



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 14th June 2007 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: K Davies (Chairman), P Blagden, P Challis, S Clark, A Colaço, D Ives, C Lewis, M Lock, J Morden, A Philips, T Shorrocks, A Smith, A Thorpe, I Titman-Reade and the Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors: N Kiley and K Lock (District)

Declaration of Interest: Cllr Philips 07/98(x) and Cllr Smith 07/96

07/84 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes:

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 10th May 2007 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

07/80 The Clerk confirmed that she had checked with the Council's insurance company who confirmed that as long as the SID operators are trained they are covered by the PC's public liability insurance.

07/85 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr M Lock reported that as a result of the election on 3rd May the Conservatives increased their majority to 20. The new Chairman of West Berkshire is Andrew Rowles and Graham Jones remains as Council Leader. West Berkshire's new refuse contract is being negotiated with VEOLIA and it is understood that it will include kerbside collections of plastic bottles (but no other plastics). There will be a consultation on traffic routes for heavy vehicles between 1st June and 31st August which will include all Parish Councils. The Street will be closed from the 30th July until 5th August, for connection to the existing foul sewer at the Thomas Homes Site (Mortimer Mens Club). Highways have confirmed that the new Mortimer signs at St Catherine's Hill are in the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer. Cllr Lock was asked to look into the enforcement notice served under section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act on land at 14 Longmoor Land (Agenda Item 06/159 refers).

07/86 **Report from Finance & General Purposes Committee:** The Chairman confirmed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 8th May and the following items were discussed, Community Interest Company (reported at the May meeting 07/74), new Code of Conduct information (reported at the May meeting 07/09), SMPC insurance renewal (reported at the May meeting 07/80), Fairground bookings (see agenda item 07/96 below) and review and approval of SMPC accounts for 2006/2007 (see agenda item 07/97 below).

07/87 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that he had been elected Chairman and Cllr Thorpe Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee for the year to May 2008. The Committee had met twice since the last Council Meeting on the 16th May and the 12th June 2007 when 11 plans were considered.

07/00586/HOUSE 40 The Avenue. Demolition of existing garage, single storey extension to include bedroom etc. room in roof space. No objection.

07/00765/LBC2 North Cottage, Mortimer Lane. Re-roofing of existing cottage. No objection.

07/00826/HOUSE The Coppers, Birch Lane, Mortimer Common. First floor extension over existing carer's accommodation.

07/00849/HOUSE 29 St John's Road. Two storey side extension. No objection.

07/00881/OUTD Land adjacent to 16 The Beavers. Development of a new house attached to existing end terrace. Object - over development. It will create a cramped appearance at the end of this terrace with limited access.

07/00779/LBC2 Mortimer House, Mortimer Lane. Replacement of two existing windows on South elevation and on West elevation. No objection.

07/00897/OUTD Longmoor Cottage, Longmoor Lane. Outline application to demolish existing two storey house and erect three new 1½ storey houses with single garages. No objection to outline application but reserve the right to comment specifically when detailed application is submitted.

07/01019/ADV Thornhill Pharmacy, 24 West End Road. Various signage. No objection.

- 07/00897/OUTD The Lindens, Mortimer Lane. Demolish existing garage and conservatory. Erect two storey side extension. New detached garage. No objection.
- 07/01019/ADV Land adjacent to St Catherine's, Sweetzers Piece (new house recently approved). Single storey garage. No objection.

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

- 07/00516/HOUSE 22 Stephens Road. Two storey side and rear extension. Approved.
- 07/00586/HOUSE 40 The Avenue. Demolish garage, erect single storey side extension to include new garage etc.
- 07/00637/HOUSE 43 College Piece. Change 2 bedroomed semi-detached house into 2 one bedroom maisonettes. Approved.
- 07/00645/HOUSE 12 St John's Road. Replacement flat roof and single storey extension to fitness room. Approved.
- 07/00578/FULD Mowbray House, Mowbray's Hill. Annex over garage with deck access. Retrospectively approved.
- 07/00588/HOUSE 17 The Avenue. Single storey side and rear extension. Approved.
- 07/00826/HOUSE The Coppers, Birch Lane. First floor extension over existing accommodation. Refused.
- 07/00849/HOUSE 29 St John's Road. Two storey side extension. Approved.

Notice of Appeal Decision: 06/01853.OUTD, 56 The Avenue. The erection of a two storey 4 bedroom house on a segregated plot of 0.1 hectares. The appeal has been dismissed.

Notice of a Pending Appeal to the Secretary of State: 06/01625/FUL. Car park for school and church on land adjacent to St Mary's Church. The appeal is against WBC's decision to refuse permission. This is to be decided on the basis of written statements and a site visit. The Parish Council's comments are part of WBC's file.

S.106 Developer Contributions: A letter has been received from the Head of Highways and Transport setting out the procedure by which contributions are obtained and subsequently incorporated into the Capital Programme together with the constraints on their use.

1. Small sites (less than 10 properties) - standard conditions are:
 - a) Improvement to pedestrian, cycle, bus stop facilities and highway safety improvements all within the named Parish.
 - b) Bus services in West Berkshire.
2. Larger developments (10 or more properties). A full transport impact assessment is normally required, site specific requirements are invariably incorporated within the S106 agreement. But conditions are worded in such a way as to give a degree of flexibility in the use of funding.

Parish Bids for inclusion in the Capital Programme: With more Parish Plans coming on stream the individual expectations are becoming clearer. In October each year the Parish will be provided with standard Bid Forms for completion and submission by a specific date to be announced. To enable the bids to be accurately assessed and costed they must be realistic, clearly defined and scoped.

Lawful Development Certificates: A company has been distributing 'flyers' to households implying that usual planning policy restrictions can be ignored. Following a recent use of such a certificate the Parish Council wrote to John Redwood MP and a definitive letter has now been received from Baroness Andrews, Under-Secretary of State. 'The purpose of the Lawful Development Certificate is to provide the possibility of obtaining a statutory document to confirm existing or proposed use. Where an unauthorised use of land can be shown to have continued for ten years or four years where a building has been used as a single dwelling house without planning enforcement action having been taken, that use gains immunity and becomes lawful. The 'flyer' raises household expectations which may well be unfounded.

- 07/88 **Update on planning application for new car park at Mortimer Station:** Cllr Morden reported that the application for a new car park at Mortimer Station had been withdrawn but will be re-submitted when more information is available.
- 07/89 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's solicitors have confirmed that the absolute (freehold) title of the land at Brewery Common has been registered under title number BK38527. Cllr Shorrocks said that there was no report but a committee meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 19th June.
- 07/90 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Blagden reported that the Committee met on the 4th June and that he had been elected Chairman for the coming year. A review of the condition of the trees on the Fairground is to be carried out and four dead silver birch trees are to be cleared as a priority. A request for a two day music festival in August for school bands across Berkshire was discussed. Cllr Thorpe proposed that the Parish Council support this event on the Fairground subject to the usual booking conditions and fees but that it should be restricted to the Grazing Area. This was seconded

by Cllr Challis and carried unanimously. Clerk to action. There is a project to encourage more volunteers for the Fairground working parties. A pond dip with the Pang and Kennet Valley is planned for the 3rd or 4th weekend in July. A pond clearance is provisionally booked for September and heath land management in October.

- i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that the Rospa annual safety report had been received. It is a good report. The gates need some attention and might need replacing. There are some gaps in the safety surface tiles have been highlighted as a low-to-medium risk and the Council needs to consider providing a road sign. Cllr Smith also reported that some of the wooden steps on the multi play need replacing. The Clerk to action.
 - ii. **Update on Stratfield Mortimer Community Centre Sub-lease:** The Chairman reported that the CIC had asked for a Letter of Intent to grant a sub-lease. This was agreed, Clerk to Action.
- 07/91 **Cemetery:** Cllr Lewis reported that the Committee met on the 11th June and that he had been elected Chairman for the coming year. The meeting started with a site visit and he said that there is concern over the quality of the mowing in the Cemetery and that this is to be reviewed after the contractor has carried out the next cut and a letter sent. The garden of remembrance is to be removed as soon as possible and a letter has been agreed and sent to Mr Tucker regarding his concern for the rose planted in memory of his mother. There is as yet no update from Englefield on the Cemetery extension. The Cemetery regulations are to be reviewed and the date of the next Committee meeting is the 1st October 2007
- 07/92 **Communications Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that the Newsletter went out as scheduled to every household. Hydro Logic who have printed the newsletter for the last few years have said that they will be unable to continue this due to pressure of work. The Clerk is to send a letter of thanks to Hydro Logic. A vote of thanks was offered to Cllr Blagden for his hard work.
- 07/93 **Co-Option of Members onto Committees:** It was confirmed that Cllr Smith has been appointed onto the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee and the Fairground Trees and Amenities Committee. Cllr Blagden was appointed as the Parish Council representative on the Wokefield Advisory Committee.
- 07/94 **Update on Street Lighting:** In the absence of Cllr Kiley the Clerk reported the details on the public consultation meeting to be held in St John's Hall on Wednesday 27th June 2007.
- 07/95 **Update on Willink Leisure Centre Agreement:** Further to minute number 07/78 The Chairman reported that the Willink Leisure Centre Agreement between Berkshire County Council, Newbury District Council, Burghfield Parish Council, Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council, Sulhamstead Parish Council and the governing body of the Willink School, dated 14.8.96, replacing a prior Agreement dated 1.4.96, is effective for 53 years i.e. until 14.8.2049. Early withdrawal before that date is penalised by a requirement to give 12 months' written notice and pay a specified amount of compensation.
- 07/96 **To review all Fairground Bookings/Users including location and payment:** Cllr Clark said that the Parish Council need a sensible coherent policy to cover all Fairground bookings (this is to include payments by the Cricket Club). It was proposed by Cllr Morden that the Finance and General Purposes Committee draw up this policy and make a recommendation to the full council. This was seconded by Cllr Shorrocks and put to the vote and carried by 8 votes to 3 (with 2 abstentions, Cllr Lock and Cllr Smith). Cllr Challis then proposed that in future the funfair be restricted to the Grazing Area and this was seconded by Cllr Morden and put to the vote and carried by 12 votes to 2. Cllr Clark warned the council that this could reduce the budgeted income for the Fairground by one third if the funfair declines to attend. The Clerk is to write to the Fair.
- Cllr Lewis asked that it be minuted that he had asked for an agenda item on this but it had been refused and he said that it is gross misconduct. During the debate Cllr Lewis accused Cllr Clark of being mischievous and the Chairman ruled him out of order.
- 07/97 **To Approve and Confirm that the Accounts for the Year 2006/2007 present fairly the financial position of Stratfield Mortimer Parish council:**
Copies of the full Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Accounts, Audit Return and supporting papers for the year ended 31 March 2007 were circulated to all members prior to the meeting. The Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 8th May 2007 and reviewed the accounts and all the audit papers and recommended the approval of the 2006/2007 accounts. The Clerk as Responsible Finance Officer read out the details contained in the eight points in Section 2 The Annual Governance

Statement (previously Statement of Assurance) Section of the Local Councils in England and Wales Annual Return for the year ended 31.3.07 and the declaration which said 'We acknowledge as Members of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council our responsibility for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts and for the council's internal controls and confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to Section 1 (The Council's Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2007'. This included the end of year Bank Reconciliation and the Details of Variation Comments Sheet. Cllr Shorrock proposed that the accounts and supporting documents for the Year 2006/2007 be approved, seconded by Cllr Thorpe and it was unanimously resolved. The Chairman and the RFO duly signed the accounts. **The Clerk** is to send the Annual Return to the External Auditor (Messrs Hacker Young) and in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1998 and, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, display Notices of Appointment of date of the Electors' Rights for the annual return on the two Parish Council Notice Boards to advise any interested person that the accounts are available for inspection (on prior application to The Clerk). Cllr Shorrock also proposed a vote of thanks to The Clerk with regard to the preparation of the accounts and this was carried unanimously.

07/98 **Finance - to agree accounts for payment:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. The Chairman proposed that they be paid, this was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and carried unanimously.

- i. Clerk's Salary.
- ii. H.M. Revenue and Customs (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. Martin McColl Ltd (newspapers) £7.85 (paid by credit card).
- viii. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone Parish Office) direct debit £26.67 inc VAT.
- ix. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £8.43 (postage).
- x. Ian Philips (grass cutting Cemetery) £174.23 inc VAT.
- xi. Richard Weavers (grass cutting Fairground) not received.
- xii. Bridgewood Landscape Services (grass cutting Alfred Palmer Field) £160.00.
- xiii. Dads Shop Ltd £183.20 inc VAT.
- xiv. Playground Safety Ltd (Rospa) Report £125.73 inc VAT.
- xv. Viking Direct (stationery) £53.96 inc VAT.
- xvi. Thames Water (water trough Fairground) Direct Debit £6.18.
- xvii. Mr Nickless (updating Community Award Board St John's Hall) £39.60.
- xviii. Monster Play Systems £8,336.39.

07/99 **Correspondence:**

- AWE LLC Report from the meeting held on the 7th June 2007. Mr B Taylor sent in his final report (as Cllr Ives has been appointed as the Council's representative). A copy of the report will be sent to all councillors and a copy held in the Parish Office.
- An invitation from Thames Valley Police to a Stakeholder Forum on the 26th June 2007. Cllr Ives to attend.

07/100 **Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- The Clerk reported that Mr John Hannawin had advised that his four year term as the Parish Council appointed Governor at St John's School concludes in July and that he will not be offering himself for re-election. This is to be put on the Agenda for the July Meeting.
- Cllr Shorrock reported that West Berkshire Council had advised him that day that the consultation on the Village Design Statement had been completed and all comments are favourable and they are to recommend it as a model of what a VDS should be. A couple of small amendments are to be made to the final document, a map and information on the archaeological sites are to be inserted. The Village Design Statement is to be presented by Cllr Shorrock to the Area Forum on the 18th July.
- Cllr Colaço asked about the vanishing Mortimer West End sign (see 07/85 above). Cllr Lock is to arrange for a letter to be sent from West Berkshire Council highways explaining why the

sign was removed.

- The Clerk was asked to report to West Berkshire Council regarding the amount of litter on the public footpath at the back of McColls.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 12th July 2007 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 10:05 p.m.