to and from the Street is dangerous for the number of vehicle movements expected. The line of sight close to a bend will leave waiting traffic unsighted. 2. Parking for 21 cars indicates the probability of pollution from run off of rain and car washing from this site into the ditch to the south of the site. Clay substrata will not trap pollutants and oils and proper provision for filtration and trapping must be installed.
04/02794/HOUSE	54 The Crescent. Conservatory. No objection.
04/02831/FUL	Land at Field Farm, Sulhamstead Hill – Hanson quarry. Vary condition to restore site as landowner has requested different scheme. No objection.
Adjacent Parish	
Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:	
04/02372/HOUSE	Sunnybanks, Kiln Lane. Two storey pitched roof extension, porch extension. Refusal – over development and visual intrusion on the countryside.
04/02267/FUL	K. G Hutt, Pitfield Lane. Demolition of builders' yard and erection of 3 houses and garages. Approval.
Notice of Appeal	Garth House, 34 St John's Road. Linden Homes are appealing to the Secretary of State

04.01996 against the refusal by West Berkshire Council for the demolition of Garth House and re-development to form 10 four bedroom and 4 three bedroom dwellings. This was their original application. They have already submitted a fresh application 04/02635 – see above.

Welshman's Road, Mortimer Quarry – Hansons Ltd. Following our letter to Hampshire County Council (see minutes of 11 November 04) we have received further responses explaining that some, at least, of the lorry movements have been for local delivery, College Piece and Wokefield Park. At least Hampshire County Council and Hansons are aware of our concern and hopefully no unnecessary lorry movements through Mortimer will be made.

Up date on Mortimer Hill Site: Taylor Woodrow are starting the preliminary work on the site, new proof fencing, bat posts, decommissioning of existing wells and realignment of the private access road to Mortimer Hill House. There will also be a meeting with West Berkshire Council Highways to set out the new roundabout access to the site. This will take place prior to Christmas.

04/182 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

- i. **Update on BT poles Windmill Road:** The Clerk advised that a letter of apology had been received from BT and the poles had now been moved to the correct position.
- ii. **Update on Traffic Management and Traffic Survey:** Cllr Davies reported that the traffic survey has been deferred by TRL because of the installation of the new gas main. A Traffic Order has been received from West Berkshire Council to increase the double yellow lines from 15m to 30m on Windmill Road at the junction of Victoria Road.
- iii. **Update on Brewery Common Title:** Cllr Davies reported that a further document has been obtained from DEFRA which states that the land was the Parish Council's in 1973. This has now been passed to the Land Registry.
- iv. **Update on Brewery Common gas main:** West Berkshire Council have written to Transco asking them to now remove the gas pipe which constitutes a trespass on the common.

04/183 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

- ii. **Report:** The Clerk reported that the large wooden gates on the Hammonds Heath Entrance had been stolen. This has been reported to the Police and steps taken to temporarily secure the Fairground. A verbal quotation had been received for replacing the gates, locks etc at a cost of approx £409 and in view of the security of the Fairground it was unanimously agreed to proceed with this quotation. **Clerk to action.** Cllr Blagden circulated his report on the work of the Monthly Maintenance to all members. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Smith attend an Outdoor Play Area Inspection and Maintenance One Day Course on 11th January 2005 in connection with his role as Play Area Inspector at a cost of £170.00 plus VAT.
- iii. **Update on meeting with Charity Commission and proposal to set up a new trust:** Cllr Davies reported that a site visit had taken place between Mr Claus (a solicitor for the Charity Commission) and three members of the Parish Council on the 3rd December. The Charity Commission now say that they cannot agree to the present Trustees granting a lease to the Council, but instead they are prepared to help the Council set up a new body of independent trustees to replace the present Trustees (i.e. the Council, under the Charity Commission's Order of June 1948). Recognising that they had misled the Council they sent one of their solicitors to the meeting on the 3rd December (referred to in Minute 04.168) to explain and clarify the matter. The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Lewis, with the Clerk in attendance, duly met the solicitor, Mr Stephen Claus. After a long discussion, agreement was eventually reached that the setting up of a new body of independent trustees should be recommended to the Council at its next meeting. Cllr Davies proposed that this recommendation be accepted in principle. The Charity Commission will if necessary confirm to the Council's auditors that steps are being taken to regularise the financial position. This was seconded by Cllr Lewis and it was unanimously resolved that a new trust be set up of five members i.e. from other local charity bodies with one member from the Parish Council. It was agreed that Cllr Davies progress this further and report back.
- iv. **Fairground Refurbishment Project (pavilion):**
 - **Update on meeting with Relief in Need:** As reported last month the Business Plan was presented to the Relief in Need Charity on the 23rd November who were happy about the plan and have offered to contribute £150,000 towards the facility provided enough

matching funds are in place to commit to go ahead at the end of 2005.

- Proposal that SMPC registers itself as an environmental body with Entrust at a cost of £100: Cllr Smith advised that the Council need to register as an environmental body to be able to apply for certain grants and proposed that the Council go ahead. This was seconded by Cllr Philips and unanimously agreed. **Cllr Smith** to action.

04/184 **Cemetery:** No report.

04/185 **To ratify precept figure for 2005/2006:** The Chairman reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 23rd November to agree a budget and precept figure for the next financial year (budget circulated to all members). The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommended a precept of £74,265. The increase in the Precept Figure is because over the last two years the Council have been drawing on reserves of the Parish Council to mask expenditure and this did not show a true picture. It was proposed by Cllr Morden and seconded Cllr Lewis that this figure be accepted and unanimously resolved. **The Clerk** to complete the Local Government Finance Act Form and sent it to West Berkshire Council asking for a Precept of £74,265.

04/186 **Report on SEEDA (SE England Development Agency) Programme:** This was circulated to all members and is about funding opportunities for the Council and other organisations.

04/187 **Update on Transport Grant – changes to timetable:** The Clerk reported that negotiations have been taking place to change the mini bus timetable in line with the changes to the First Great Western Link rail timetable. It is hoped to implement these changes next week.

04/188 **Update on Rural Housing Trust Survey:** No update – held over.

04/189 **Resignation of Parish Council Representative on Clarke's Educational Charity:** The Chairman reported that a letter had been received from Mr John Gosling, the Parish Council's representative/trustee on the charity of Clarke's Educational Foundation and a vote of thanks was passed to Mr Gosling for his work as a long serving member of the Parish Council and for his work on the Clarke's Charity. Mr Gosling suggested that Mr Roger Peters, former councillor and Chairman of the Parish Council would be happy to become the Council's representative from January 2005. The Chairman proposed that Mr Gosling's resignation be accepted and that Mr Peters be accepted as the Council's representative. This was unanimously resolved. **Clerk** to contact Mr Peters and the Clerk of Clarke's Foundation.

04/190 **To agree to join the Berkshire Local Government Pension Scheme for Clerk:** It was unanimously resolved that under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 that Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council applies for admission to the Berkshire Pension Fund to allow the Parish Clerk to become a member of the scheme.

04/191 **Finance – To Agree Accounts for Payment:**

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

- i. Clerk's Salary.
- ii. Clerk's/Custodian's Tax and NI.
- iii. Clerk's Expenses.
- iv. Custodian's Salary.
- v. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd –payment for Mortimer Link £763.75 inc VAT.
- vi. Dabs.com - £2,006.43 inc VAT.
- vii. Metrosigns – new front for vandalised noticeboard £105.16.
- viii. Thames Water – water trough Fairground £4.24.
- ix. Impact – renewal of support service for accounts package £55.00.
- x. Thrive – gardening contract Cemetery (2 months) £90.00.
- xi. P Blagden – reimbursement of expenses Business Forum £12.46
- xii. G W Roffe – payment for repair/overhaul of strimmer £25.00.
- xiii. Dads Shop Ltd. £61.02.

04/192 **Correspondence:**

- A report from Mr W Taylor (LLC Representative for Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council) on the AWE Local Liason Committee Meeting on the 2nd December 2004 (Already Circulated). Further information will be held in the Parish Office.

- A letter from Mr G Mayes saying that he had reported the blocked drain to West Berkshire Council onto the Foudry Brook.
- A number of Circulars/Newsletters were distributed to councillors.

04/193 **AOB/ Future/Agenda Items:**

None

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 13 January 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 10:05 p.m.