



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2007 @ 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors: K Davies, J Morden, P Challis, D Ives, C Lewis, A Philips, S Clark, T Shorrocks, A Smith, G Puddephatt, A Thorpe, S Harding, K Lock (District) and Mrs J Kirk (Clerk).

**Apologies:** P Blagden, G Parry and N Kiley

**Declaration of Interest:** None

07/33 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

**Minutes:**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters Arising:**

07/29 The Clerk reported that a Parish Council digital camera had been purchased at a cost of £172.84 including memory card, carry case, P&P and VAT.

07/28 The Chairman reported that he has now appointed a Trustee (Keith Lock) who will fill the vacancy in the gift of the Parish Council Chairman on the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field Charity.

07/34 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock reported that West Berkshire Council has set its budget for 2007/08. The grant system which improved two years ago has been maintained with an increase of 5% from the Government direct to schools. There is an increase of £3million in the cost of looking after the elderly and overall there is an increase of 2.8% in the Council Tax which equates to approx. £31 at Band 'D'. Any changes in the Fire, Police and Parish Council precepts will be extra. One important piece of legislation has passed Parliament and will await the Chancellors decision about implementing it that is the Planning Gain Supplement. This will centralise the developer contribution system, currently known as Section 106 Agreements. The Government guarantee to return at least 70% of these contributions so West Berkshire Council stands to lose at least £2 million per annum.

07/35 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met once since the last Council Meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2007 when 6 plans were considered.

07/00085/HOUSE 7 The Avenue. Single storey extensions to side and rear of bungalow. No objection.

07/00171/LBC2 Stable Cottage, Mortimer House, Mortimer Lane. Re-roofing existing cottage. No objection.

07/00191/HOUSE The Coach House, 36 St John's Road (Garth House). Demolition of existing garage, erection of new double garage. No objection

07/00210/FUL Garth House, 34 St John's Road. Section 73 relaxation of condition 20 of previous permission 06/01789/FULD requiring the provision of a copy of the DEFRA Licence to the local planning authority.

Object: This was a necessary condition attached to the Planning Permission granted by West Berkshire Council. The developers have given no reason as to why this condition should be relaxed - in effect removed.

07/00259/HOUSE 15-16 Asparagus Close.

1. Removal of existing 1m high metal fence.

2. Erection of a) 1m high metal fence (i.e. moving fence to other side of private drive) b) 1.8m high close boarded wooden fence at end of joint drive.

No objection:

1. To the re-siting of the 1m high fence.

2. To the 1.8m high close boarded fence at the end of the drive providing only that the applicants have written condition from the owners of the adjacent field that they have no objection to access being permanently sealed. (The developers of the estate conduited the water course and provided a 5 barred gate at this point. The gate has been removed and placed by sheep fencing).

07/00190/HOUSE West View, Mortimer Lane. Detached garage. No objection

The following Planning Officers recommendations have been received from West Berkshire Council:

06/02816/HOUSE 19 West End Road. Single Storey side extension. Approval.

07/00011/OUTD Longmoor Cottage, Longmoor Lane. Demolish existing house, erect 4 new two storey houses with single garages. This application has been withdrawn.

General Permitted Development Order 1995:

Cllr Morden reported that following the report last month the Parish Council had concerns about the Permitted Development Order which allowed a substantial building to be erected in the garden of Woodlands, Summerlug notwithstanding earlier refusal by West Berkshire Council for an almost similar building. The Parish Council have written to the Rt. Hon. John Redwood MP and he is referring the matter to the Planning Minister. Nothing further has been heard to date. However, Scottish Southern Electric Power Distribution have written to the Parish Council requesting permission to erect a span overhead conductor from an existing pole to a 'New house' adjacent to Woodlands, Summerlug. The 'games room, gym and shower room' is we must assume, to receive its own metered supply making it independent of 'Woodlands'. The Matter is to be referred to West Berkshire Council Planning Department who will look into whether the owners are in breach of the Development Order.

07/36 **Update on Rural Housing Trust:** Cllr Morden reported that a meeting took place on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2007 with officers from the Rural Housing Trust and 5 possible sites were inspected. The Rural Housing Trust have now short listed three sites which have written to the land owners to enquire whether they would be willing to consider negotiating for one of these 'exception' sites which are just outside the settlement boundary. As such negotiations are price sensitive the location of these sites for affordable housing cannot be disclosed at the present time. It was agreed the Clerk would write to the RHT asking if the locations of the sites could be disclosed to councillors and any such disclosures would of course be subject to the Council's rules on confidentiality.

07/37 **To approve Village Design Statement:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that the final draft of the Village Design Statement had been distributed to all councillors and working party members. A few slight amendments have been made and Cllr Shorrocks proposed that the final document be approved by the Parish Council and sent to West Berkshire Council for their approval and adoption. This was seconded by Cllr Morden and unanimously carried. A vote of thanks was offered to Cllr Shorrocks and all the members of the working party for all their work on the Village Design Statement.

07/38 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that further to minute number 07/21 re Brewery Common ditch a reply has been received from West Berkshire Council informing us that the Public Protection team visited the site and inform that Brewery Common falls into a contaminated land regime. A risk assessment was subsequently carried out by the Public Protection Team which shows the site to be 'low risk'. The Parish Council resolved to accept the results of the Public Protection Team and as it is a low risk agreed to write to West Berkshire again reiterating its request of the 12<sup>th</sup> February, to make the ditch deeper and wider with a small bank to be effective as a deterrent to unauthorised vehicles. Clerk to action.

i. **Update on West End Road Car Park:** No update.

ii. **Update on Brewery Common Registration:** No update.

07/39 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** In the absence of Cllr Blagden Cllr Clark reported that the new sports wall and youth shelter have been extensively used and that the Parish Council is a victim of its own success as the ground is being churned up. Cllr Clark proposed that 30 sq metres of grass matting be installed by Monster Play Systems in front of the goal at a cost of £1,749.80 plus VAT. Cllr Smith seconded this and it was carried by a majority vote of 14 to one. The Clerk to action.

St Mary's School PTA has approached the council about the possibility of hiring part of the Fairground for a mobile ice skating rink. It was agreed that the matter should be referred to the Fairground Committee to consider all aspects in detail who can decide on a detailed recommendation taking into account the usual booking procedures and requirements (managed by The Clerk) together with questions of risk assessment, security, insurance etc.

i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that everything in the play area seems to be fine but the self closing gate still appears to not be closing properly. Cllr Smith suggested that the new multi goal and youth shelter be added to the monthly check list and that they are included in the annual Rospa Safety check in April. Clerk to action.

ii. **Stratfield Mortimer Community Centre update:** See 07/46 below

07/40 **Cemetery:** No report

07/41 **Communications Committee:** No report.

- 07/42 **Street Lighting Working Party update:** Cllr Puddephatt reported that the working party met on the 12<sup>th</sup> February and re-visited where they had got to. The next meeting of the working party is to be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March in the Parish Office.
- 07/43 **Update on proposed car park at Mortimer Station:** No report.
- 07/44 **Report from BMNAG Meeting & Policing Update:** Cllr Ives reported that he, Cllr Clark and Cllr Philips attended the BNAG Meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March. The minutes of the previous BNAG meeting gave the impression that Mortimer were without reservation prepared to proceed with the partially funded PCSO. It was made clear that although provision had been made in the Precept budget for 2007/08 the full agreement to proceed had not been made by the Parish Council. It was underlined that the Parish Council as previously stated in previous meetings would expect that the fully funded PCSO should be in place and that there should be some form of report to identify the time spent in our Parish by the partial funded PCSO. The proposal is that Mortimer and Burghfield would be contributing equal funding. Within the last week a fully funded PCSO, Steve Pengilly, is now covering our NAG area. PC Perran Bateman has now moved full time to Thatcham. PC Nick Evans remains with the PCSO covering our NAG area. In addition the traffic warden is no longer employed and his duties will be covered by the PCSO(s). It was agreed that a meeting be arranged prior to a final decision with a Police Inspector together if possible with Burghfield and Sulhamstead Parish Council representatives to establish the minimum Police establishment in our area. The Association of Chief Police Officers Guidance on Police Community Support Officers states PCSO are 'to reinforce, not replace, our other methods of policing'.
- 07/45 **Willink Leisure Centre Management Committee Update:** Cllr Morden reported that the Head of Cultural Services at West Berkshire Council has recommended to West Berkshire's Executive that Parkwood Leisure Ltd should be identified as the preferred bidder to manage the Council's portfolio of Leisure Centres across the whole district. Parkwood currently manage Northcroft and Cotswold Leisure Centres. The Council will now enter into a period of detailed negotiation with Packwood and West Berkshire Council will need to meet with SMPC, as one of the stakeholders, to outline the implications. Cllr Morden will advise the Parish Council when the meeting has been arranged.
- 07/46 **Report from the Finance & General Purposes Committee:** The Chairman reported that the Finance & General Purposes Committee met on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2007 with the Council's solicitor who will advise on granting the CIC a sub-lease over a portion of the Fairground in order to build a community building. The Parish Council will need consent of the Landlords (Fairground Trustees). Cllr Lewis (a trustee) informed the Parish Council that the trustees had already discussed this and will put their consent in writing.  
The Chairman then read out a minute from the Finance and General Purposes Committee relating to the amount of the match funded grant to be given to the church towards maintenance of St Mary's Churchyard. The council endorsed this proposal and agreed with no dissent that a match funded grant of £800 be given.
- 07/47 **Parish Council Elections 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007:** The Chairman gave details for the forthcoming elections and advised that the Clerk has election packs available. He emphasized the importance of at least 80% of the 15 Parish Council seats being elected in order to qualify for Quality Parish Status.
- 07/48 **Finance:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. The Chairman proposed that they be paid and this was carried unanimously.
- i. Clerk's Salary
  - ii. Inland Revenue (Tax and NI)
  - iii. Clerk's Expenses
  - iv. Custodian's Salary
  - v. RBWM (Pension)
  - vi. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900 inc VAT.
  - vii. Forbuoys Ltd (newspapers) £4.15.
  - viii. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone Parish Office) direct debit £25.46 inc VAT.
  - ix. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £269.84 inc VAT. This consists of £172.84 PC Camera (minute number 07/29, including memory card, carry case, P&P and VAT) and Conference hotel accommodation £97.00 inc VAT (minute number 07/13)

- x. The Post Office (purchase of stamps) £32.00
- xi. R M Weavers (grass cutting Fairground September) £179.78 inc VAT
- xii. Andrew Hazelden (Community Award Plate 2007) £180.00
- xiii. Staples (stationery) £51.79 inc VAT
- xiv. Monster Play Systems (Combination Goal End and Youth Shelter Fairground) £14,499.51 inc VAT
- xv. Open Spaces Society (purchase of book 'Our Common Land') £19.00
- xvi. WGM Ltd (purchase of tools for Fairground) £248.30 inc VAT
- xvii. Butlers Lands Ltd (installation of new double gates etc Fairground) £1664.98 inc VAT
- xviii. Dads Shop Ltd £73.90 inc VAT
- xix. Thames Water (water trough Fairground) £5.80
- xx. Butlers Lands Ltd (removal and disposal of waste from pond clearance) £141.00 inc VAT
- xxi. SLCC (purchase of 4 reference books) £49.95
- xxii. Monster Play Systems (installation of surfacing to protect new goal area) £2,056.02 inc VAT

**07/49 Correspondence:**

- Letter from Mr Loader regarding tipping and motorcycle use on Windmill Common. This was passed to the Roads Footpaths and Commons Committee for investigation. Clerk to reply.
- Letter from the Audit Commission reporting that the five year contract with external auditor Hacker Young had expired but that due to time constraints this has been extended for a further year to cover the financial year 2006/07 prior to a new tendering process being put in place.

**07/50 Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- Cllr Challis reported that there is a potential hazard with the new police enforcement lay-by by The Fairground. Some of the holes in the grass create have not been filled with soil which could pose a hazard to small children and dogs. Clerk to report.
- Blocked Drain in King Street. Cllr Challis again reported that the blocked drain had not been cleared in King Street. The clerk said that she reported this on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January and was given reference number (ELM 50203) and following a further complaint from a elderly resident reported it again on the 6<sup>th</sup> March only to be told by West Berkshire that due to budgetary constraints they will not be able to clear this until after 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- Cllr Challis asked the Clerk to investigate the three missing 'Mortimer' Signs
- Cllr Smith asked the Clerk to report that the footpath and road in The Street could be cleared which is as a result of footpath maintenance work carried out by West Berkshire Council.
- Cllr Ives reminded councillors that there is a public Neighbourhood Watch and Police Meeting in St John's Hall on the 18<sup>th</sup> March at 7:30 pm
- Cllr Ives reported that the SID (Speed Indicator Device) machine is to be used in the next couple of weeks.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at 7:30 p.m.

**Date of Annual Parish Meeting:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 7:30 p.m. in St John's Hall

The Meeting closed at 9:50 p.m.