



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 13 January 2005 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), P Blagden, , S Clark, K Davies, T Jones, C Lewis, J. Morden, Mrs A Philips, T Shorrock, A Smith, K Lock (District), Mrs J Kirk (Clerk) and 1 member of the press.

Apologies: Councillors: Ms S Harding, P Scrase, P Challis, G Parry, and K Lock (District).

Declaration of Interest: Cllr Philips declared an interest in agreeing the grass cutting contracts 05/13 and 05/13(x).

05/1 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

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

Matters Arising:

- Cllr Davies reported that more information had been received on the Seeda programme from the CCB and it was agreed that he would take this forward and report back.
- Cllr Smith reported that he had been approached by two members of the public regarding the number of recent accidents on the Street and whether the 40mph speed limit could be reduced to 30mph. This has been passed to the Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee to investigate.
- The Clerk reported that Mr G Mayes reported to her that on Saturday 8th January 2005 raw sewage had flooded onto the Grazeley Road. Thames Water came out and found that the sewer from Beech Hill was blocked and they then flushed the system to clear the blockage. Mr Mayes has written on behalf of the Parish Council to Thames Water and the Environment Agency.
- Sponsorship for the quarterly newsletter by local business in the form of minimal advertising. This was passed by a majority vote
- Laptop Computer Course - The next course started on the 11 January 2005 in the Methodist Hall.
- Business Forum - Cllr Blagden reported that 15 local businesses were represented by 20 attendees on 2 December. Cllr Davies hosted the meeting and the responses from the meeting were very encouraging. All felt that regular meetings of local business people would be of benefit to all and that the theme of future meetings should be on business rather on parish issues. The next business forum will be on 3rd or 17th March.

05/2 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock gave his report to the Parish Council

05/3 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met once since the last Council Meeting on the 6th January 2005.

04/029227/FUL

72 Victoria Road (Mortimer Surgery). Extension to existing doctors' surgery.

Object:

1. Overdevelopment of site. The Parish Council's comment on the last approved application, 143793 dated 13 January 1994, that the site had now been fully developed and no further application to increase the working accommodation should be considered is still very much valid.
2. Detrimental to the street scene. Building up to the road boundary hedge will be overpowering to the adjacent bungalow and to the properties opposite.
3. Reduction in the number of already inadequate parking provision. No provision for delivery vehicles turning before leaving the site leading them to back into a busy bus route road already congested with parked cars.
4. No parking provision for visiting Breast Screening Clinic.
5. The application does not give a fair assessment of the additional staff and visitors

to the three new rooms. This will inevitably give rise to the need for additional, not reduced parking.

6. Clinical trials, meeting rooms, library etc. should be housed off site.

04/02839/FUL Land adjoining Mortimer Hill House. Construction of electrical sub station.

Object

Should be more sensitively sited further from both the proposed and the existing (shown on the plan as Brick Barns) properties.

04//02837/FUL Land adjoining Mortimer Hill House. Re-location of the path and cycle link. No objection.

04/02502/HOUSE 20 windmill Road. Detached garage. No objection.

04/02862/FUL 39 Stephens Close. Porch to front of property. No objection.

04/02891/FUL Broadwell, 17 Victoria Road. Change of use from D1 dental surgery to B1 Offices. No objection.

Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:

02/02381/FUL Gardners Cottage, Mowbrays Hill. Detached garage - approval.

04/02417/HOUSE Lane House Cottage, Mortimer Lane. Single storey detached garage – approval.

04/02468/FUL 3 Hammonds Heath. Demolition of existing dwelling etc. erection of new 4 bedroom house and double garage - approval.

04/02510/FUL Windmill House, Victoria Road (T.A. Fisher Ltd). Ground and first floor extension to existing offices – refusal.

04/02553/HOUSE 70 Windmill Road. Two storey rear extension and replacement of flat roof with a pitched roof and associated works - approval.

04/02593/ADV 60-62 Victoria Road (Spratleys Garage) one non-illuminated totem type sign - approval.

04/02634/RESMAT Colthouse, Sweetzers Piece. Demolition of existing and erection of two new dwellings - refusal.

04/02628/FUL St Catherines. Sweetzers Piece. New 3 bed house with garage - withdrawn.

04/02680/HOUSE 25 Victoria Road. Double tandem garage and store - approval.

04/02794/HOUSE 54 The Crescent. Conservatory - approval.

Cllr Morden reported that on the 20 December 2004 West Berkshire Council’s Eastern Area Planning Committee met to consider (among others) the application to re-develop Mortimer Men’s Club. He spoke on behalf of the Parish Council pointing out that although the Parish Council had no objections in principle the proposed access onto The Street was a considerable hazard. The Highways Officer has now conceded that he had not properly assessed the traffic problem. The committee’s decision was to defer the application for further assessment by highways and consultation with the developer.

Tree Preservation Order TPO681 has been served on the owners/occupiers of Squirrels Lodge, West End Road (last house on right before St Catherine’s Hill) to protect 6 oak trees on the site.

There was to have been a workshop for Parish Councillors on 6th January but this has been postponed because the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) has moved the goalposts. This new document will be setting the strategic policy context within which West Berkshire will need to develop its Local Development Framework.

05/4 **South East Plan Public Consultation:** Cllr Morden reported that a consultation period 24 January to 15 April 2005 has been initiated but as yet none of the supporting documents have been received. They are due in late January. The Regional Plan is intended to cover the period to 2026.

05/5 **Town & Country Planning Act - Changes to Planning System:** Councillor Morden reported that from the Parish Council’s point of view there are no changes affecting the submission of our observations. We will be given 21 days to comment from the date of notification. The changes are all within West Berkshire Council and are in response to a report of the Government appointed Inspector who found that the current Planning Committee structure was the key obstacle to improving performance. The main changes are:-

1. Any West Berkshire ward councillor wishing to call in an application to the Area Planning Committee will have to do so before they are aware of the officer’s recommendation under delegated powers. To help our ward councillors the Parish Council’s planning committee minutes are now being given to them immediately following the committee meeting.
2. The present four West Berkshire Area Committees which meet on a 6 week cycle are being reformed as two Area Committees - Eastern and Western which will each meet on a 3 week cycle. The changes take place on 23 February ‘05

- 05/6 **Village Design Statements under new Planning System:** Under the recently introduced Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 a new policy system introduces a new range of planning documents collectively known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will comprise a core strategy, site specific allocations of land and a proposals map. Under this new system West Berkshire Council is no longer able to adopt Village Design Statements as Supplementary Planning Guidance but could conceivably use them as supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). However, there is a problem, SPDs need to be accompanied by a sustainability Appraisal and the Government's guidance document for this runs to 174 pages. As West Berkshire Council see it, the way forward is for VDSs to be accepted by them as providing a consensus view of the local community that can be used as a material consideration in planning decisions and will be available to the Planning Inspectorate in the event of a planning appeal. The VDS is therefore not dead and Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council intend to start the consultation procedure in February and councillor Morden asked if any councillor or member of the public who wishes to become involved to pass their names to the Clerk.
- 05/7 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**
- i. **Update on Brewery Common Title:** Cllr Davies reported that a further title document dated 15th March 1973 has been obtained from West Berkshire Council. This has now been passed to the Land Registry.
 - ii. **Update on Brewery Common gas main:** West Berkshire Council are still pressing Transco to remove the unauthorised pipe as the council wishes to install the dragon's teeth which we believe will need the Secretary of State's approval Cllr Davies to progress.
- 05/8 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**
- i. **Report:** Cllr Blagden gave an update on the monthly maintenance programme for the Fairground.
 - ii. **Update on meeting with Charity Commission and proposal to set up a new trust:** Cllr Davies reported that the draft document for the new Trust has been amended and improved. He also read out the suggested changes of the object of the charity and these were unanimously agreed and the draft text is to be sent as it is at the moment to the Charity Commission for their approval. In the meantime the parish council are to write formally to invite the organisations to agree to be new trustees. These are in addition to one representative from the Parish Council, a) Englefield Estates, Clarke's Charity and Mortimer Surgery plus one representative to be elected at the Annual Parish Meeting in April.
 - iii. **Fairground Refurbishment Project (pavilion):**
Cllr Smith reported that the Relief in Need Charity have agreed to donate £150,000 as long as the project has started by next year. Cllr Puddephatt has obtained a sought after place for a member of the committee in the London Marathon to enable the project to raise money by sponsorship.
- 05/9 **Cemetery:** Cllr Thorpe reported that the new notice board is now in place and that the ditch has been cleared and the hedge trimmed back.
- 05/10 **Update on Parish Plan Action Plan:** The Clerk and Cllr Blagden are to up-date the plan and then a follow up meeting is to be arranged with West Berkshire Council.
- 05/11 **Update on Rural Housing Trust Survey:** The Clerk reported that she had spoken to the Field Worker and she will complete the survey report within the next few weeks. The Field Officer has said that there had been an excellent response and that 405 replies had been received and 111 people having registered an interest in the scheme. Once the report has been received the Parish Council will be able to investigate the next stage of the consultation.
- 05/12 **Update on Leisure in the Rural Communities:** Cllrs Blagden and Smith agreed to take this forward and will report back at the next meeting.
- 05/13 **Finance**
- i. It was resolved in order that the bank signatories can be changed:
 - The Co-operative Bank p.l.c. ("the Bank") shall continue as our bankers.
 - The Bank shall be authorised to honour all cheques and all other documents made or accepted on our behalf even if such payment causes any accounts to be overdrawn or increase any existing overdraft, provided that such documents are signed in accordance

with the specimen signatures shown in the Signature Verification Section (6)

- The Bank shall act on all specimen signatures in accordance with any instruction, notice request or other document in writing concerning our account (including the opening of new accounts), affairs or property.
 - The Bank shall be sent a copy of any future resolutions which affect the terms of the above resolutions.
 - The Bank shall be sent a copy of any changes in our Rules/Regulations or Bye Laws:
 - The Bank shall be notified in writing of any change of Members.
 - The Bank shall be notified in writing of any change of official authorised to sign on our behalf.
 - The Bank shall otherwise continue to operate our account(s) in accordance with the mandate.
- ii. The Chairman proposed that the council purchase a Risk Assessment Computer Package (as advised to do by the auditor as it is a legal requirement to carry out a risk assessment under the audit regime) from DMH Solutions Ltd at a cost of £80.12 and this was unanimously agreed.
- iii. Agree annual grass cutting contracts: (Cllr Philips declared an interest and took no part). It was unanimously agreed to continue the grass cutting contracts for the 2005 season with Ian Philips (for St Mary's Churchyard and Council Cemetery) and with Bridgewood Landscape Services (for Alfred Palmer Memorial Field) with no increase on 2004 prices. The contract with Weavers (to cut the Fairground) has already been agreed for a two year period 04/05.

05/14 **Finance**

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 £616.88 inc VAT.
- vi. Playground Management Ltd - Rospa Course £199.75.
- vii. Clarks Legal - Brewery Common £755.25 inc VAT.
- viii. Butlers Lands Ltd - installation of notice board Cemetery £88.12 inc VAT.
- ix. RM Weavers - grass cutting Fairground £71.06 inc VAT.
- x. I Philips - hedge cutting Cemetery £188.00 inc VAT
- xi. P Blagden - reimbursement of Fairground expenses £19.98
- xii. Staples - stationery £8.99 inc VAT
- xiii. Butlers Lands - installation of new gate/lock Fairground £542.84 inc VAT
- xiv. DMH Solutions Ltd - risk assessment package £80.12 inc VAT
- xv. Thrive - gardening contract Cemetery 45.00.
- xvi. SLCC - annual subscription £105.00
- xvii. Anthony Collins Solicitors - legal fees Fairground £881.25 inc VAT
- xviii. West Berkshire Council - quarterly photocopying charges £162.38 inc VAT

05/15 **Correspondence:**

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

05/16 **AOB/ Future/Agenda Items:**

None

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 10 February 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 09:30 p.m.