



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 10 November 2005 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: K Davies (Chairman), P Blagden, C Lewis, J. Morden, T Shorrocks, P Challis, D Ives, G Puddephatt, S Clark, A Smith, G Parry, Mrs J Kirk (Clerk), and Cllr K Lock.

Apologies: Cllrs A Philips, G Puddephatt, N Kiley and S Harding.

Declaration of Interest: None

05/175 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of 13 October 2005 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. One minor amendment was made to item 05/164. The number of Village Design Statement questionnaires returned was 118 not 130 as minuted.

Matters Arising: Cllr Shorrocks had some questions regarding the update on the pavilion project but it was agreed that these would be dealt with after the pavilion report (05/180 (iii)).

05/176 **Report from District Councillors:**

Cllr Lock reported that Nick Carter had been appointed the new Chief Executive of West Berkshire. West Berkshire has finally agreed to the placing of a sign to Willink Leisure Centre from Mortimer subject to an agreed location being agreed by SMPC. This was discussed and it was agreed to the sign being sited on the existing finger post on the south side of The Street by the War Memorial pointing towards Hammonds Heath and Brewery Common. Cllr Lock also reported that a new application is being submitted for 14 semi detached houses in (Garth House site) St John's Road. Also an alternative plan for 10 houses at the Working Men's Club site (including demolition as it is not to be listed).

05/177 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on the on the 20th October and 3rd November 2005 when 7 plans were considered.

05/01357/FULD St Mary's School. Addition of canopy. No objection

05/02098/HOUSE 34 King Street. Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension. No objection.

05/02179/HOUSE 35 Victoria Road. Single and double storey extension to rear of property. No objection.

05/02271/FULD Land adjacent to 58 The Avenue. Erection of chalet comprising existing garage. No objection.

05/02232/HOUSE 22 Briar Lea Road. Proposed loft conversion with gabled dormer windows to rear. No objection.

05/02264/HOUSE 28 The Avenue. Addition of two storey side and rear extension and demolition of existing garage. No objection.

05/02359/FULD Land to rear of Serena, Birch Lane. One detached 4 bedroom dwelling and parking bay. No objection subject to the passing bay in Birch Lane being completed before any work on the building site commences.

Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:

05/02839/FUL Electricity sub station on the Mortimer Hill site. Approval.

05/01724/HOUSE 6 Church Farm Barns. Extension to provide disabled persons play/day space accommodation. Approval.

05/0884/ADV Adjacent Parish. Wokefield Park (Bloomfield Hatch Entrance). Temporary construction project board. Refusal.

05/01919/HOUSE West End House, 1 West End Road. New boundary wall and gates. Approval.

05/01929/FULD Woodlands, Summerlug. Small dwelling in corner of garden for elderly couple. Refusal.

05/01931/HOUSE The White House, 2 St Mary's Road. Conservatory. Approval.
 05/01997/REM The Colt House, Sweetzers Piece. Demolition of existing and erection of two dwellings. Refusal.

05/02056/FULD Land to rear of Birch Cottage, Birch Lane. New dwelling house. Approval.
 Cllr Morden reported that there will be a site visit on Tuesday 15th November at 2:30pm by the Inspector in respect of the appeal against West Berkshire Council's decision to refuse the planning application to build houses behind 33-37 West End Road (05/00243 and 05/01218).

Willink Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee:

Cllr Morden reported that he attended a meeting on behalf of the Parish Council on 25th October 2005. The items discussed were:

1. Skate Park A skate park is to be installed (planning permission awaited) on the old Burghfield Common recreation ground opposite The Rising Sun, Holly Bush Lane.
2. Signage: See above District Councillor's report (05/176).
3. Floodlights: The floodlights on the Astroturf pitches are now installed and operating.
4. Disabled Swimming Changing Facilities: The necessary work is to be carried out on 20th November.

Usage for the period from April to August 2005 showed an increase of 1.78% over the same period last year. A Procurement Project Review is about to take place. It is hoped that all 8 sites across the West Berkshire Council District will be under one contractor. The various Parish and Town Councils most affected will be consulted, that includes this Parish Council as a financial contributor.

05/178 **Update on Village Design Statement:** No update. Next meeting of the working party is Wednesday 16th November 2005.

05/179 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

Report: Cllr Shorrocks reported that Cllr Challis made a report on Windmill Common and the items that need attention are: 1. The chestnut fencing leaning over Footpath 27 from Windmill Road (already reported to WBC). 2. At the rear of Woodside Close a partially fallen dangerous pine tree (this has already been cut down and made safe), 3. A discarded gas cylinder on Byway 26 (already reported to WBC) and other areas where rubbish has been dumped etc are to be dealt with by the custodian. Cllr Shorrocks also reported that the Clerk is obtaining costings for the installation of the kissing gate on the Windmill Road end of footpath No 37 and will report back at the next meeting.

- i. **Parking Lay-by for Speed Enforcement:** Following West Berkshire Council's letter stating that Thames Valley Police have stated that they will require two parking lay-bys (sites identified as on the verge by the Fairground (opposite St John's Church and the field entrance by the junction with Mortimer Lane) to be formalised before they will carry out speed enforcement. The formalisation of the lay-by will allow for safer access/egress and minimise damage to the highway verge. The Clerk replied to this saying that the proposed siting of the lay-by at the Fairground is not appropriate when there is already a lay-by a few yards further down the road which could be used to this purpose. West Berkshire Council replied stating that the existing lay-by will not allow for two way enforcement (based on force guidelines that require vehicles to be visible for a distance of 200m, which cannot be achieved with the existing lay-by). It was agreed to as **The Clerk** to arrange a site meeting with West Berkshire Council and members of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee to discuss this further.
- ii. **Update on TRL Traffic Survey:** It was agreed that Councillors Davies and Shorrocks would update the survey from TRL. A letter has been received from a member of the public asking for a copy of the report and as this is not a public document and the copyright in it belongs to TRL it is not possible. **The Clerk** is to reply advising of this but offering to consider disclosing some details for information.
- iii. **SID (Speed Indicator Device) Training & Usage:** Cllrs Ives and Challis are to attend the further SID training course to be held on 11th January 2006 at WBC. **Clerk** to arrange. Cllr Blagden is to arrange with WBC to have the SID equipment in Mortimer in the near future
- iv. **Update Brewery Common Gas Pipe Compensation Claim:** Ms Michelle Sherman from West Berkshire Council, acting as the Council's legal advisor, has reported that Land Services Ltd. on behalf of Transco has agreed to meet surveyors and legal fees but not to pay compensation. It is believed that there is a clear legal justification for compensation, and Ms

Sherman has been asked to pursue this.

05/180 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

Report: Cllr Blagden reported that the Fairground Trees and Amenities Committee met on the 19 October and that he had been elected Chairman of the committee until May 2006. The grass cutting contract details for the 2006 season were agreed. The budget requirements for the 2006/2007 budget were discussed and these will be put forward to the Finance and General Purposes Committee later this month. It was agreed that a six month work programme for the Fairground be developed and the work identified would be discussed with the Clerk and then allocated by her to either the Custodian, working party or a contractor. The next meeting was set for 6 February 2006

- i. **Monthly Area Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that the play area equipment is in good condition. The missing swing has been replaced and the gates to the play area are now closing properly.
- ii. **Insurance Cover:** Cllr Davies reported that following last month's report West Berkshire Council's insurers (Jardine Lloyd Thompson) have advised that they do not insure parish council's only principal authorities. They advised that there are only two insurance companies that cover local councils Zurich Municipal and Allianz Cornhill (present insurers). Zurich has been approached and they are to send a proposal form.
- iii. **Update on Pavilion Project:** Cllr Smith reported that Tom McCloughlin from the working party had met with the Eastern Area Planning Officer, Abigail Heard, and the working party is now formally asking for Planning Permission for the new pavilion. The health check for the SEEDA grant application is nearly completed which can then be submitted. Cllr Shorrocks then asked the following questions which include the replies by Cllr Smith:
 - 1) 'The building is not intended to start until autumn 2006 there will be no or little need to cover running costs in the 2006/07 budget' *Q. What about future budgets? Will there be a need in the 07/08 budget to cover running costs.* *A. The Parish Council will make a budget provision for the Pavilion Project in 2006/7. This will be to support the project in realising the community's long established aim of having a building on the Fairground to provide a facility for the entire village. As the plan is currently to begin construction in autumn 2006, there will be no significant requirement to cover running costs during this period).*
 - 2) 'It is intended the building will be self funding within 4 years' *Q. How is it intended to be funded in those 4 years?* *A. The project team are targeting that the facility becomes self-funding within 4 years. A management committee, comprising a cross section of users groups and community organisations, will be responsible for raising the monies required for the maintenance and upkeep of the building. It is envisaged that this will be achieved in the 4 year time span by charges made for usage. The management team will be responsible for the promotion of the facility and during the time that usage is being built up, the management team will be approaching funding bodies to find grants to make up any short-fall. (There is no expectation that this would necessarily come from the precept.*
 - 3) 'There is no expectation that the costs would be covered by the precept' *Q How are they to be covered?* *A. On-going costs would be covered by usage charges, so that those groups using the facility, such as the cricket club and the tennis club would be charged for that use. Charges will be in line with those imposed by similar facilities within the locality. It is likely that the management committee would also look to gain money through grants, sponsorship and other fund raising efforts. The Parish Council will, of course, have representation on this committee.*
 - 4) 'Although SMPC currently pay towards the upkeep and running costs of Willink from the precept, is it entirely appropriate to make a similar consideration for a facility within the Parish?' *Q The PC currently pays over £7k annually towards Willink. What is the expectation for the PC contribution to the pavilion?* *A. There is no expectation that the running costs for the facility should be met from the precept, as explained above, these are to be met by the USERS of the facility and any short-fall will be*

addressed by the management committee through appropriate fund-raising

- 5) *The Working Party is working on the issue of addressing the running costs and is assessing the running costs of similar facilities and these costs are explored in the Business Plan (presented to the Parish Council in 2004). However, this is not the main priority of the working party at this time. The working party is focussed on attaining the grants that will enable the facility to be built in the first place. Once the current deadlines have been met it will be possible to concentrate on other issues, which include a more accurate forecast of running costs. The Working Party is made up of volunteers and any offers of further help would be gratefully accepted. When the building is complete its day to day operation and running will be managed by a committee representative of all interested parties.*

- iv. **Fairground Trust:** Cllr Davies reported that the Parish Council are pressing ahead with the question of valuation for rent with a view to setting up the proposed lease.
- 05/181 **Cemetery:** Cllr Clark reported that the Cemetery maintenance arrangement with Thrive is now due for renewal and there have been concerns about the performance of Thrive over the last 12 months. The Committee are to look at alternative options and report back with recommendations in due course. The Cemetery Regulations were last reviewed in June 2004 and in recent times a number of issues have arisen which make it clear that a comprehensive review should be undertaken by the committee. The existing Cemetery obviously has a finite life and, in view of the amount of time it will take to obtain further land, together with the necessary planning consents and environmental issues it is proposed that initial enquiries should now commence to consider future options. Cllr Challis asked if the question of hand digging graves could be investigated.
- 05/182 **Communications Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that the committee met on the 8th November and the following items were discussed. A proposed budget of £1,368 was discussed and will be put forward for consideration in the 2006/2007 budget. The next newsletter is to be delivered during the weekend of the 6th/7th January and councillors were advised that the deadline for contributions is the 16th December 2005. A loose leaf 'Welcome to Mortimer' pack is being developed, to be funded by local organisations and businesses, it is intended that initially the information pack is to be delivered to every house in the village and the additional stock to be distributed between the estate agents, doctors, Library, Parish Office etc. Sarah Morland and Pauline Rabbitts have both resigned from the Communications Committee due to time restraints. Cllr Blagden advised that there are now spaces on this Committee and he would like two volunteers from the Parish Council to join this Committee. Cllr Ives put his name forward to join.
- 05/183 **Mortimer Link (mini bus to Station) Review:** As the grant from SEEDA expires at the end of the financial year the Clerk has been asked to investigate further funding and arrange a meeting with the operators Stewarts.
- 05/184 **Update Burghfield/Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group:** Cllr Davies advised that he had been asked to be Chairman of this group. It had been agreed that there can be two representatives from each organisation and it was agreed that Cllr Ives and Cllr Philips represent the Parish Council. **The Clerk** was asked to find an available Saturday morning in January/February to hold a follow up public meeting.
- 05/185 **Update Leisure in the Parish Scheme:** Cllrs Smith and Blagden have had an up-date meeting with West Berkshire. The only expenditure so far from the £2,000 grant has been the purchase of the mini tennis nets £167. A lot has been achieved but little spent such as the health walks which start at 10am every Tuesday (regularly attended by more than 15 people), it is hoped to hold Sunday walks as well in the near future. The introduction of the younger age group (pre-school) tennis coaching has been made possible from this financial support. It is hoped in the New Year to be able to work with the local schools so that all children get the opportunity to play tennis. Cllr Smith reported that the setting up of a youth club is on hold at the present until a venue can be found.
- 05/186 **Finance:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Smith proposed that they be paid; Cllr Clark 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. RBWM (Pension).
- vi. Ian Philips (grass cutting Cemetery/Churchyard) £497.85 inc VAT.
- vii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £763.75 inc VAT.
- viii. Forbuoys (newspapers) £4.50
- ix. Fieldwork Rest & Play Ltd (new chain bridge for multi play unit and other repairs) £1,438.79.
- x. The Royal British Legion (poppy wreath) £20.00.
- xi. WBC (planning application fees new pavilion) £662.50.
- xii. Butlers Lands (felling of tree on Windmill Common) £94.00 inc VAT.
- xiii. Thrive (Cemetery maintenance, including plants) £75.53.

05/187 Correspondence:

1. It was reported that a Mr A Clark had requested permission to graze horses on the Fairground for an un-stated period. After discussion it was proposed that this be refused on the grounds of the impact on public amenities and the regular bookings by existing users. It was unanimously agreed to reject the application.
2. A number of circulars and newsletters

05/188 Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:

None

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 8th December 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 10:10 p.m.