



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Unadopted Minutes of Meeting

held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2007 @ 7.30 p.m.

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

**Apologies:** Councillors: None.

**Declaration of Interest:** Cllr Philips 07152 (ix).

07/140 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

**Minutes:**

The Minutes of the Meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments. Cllr Clark stated that he had not been in contact with any parish councillor from the 28<sup>th</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 and therefore the statements in the Part II Confidential Section, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph page 8 and 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph page 10 were incorrect.

**Matters Arising:**

The Chairman proposed the following resolution

In Minute 07/96 (14<sup>th</sup> June 2007) a recorded statement by Cllr Lewis included the words 'gross misconduct'. The Council requires it to be stated publicly that those words are unwarranted and unacceptable. A written apology received from Cllr Lewis, included the words 'I withdraw my comment about gross misconduct and unreservedly apologise' and this is to be minuted and the words 'gross misconduct' expunged from the Council's Minutes.

This resolution was carried.

07/141 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Mollie Lock reported that the panel of Planning Inspectors who conducted the examination in public of the Draft South East Plan have recommended that the number of houses to be built in the South East up to 2026 should be increased by 10.7% to 640,160. Specifically in West Berkshire they propose an increase from 10,500 to 18,000 an increase of 71.4% and they endorse the scheme to build 7,500 houses in the floodplain north of the M4 in Pingewood to meet the needs of 'The Reading Growth Diamond'. If the site of 7,500 dwellings is not agreed to these houses will have to be spread across the District but outside the 75% which is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

At the Kennet and Pang Area Forum on Tuesday it was agreed to include the construction of a continuous footpath along St Catherine's Hill in the 2008/09 programme or sooner if funding permits. The Parish Council's request to erect bollards outside the 'greengrocer side' of Budgens was also agreed.

West Berkshire Council appears to have changed its housing policy without consulting Members and has lost the confidence of the Rural Housing Trust who claim that where Parish Plans favour small village developments on Section 106 sites for local people, the Council now does not give those local residents sufficient extra points to give them priority now will it allow the local Parish Council to know who is being allocated those houses. Cllr Lock is trying to find out more information on this but in the meantime her advice to any Parish Council considering such a scheme is do not proceed.

Cllr Morden proposed that the Parish Council write to the Rural Housing Trust (cc West Berkshire Council) re low cost housing on rural exception sites.

07/142 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Committee had met once since the last Council Meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2007 when 4 plans were considered.

07/01928/REM 4 The Crescent. Erection of detached dwelling on plot to rear (fronting Spring Lane). No objection.

07/01945/OUTD Longmoor Cottage, Longmoor Lane. Demolition of existing house and garage. Erection of 3 new 1 1/2 storey houses with garages. No objection.

07/01992/HOUSE 7 St Mary's Road. 2 storey rear extension and conservatory. No objection.

07/01995/HOUSE Stanton, 63 Victoria Road. Side garage and utility (all single storey) No objection.

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

- 07/01548/FUL Garth House, 34 St John's Road. Section 73 – removal of condition 20 earlier permission 07/00210/FULD requiring copy of DEFRA licence. It was thought that some wild life species were at risk as a result of the proposed demolition of Garth House but it has been confirmed by Natural England that the licence is not now required and W.B.C.'s Ecologist has not objected. The recommendation is therefore for Approval.
- 07/01634/HOUSE 16 Mortimer Hall, The Street. Conservatory. Approval.
- 07/01636/HOUSE Oakfield Cottage, The Street. Two storey side extension. Approval.
- 07/01670/HOUSE 45 Stephens Firs. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor extension above existing kitchen. New garage. Approval.
- 07/01697/FUL Horse and Groom, The Street. Partially covered pergola to existing ramped side entrance. Approval.

Tree Preservation Order: Land at Oakwood, St Catherine's Hill. West Berkshire Council have placed a TPO on one oak at the north west corner (close to the road).

07/143 **Update on Station Car Park:** Cllr Kiley advised that he has been speaking to First Great Western and ABCOA regarding the proposed new car park. The Parish Council will take into account the concerns the planning officer expressed before re-submitting the planning application. First Great Western have indicated that they may contribute towards the cost of the project especially in view of the disabled provisions.

07/144 **Update on Village Design Statement Adoption:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that he and Cllr Ives attended the Eastern Area Forum on the 9<sup>th</sup> October to formally present the Village Design Statement for adoption. The Forum explicitly requested that the community's desire to maintain itself as a separate village entity be incorporated into the plan. The following text has been inserted into the Village Design Statement:

Chapter 4 The Setting Today: 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph on Landscape and Environment ...'and that the residents expressed a strong desire to maintain development within the existing 'settlement boundary.'

Chapter 8 Recommendations and Guidance: Paragraph No 2 (Guidelines for Development)

'2. Residents expressed a keen desire to maintain the separation and individuality of the village and are anxious to contain building and development within the existing 'settlement boundary', thus maintaining the Greenfield and rural aspects of the approaches to the village itself, which, it is felt, do much to establish the character of the community.'

Cllr Mollie Lock confirmed that these amendments were in order and that the Forum's endorsement of the Village Design Statement would now be unequivocal. The Clerk is to forward the amended version to West Berkshire Council Planning Department. The Clerk is to also have 4 colour copies printed of the final Village Design Statement for retention in the Parish Office.

Cllr Shorrocks proposed that the Clerk write to all non parish council members of the working party and thank them for their work.

07/145 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that the Committee met on the 8<sup>th</sup> October. The main points covered at the meeting were

- The new footpath at Hammonds Heath.
- West Berkshire Council have written saying they are currently working on improving ease of access to the public rights of way to enable more members of the public to make use of them. WBC propose replacing stiles with kissing gates on the 3 mile circular walk (this would include all the stiles on the footpath from Hammonds Heath to Wheats Farm) and sought the Parish Council's view. The Committee unanimously agreed to this and a reply has been sent to West Berkshire.
- Members of the Committee met with a representative of West Berkshire Council to look at parking issues in Mortimer. It was agreed that the installation of bollards close to the road edge outside the greengrocer side of Budgens will be considered by the Kennet and Pang Area Forum.
- Renewal of yellow/white lines. West Berkshire have confirmed that these will be renewed later in the month.
- Parking outside St Mary's School. West Berkshire Council confirmed that following their letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> April they haven't yet carried out their review as they have a busy work programme but will be in touch in due course. It was agreed that in the meantime Cllrs Smith and Clark would visit St Mary's School to explore further options on the parking situation.

- Car Parking outside St John's Church. This will be raised as an Agenda item at next month's main parish council meeting.

Cllr Shorrocks advised that following the resolution at the September meeting to agree to option 1 for a new footpath in Hammonds Heath that West Berkshire Council had reported their initial findings and information from the Safety Auditor. The Committee recommended that layout 1 in conjunction with modifications to the island (where war memorial stands) be agreed. This will reduce the speed of traffic entering Hammonds Heath by making it one way for traffic approaching from The Street and from Hammonds Heath. This would also enable the provision of a future footway link to the existing footway on The Street. Cllr Shorrocks proposed that layout 1 in conjunction with the island modifications in conjunction with layout 1. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and put to the vote. 11 in favour and 3 against. Motion carried. Clerk to advise West Berkshire. Cllr Shorrocks is to discuss these proposals with the British Legion.

Cllr Shorrocks also proposed that the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee recommend to the Parish Council that it ask West Berkshire Council to look at traffic calming measures around the war memorial island and Hammonds Heath Road areas. This was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and put to the vote with 10 in favour, 3 against and one abstention. Clerk to action.

07/146 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Blagden reported that there was a disappointing show of support for the pond clearance held on the 6<sup>th</sup> October as only two people attended in addition to the representative from the Pang and Kennet Valley Trust. Cllr Blagden hopes to re-arrange a further pond clearance for another date when hopefully more councillors and parishioners will be able to help. Cllr Blagden advised that the Parish Council had been approached by the Prince's Trust who is willing to help with projects on The Fairground that would normally be contracted out. He will give an up-date at the next meeting.

i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that the play area is fine and that he and the Clerk met with Nick Olof of Fieldwork Rest and Play to look at the self closing gates in the play area to decide whether or not to replace them. Mr Olof recommended that they be repaired. It was agreed to ask him to do this and also to replace all (18) wooden steps/blocks on the multi play unit.

ii. **CIC Update:** Cllr Smith declared an interest and abstained from any decision (as he is a Director of the CIC). The Chairman reported that the draft amended sub lease had been received from Michelle Sherman, the Parish Council's Solicitor, with the suggested amended text from the CIC. It was agreed that The Chairman would review the amendments and report back to the council.

The Chairman proposed that the council charge a peppercorn rent for the sub lease but ask that the CIC pay all reasonable costs for the setting up of the sub lease. This was put to the vote and unanimously agreed.

The Chairman also proposed that Isis Surveyors Ltd of Tadley be instructed to carry out a survey of the precise area to be the subject of the sub-lease and prepare a plan to the standard required by the Land Registry. This was put to the vote and unanimously agreed. Clerk to action.

07/147 **Cemetery:** Cllr Lewis reported that the Cemetery Committee met on the 1<sup>st</sup> October mainly to look at repairing the Cemetery drain/ditch which was badly damaged during the storm in July. 3 options had been considered. T.B. Estates have subsequently recommended to repair and reinstate the existing pipe and dig out the top of the stream which is currently not piped.

Cllr Lewis proposed that T B Estates quotation be accepted at a cost of £1,400 plus VAT and this was seconded by Cllr Kiley and unanimously agreed. The Clerk to action.

07/148 **Communications Committee:** Cllr Blagden reported that the next newsletter is to be developed at the end of this month and he is obtaining quotations for printing.

07/149 **Report from Finance & General Purposes Committee:** The Chairman reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October and the main points considered were:

- Because of continued vandalism to the tennis court fence the committee recommended that as a short term solution a heras fence panel be bolted to the existing fence and posts at a cost of £150 plus VAT and this was agreed. Clerk to action. In the long term the council is to consider completely renewing the existing fence.

- As agreed in Minute Number 07/93 of the June Minutes a working party has been set up to set a policy for Fairground usage and charges. The working party had its first meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> October and will report back in due course.
- A meeting to discuss the 2008/2009 budget has been set for Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.
- The wording of the SMPC S137 Grant Application Form has been slightly amended and is now more comprehensive and covers more detail.
- Update on the CIC sub lease (see 07/146 (ii) above).

07/150 **Update on appointment of PCSO and Community Policing:** Cllr Ives reported that the partially funded PCSO (Steve Pengilly) is now fully operational. The first of the monthly update meetings took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> October between the three parish councils, the PCSO and Sgt Barry Walker. A chain of command for the PCSO was established and a reporting system to establish whether each parish is getting their fair value for money. This system will also identify the high/low risk times. Update meetings are to be held monthly at the Parish Office with every third meeting to be held at Pangbourne Police Station with senior police officers.

07/151 **Report from Willink JMC Meeting:** Cllr Morden reported that the new contract for West Berkshire Council's new Leisure facilities is now with Packwood Leisure. The first meeting with the new management was held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007. Cllr Royce Longton was elected Chair and Cllr John Morden vice-Chair for the year 07/08. In the short time that Parkwood have been in control there exudes a feeling of efficiency and smartness, cleaner, more staff and a general air of moving forward. The manager's report was crisp and to the point. Hopefully this is a good omen for the future. Attendance, which had slipped, is already improving.

07/152 **Finance: To agree accounts for payment for October:** The Clerk reported that Cllr Philips had on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007 checked the PAYE contributions, pension contributions for months 1 to 5 2007/08 for both the Clerk and Custodian and confirmed that everything is in order. 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. 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. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone Parish Office) direct debit £27.51 inc VAT.
- viii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £41.10 The Train Line (Conference Coventry) £39.10, service charge £2.00.
- ix. Ian Philips (grass cutting Cemetery) £174.23 inc VAT.
- x. Richard Weavers (grass cutting Fairground August) £186.13 inc VAT.
- xi. Bridgewood Landscape Services (grass cutting Alfred Palmer Field) £160.00.
- xii. West Berkshire Council (quarterly photocopying charges) £52.23 inc VAT.
- xiii. British Telecom Direct Debit (quarterly line rental Parish Office) £57.42 inc VAT.
- xiv. Newbury Weekly News (Printers) Ltd (invoice for advert for Code of Conduct) £166.03 inc VAT.
- xv. i-next Ltd (two year domain name renewal) £76.38.
- xvi. Burghfield Village Hall (hall rental for BMNAG Meeting) £19.00.
- xvii. T B Estates Ltd (cutting back ditches Hammonds Heath/Windmill Road) £158.63 inc VAT.
- xviii. Dads Shop Ltd £21.30 inc VAT.

07/153 **Correspondence:**

- Letter received from Mortimer Methodist Church re Hall and Church Security and new procedures. The Clerk will send a copy of this letter to all councillors and make a poster to be displayed on the entrance door for each meeting advising any parishioners wishing to attend the meeting to ring the door bell to gain admittance.
- Letter received from Mr S P Lansley regarding the proposed new footpath on Hammonds Heath was read out by the Chairman. It was agreed a letter of apology would be sent

expressing regret for any misunderstanding.

**07/154 Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- The Clerk reminded councillors of the Remembrance Day Service/Parade on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 10.45am at the War Memorial.
- Cllr Smith reported that further to minute number 07/139 regarding verge damage and storage of materials at the entrance of The Bevers that he had been advised that the builder will tidy up and make good the verge at the end of the building work and it was in the Planning Consent that the verge could be used.
- Cllr Shorrock asked for a future agenda item to discuss the Parish Council Policy towards Fairfield Park, West End Road and suggested that West Berkshire Council Enforcement Officer and Thames Valley Police be asked to attend.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 10:05 p.m.