



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 8 December 2005 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: K Davies (Chairman), P Blagden, C Lewis, J. Morden, T Shorrocks, P Challis, D Ives, S Clark, A Philips, N Kiley, A Thorpe and Mrs J Kirk (Clerk).

Apologies: Cllrs A Smith, G Parry, G Puddephatt, S Harding and K Lock (District).

Declaration of Interest: Cllr C Lewis 05/195 (iv)

05/189 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Meeting of 10 November 2005 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. One slight amendment was made to item 05/182.

Matters Arising: None

05/190 **Report from District Councillors:**

In the absence of both District Councillors the Clerk read out a written report from Cllr Harding. Cllr Lock will be presenting a petition from Mortimer Age Concern at the next District Council meeting, asking for the travel token system to continue. The Government plan to introduce a free bus pass for over 60's next April, the council will be able to continue offering tokens for people who do not have access to buses. West Berkshire Council has been told that the Primary Care Trusts for Newbury, Reading and Wokingham must combine into one (but not by what date). Each district will have a local organisation under a joint management board based on District Council boundaries. This means that Mortimer surgery will come under West Berkshire local area rather than Reading PCT as at present. The Padworth re-cycling site proposals seem to be bogged down. One of the contractors has pulled out, leaving only one bidder, and no planning application has yet been submitted. Bookings for events at Ufton Court have now been stopped, and the council are planning to hand it back to Englefield Estates. Ufton Court is rented jointly by all 6 Berkshire Unitary Authorities and they are keen to end the lease, although this may be costly as it will have to be handed back fully repaired. AWE has held a meeting with the Eastern Area Planning Committee outlining their plans to increase their staff by 25% over the next 3 years and invest £1,050 million at the sites. They have planning permission for a new laser facility which they admit will enable them to research new weapons systems. They plan a massive re-building programme at Aldermaston and Burghfield, which will last until 2015. Work on Windmill Court is ready to start and the contractors will move onto site during the Christmas period. Several Sovereign sites in the village (plots of land on Stephens Road and The Beavers) are up for auction. Cllrs Lock and Harding have been told by Sovereign that it is not viable for them to build on sites of less than 5 houses. In addition, land values are high in Mortimer and they believe that the money from the sales can be better invested elsewhere e.g. Burghfield. Cllr Lock has taken this up with the Chief Executive of Sovereign as he does not believe this meets the needs of local people. It was then brought to the Parish Council's attention that there had been a report in the Newbury Weekly News that day about the housing association selling off sites also stating that "the village is regarded as a development area by West Berkshire Council" and it was thought that if this was correct it had serious implications as to the future of Mortimer. It was agreed to ask **the Clerk** to write to West Berkshire Council asking for clarification about the meaning of this statement.

Cllr Harding's report then covered an up-date on the footpath in The Street which said that the tree officer has made his report and a quotation from BT to move the services under the footpath had also been received. Negotiation on the removal of the covenant continues, but it has been decided by West Berkshire to merely seek a relaxation for the movement to enable the placing of traffic signs for the roundabout. West Berkshire are close to having a complete costing for the moving of the road and completion of the south side footpath. When this is available Cllr Harding will report back to the

Parish Council and it is also then their intention to hold a public meeting to inform people of the progress. West Berkshire footpaths department have declined to look further into a "bridge" over the tree roots solution, as they believe it is impractical and too expensive.

- 05/191 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met once since the last Council Meeting on the on the 22nd November 2005 when 6 plans were considered.
- 05/02410/FULD Land to the rear of Victoria Arms. Demolition of toilets, store and shed. Construction of 2 dwellings. No objection.
- 05/02412/HOUSE 12 St John's Road. 2 storey side extension. No objection.
- 05/02179/HOUSE 12a Stephens Firs. Single storey rear extension. No objection.
- 05/02567/FULD 6 King Street. Demolition of house and workshop. Two pairs of semi detached houses. No objection.
- 05/02522/HOUSE Sunnyhurst, Mortimer Lane. Single storey rear extension and new front porch. (Adj Parish No objection. Wokefield)
- 05/02468/FUL (Adj Land at Field Farm Sulhamstead Hill. Hanson Quarry Products Ltd. extension Parish Sulhamstead) of time for restoration of site to 31.8.06. No objection.
- Recommendations under delegated powers received from West Berkshire Council:
- 05/01825/OUTMAJ 16 dwellings with associated road and infrastructure improvements on Land adjacent to Mortimer Railway Station.
- Refusal (reasons given):
1. Outside settlement boundary.
 2. Contrary to Planning Policy Guidance.
 3. Adjacent to public water supply borehole.
 4. Partially within Flood Zone 3.
 5. At present insufficient water supply infrastructure.
 6. Does not deliver investment from sustainable development.
- 05/02058/OUTD Chalet bungalow on land adjoining 37 Stephens Close. Approval.
- 05/02073/FUL Two storey extension to existing offices for T.A Fisher (Holdings) Ltd at Windmill House, Victoria Road. Approval.
- 05/02098/HOUSE Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension at 34 King Street. Approval.
- 05/02179/HOUSE Single and double storey extension to rear of 35 Victoria Road. Approval.
- 05/02271/FULD Erection of chalet encompassing existing garage at 58 The Avenue.
- Refusal (reasons given):
1. Conflict with immediate street scene.
 2. Overbearing.
 3. Lack of planning obligation.

The appeal against refusal of erection of 6 dwellings and 6 flats at Mortimer Men's Club is to be determined by written representations and not an Informal Hearing as first advised. The Parish Council will be writing to the Planning Inspectorate to emphasise their objection to the access being on to the Street which would constitute a clear traffic hazard. Entry and exit via Pitfield Lane is the only safe way of accessing this site for 12 residential units. The deadline for consultation has been extended to 5 January 2006.

- 05/192 **Update on Village Design Statement:** Cllr Shorrocks advised that the working party met on Wednesday 16th November and is now working towards a first draft of the Village Design Statement by the beginning of February 2006. It will then be presented to the Parish Council and the public at a public meeting to be held on Saturday 25th February.

- 05/193 **Report from Finance and General Purposes Committee & with Precept figure to be recommended for the year 2006/2007:** 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 £74,818 (a slight increase on the previous year of £553) It was proposed by Cllr Morden and seconded Cllr Blagden that this Precept figure be accepted and it was unanimously resolved. **The Clerk** to complete the Local Government Finance Act Form and send it to West Berkshire Council asking for a Precept of £74,818. An amendment to the Finance and

General Purposes Minutes regarding the Clerk's hours was agreed.

05/194 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:**

Report: Cllr Shorrocks reported that the council had had use of the Speed Indicator Device for a week (SID) and this was put to use in various parts of the village by authorised users. Cllr Ives and The Clerk met with Mr Birtwhistle and Mr Worboys of McNicholas Plc and made site visits to 7 locations in the village to look at making good verges that had been disturbed during the installation of the gas main. They also looked at the markings sprayed onto the roads/paths to identify the location of services which have not washed away as they were supposed to and McNicholas have agreed to rectify all the areas identified during the visit. This is to be delayed until the Spring as the timing will be better for re-seeding etc. McNicholas are to send the Parish Council a letter of confirmation.

i. **Parking Lay-by for Speed Enforcement:** The Chairman advised that as requested at last month's Parish Council meeting members of the Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee met with members of West Berkshire Council Highways Department to look at the proposed sites for the speed enforcement lay-bys (one opposite St John's School and one at the junction of Mortimer Lane). The Committee agreed to the installation of the lay-bys and West Berkshire Council has confirmed that these will be constructed in the New Year.

ii. **Update Brewery Common Gas Pipe Compensation Claim:** Held over.

05/195 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:**

Report: No report.

i. **Monthly Area Play Area Inspection Report:** The Clerk advised that Cllr Smith had reported that everything seemed fine with the play equipment.

ii. **Insurance Cover:** Held over

iii. **Update on Pavilion Project:** In the absence of Cllr Smith the Clerk reported that a planning application for a 300 sq ft community building had been submitted to West Berkshire Council. The construction cost of the building will cost approximately £425,000 and will contain meeting rooms, toilets, changing facilities, a kitchen area, a new parish council office, large assembly room and a club room. The application for a grant from SEEDA has also been submitted.

iv. **Fairground Trust:** Cllr Lewis declared an interest (as he is a Trustee) and left the room for this item. The Chairman reported that the valuation for the Fairground Lease had been received from the District Valuer's Office which outlines their recommended parameters for setting the rent. It was agreed to have a joint meeting between the trustees and the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Parish Council to try and finalise the details, the Chairman said that there may be a need to negotiate the terms of the rent with the Trustees. **The Clerk** to arrange the meeting.

05/196 **Cemetery:** Cllr Clark advised that the next meeting of the Cemetery Committee will be on Thursday 26th January 2006 when the proposed changes to the Cemetery Regulations and quotes to install a deer fence will be discussed.

05/197 **Communications Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that the email and internet course was successfully completed with the help of staff from West Berkshire Council at the library. Another computer beginner's course is planned to start in January 2006 (already full). The next newsletter is due to be delivered over the weekend of 7/8th January. The deadline for contributions is 16th December.

Youth Club: Cllr Blagden reported that five of the eight original volunteers have resigned from the committee which puts an almost impossible burden on the remaining three in respect of administration and weekly club sessions. It is probable that sufficient effort can be made to run a number of fairly low-level sessions in the New Year.

Health Walks: A series of 'striding out' walks is being planned to run on Sunday mornings for those people who want a longer and slightly more vigorous walk for about 1½ to 2 hours, details to be posted on the village notice boards.

05/198 **Mortimer Link (mini bus to Station) Review:** The Chairman reported that the SEEDA Grant for the Mortimer Link ends at the end of the financial year and the council have budgeted to fund the scheme until end of June 2006 whilst alternative funding is sought to keep the service running.

05/199 **Update Burghfield/Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group:** Cllr Davies reported that the police

reaction to the priority list from Mortimer seems to be (a) they have all these problems in hand anyway, but (b) problem solving is something that parish councils rather than the Police should initiate. SMPC have taken this initiative by approving the scheme by WBC to install two police speed lay-bys on The Street, one opposite St John's School and one by the field entrance next to Mortimer Lane. This will be unobtrusive hard-standing areas set in grass, which will have the necessary sight-lines to catch speeding drivers. It will be put to the Police at the next NAG meeting in January, with a requirement that the Police will put them to good use promptly. The Police presence in Mortimer will then also be an opportunity to carry out enforcement against offenders parking on double yellow lines. After that it should be possible to report progress to the public meeting to be held in St John's Hall on 25th February. This in turn should give impetus to requiring further Police attention to vandalism, drugs etc. Cllr Davies reported that the meetings are held in Burghfield Village Hall which incurs a hire charge of £16.50 per meeting. It was unanimously agreed that these charges should be split between both Parish Councils 50/50 (two meetings a year each at £16.50).

05/200 **To agree to have loose leaf Minutes (from Jan 2001 to December 2005 inclusive) bound by Shaw & Sons at an approximate cost of £80 plus VAT:** Cllr Clark proposed the above and this was seconded by Cllr Philips and carried unanimously. **The Clerk** to action.

05/201 **Finance:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Davies proposed that they be paid; Cllr Shorrocks 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. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £763.75 inc VAT.
- vii. Forbuoys (newspapers) £3.60
- viii. J Morden (expenses) £32.74
- ix. Squires (6 monthly window cleaning Parish Office) £21.00
- x. Society of Local Council Clerks annual subscription £118.00
- xi. SPISE (Sane Planning in the South East) annual subscription £30.00.
- xii. Thames Water (water trough, Fairground) £5.55
- xiii. Impact (Renewal of annual support service for Accounts package) £55.00

05/202 **Correspondence:**

1. A report from Mr W Taylor (LLC Representative for Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council) on the AWE Local Liaison Committee Meeting of the 1st December 2005. A full copy of the report and supporting documents will be held in the Parish Office.
2. A number of circulars and newsletters
3. Copy of letter to WBC from Mrs M Edwards regarding the amount of Lorries in West End Road.
4. Letter from Mrs R Hill regarding the tennis courts. Passed to Fairground Committee to look into.
5. The Berkshire Communicator

05/203 **Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

The Clerk advised that nominations are being sought for the 2006 Community Award

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 12th January 2006 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 09:15 p.m.