



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 11 December 2008 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: T Shorrocks (Chairman), D Morsley, K Davies, P Blagden, D Ives, A Philips, J Morden, P Challis, A Thorpe, R Barker (until 8:05pm) and the Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors: A Smith, A Colaço, S Clark, N Kiley and M Lock,

Declaration of Interest: Cllr Philips 08/179 (x)

08/165 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting of 13th November 2008 and were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

08/157 (Flooding) Further to this Minute the Clerk advised that West Berkshire Council have placed 55 tons of rock and gabions in the Foudry Brook to fill the deep hole under Tun Bridge which was caused by water during the floods in recent years. Mr Mayes has advised that the scour is a function of water velocity, shape of the bridge abutments and the material comprising the stream bed (clays, sands and gravels) and by filling this hole it should help prevent future stream bed erosion. West Berkshire Council has not carried out the works proposed at the flooding meeting on the 2nd September 2008 including replacement of the damaged flap valve. Mr Mayes advises that if the flap valve is not repaired and the stream bed is not cleaned out the Foudry Brook will flood the roadway in the next high flow or storm rainfall. The Clerk was asked to consult West Berkshire as to when the flap valve is going to be fitted.

08/166 **Planning:** Cllr Morden the Clerk reported that the Planning Committee had not met since the November meeting.

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

08/01429/FULD Land to rear of 33 St John's Road, new two bedroom detached dwelling. Refused: The proposal is considered to be cramped and out of keeping with the character of the area with an unsatisfactory level of amenity space.

08/01893/HOUSE 77 West End Road, conservatory to rear. Permitted.

08/167 **Update on Station Car Park Planning Application:** Cllr Morden reported that as agreed previously the Parish Council is to proceed with an appeal against West Berkshire Council's refusal to grant planning permission. Cllr Morden has obtained information from the Planning Inspectorate and advised that there are three ways of progressing an appeal

1. Written representation.
2. Informal hearing.
3. Inquiry.

He then outlined the above and recommended that the Council proceeds with a 'Hearing'. Cllr Morden proposed that Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council lodge an appeal by 'Hearing Procedure' against West Berkshire Council's refusal to grant Planning Permission for a car park with 100 spaces to the East of Mortimer Station. This was seconded by Cllr Davies and put to the vote. 8 in favour and 2 against so therefore carried. Cllr Morden will now complete all the necessary paperwork which will be put before the Chairman and any other interested councillors.

08/168 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Ives reported that the Committee had not met since the last meeting. It appeared that West Berkshire Council had not carried out the promised work so this was chased and now a small amount of the work has been carried out. The footpath in the Street has now been widened/cut back and resurfaced and the Parish Council is pleased and thankful for this work and asked the Clerk to write to WBC to request that they continue to maintain this path to its current standard. The Clerk was also asked to request that West Berkshire cuts back and widens in the same way the heavily used path on the south side of the Street between St Mary's School and the railway

station. The Clerk was also asked to obtain an up-date from West Berkshire Council regarding the outstanding proposed Hammonds Heath footway.

08/169 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Blagden reported that further to the review of the trees on the Fairground and Windmill Common by WBC Tree Officer quotations are now being sought for the work recommended. Discussions are still taking place with several volunteer groups and Groundwork Thames Valley carried out a project on the 10th December with further dates being planned for 2009. A vote of thanks was offered to Cllr Blagden.

Cllr Barker left the meeting.

i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** In the absence of Cllr Smith the Clerk read out his report which said with the exception of the items mentioned previously i.e. the rocker footrest, the log step on the multiplay unit and the self closing gate to the east of the area (these repairs are now in hand with the contractor) the play area is in pretty good shape and continues to be much used.

ii. **To agree installation of new wet pour safety surface beneath junior swings and overhead ladder sections of the play area (as per recommendation of the RoSPA Report) at an estimated cost not exceeding £6,500 plus VAT**

Cllr Blagden proposed that SMPC install the above safety surfaces in line with the recommendation by RoSPA at a cost of £5,020 plus VAT. This was seconded by Cllr Ives and unanimously agreed. Clerk to action.

iii. **Update on the new Community Building and Sub-Lease:** The Chairman reported that the Agreement for Lease has now been signed by all parties.

08/170 **Cemetery:** No report.

i. **To agree recommendation from the Cemetery Committee to adopt the up-dated Cemetery Regulations, Forms and Fees (previously circulated), by virtue of the powers under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, to be effective from 1st January 2009:**

The Cemetery Committee met on the 10th November 2008 and recommends that Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council adopt the updated Cemetery Regulations, Notice of Interment, Memorial Application Form and revised scale of fees, all to be effective from the 1st January 2009. Cllr Thorpe proposed that Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council adopt the above Regulations, Forms and Fees (previously circulated to all members). This was seconded by Cllr Challis and unanimously resolved. The Clerk to action.

08/171 **To adopt, without modification, the Model Publication Scheme as developed and approved by the Information Commissioner in line with Section 20 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (previously circulated):**

Cllr Shorrock from the Chair proposed that SMPC adopts the above Scheme and instructs the Clerk to take the necessary action for the Parish Council to comply with the above Model Publication Scheme and this was unanimously resolved.

08/172 **To approve Precept figure recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee for the year 2009/2010 (previously circulated):**

Cllr Shorrock from the Chair proposed that the Council accept The Finance and General Purposes Committee recommendation of a Precept budget requirement for the financial year 09/10 of £86,489 (an increase of £4,487 on 08/09). The calculation for 09/10 on an estimated tax base figure (supplied by WBC) will be approx £51.40 per Tax Band D household (£49.53 for 08/09). This was unanimously resolved. The Clerk to complete the Local Government Finance Act Form and return to West Berkshire Council.

08/173 **Update on Internal Audit:**

The RFO reported that Mr Alan Harland (SMPC's newly appointed Internal Auditor) carried out a very thorough first six monthly audit (7 hours) on the 12th November 2008 and apart from 4 minor recommendations found everything to be in order. These recommendations were discussed at the Finance and General Purposes Committee on the 18th November 2008 and have now been actioned. The Committee offered a vote of thanks to the RFO for keeping the accounts in good order.

08/174 **Update on Community Policing/BMNAG:**

BMNAG: Cllr Ives reported that the last meeting was on the 18th November 2008. No new NAG Secretary has yet been appointed.. West Berkshire Council do not now attend NAG Meetings unless asked in advance so meetings are not so effective.

Community Policing: Cllr Ives reported that representatives from Burghfield, Mortimer and Sulhamstead met with PCSO Innes at the Parish Office on the 4th December where crime figures and updates were given and discussed.

08/175 **To agree renewal of the shared partially funded PCSO Contract Terms and conditions between Thames Valley Police and Burghfield, Stratfield Mortimer and Sulhamstead Parish Councils with effect from 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2011, subject to the condition that Burghfield and Sulhamstead do the same:** Cllr Ives reported that the new contract to the 31st March 2011 had been received from Thames Valley Police for signature by all three Parish Councils. This new contract was compared with the existing agreement and it was found that one important paragraph had been omitted in the new contract:-

(3) Information to be available to each of the Parish Councils regarding the time and duration spent in each area over the course of a month by the special service PCSO, the time spent being in proportion to each Council's funding.

It was therefore agreed that the contract would not be signed and that a letter would be sent to Thames Valley Police asking for the omitted paragraph to be reinstated and for new corrected contracts to be prepared in time for the Parish Council Meeting on the 8th January 2009. It was also agreed to advise the Police in the letter that without the clause being included the Parish Council would have to carefully consider whether or not it renews the contract. Clerk to action.

08/176 **Update on Parish Plan Refresh:** Cllr Morsley reported that the refresh group has had help from Sarah Ward from CAWB and has now planned the steps that will lead to the new Action Plan.

1. There will be a public event on the 7th February (venue to be agreed). The format will be a brief introductory talk followed by 4 or 5 groups discussing a particular area such as Village Amenities, Village Activities, Traffic and Transport, Energy Conservation with a facilitator recording their views and ideas.
2. Working Parties will be formed from this event; their first task, which will take one month, is to develop the questions for the questionnaire.
3. The questionnaire is planned to be with residents for 2 weeks about the middle of April.
4. Greenham Common Trust have kindly agreed to help design, produce and photocopy the questionnaire in full consultation with the group at no charge. They will also perform the analysis of the results on the same basis.
5. The results of the questionnaire will be made public at an event in the second half of May. The working parties will then continue to form the new Action Plan.

08/177 **Update on Parish Emergency Planning:** Cllr Blagden reported that an initial meeting was held on the 2nd December and Cllrs Lock, Blagden, Philips and Ives attended. Sample planning documents were discussed and it was agreed to ask Caroline Muirson, Head of Emergency Planning at West Berkshire Council to attend prior to a Parish Council meeting either in January or February 2009 to advise all councillors about the Emergency Planning process.

08/178 **Report from District Councillors:** In the absence of the District Councillors the Clerk read out their report, the main points being that at the Eastern Area Planning Committee Meeting at the end of November it was agreed to allow the application to establish a waste processing plant at the Old Padworth Sidings Site. The residents of Lower Padworth could eventually have some 86,000 vehicles, mostly HGVs going over the narrow railway bridge in Padwoth Lane every year. The Plant will be working 7 days a week for up to 17 hours daily. The local PAWS have said they will ask for a judicial review and there is to be a Public Inquiry over the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order on the site. West Berkshire Council's financial situation is causing some concern, last year it had an overspend of some £200,000 for the whole year but in the first six months of this year the overspend is £819,000.

08/179 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for December:**

In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Philips proposed that these be paid, this was seconded by Cllr Morsley and was carried unanimously.

- i. Clerk's Salary.
- ii. H M Revenue & Customs (Tax and NI).
- iii. Clerk's Expenses.

- iv. Custodian's Salary.
- v. Temporary Custodian's Salary.
- vi. RBWM BACS Payment (Pension).
- vii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900 inc VAT.
- viii. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone Parish Office) direct debit £26.66 inc VAT.
- ix. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £10.19 (Forbuoys Ltd £8.19 and £2.00 Service Charge)
- x. Ian Philips (spraying paths Cemetery) £58.75 inc VAT.
- xi. Alan Harland (Internal Audit Fee) £311.38 inc VAT.
- xii. SLCC (annual subscription) £149.00.
- xiii. West Berkshire Council (supply and installation of 2 new dog bins Fairground) £419.65.
- xiv. Dads Shop Ltd £29.10 inc VAT.
- xv. Staples Ltd (stationery) £65.19 inc VAT
- xvi. Thames Water (water trough Fairground) Direct Debit £10.27
- xvii. Richard Weavers (grass cutting Fairground Sept and Oct) £648.85 inc VAT.
- xviii. T B Estate Services Ltd (repair to kissing gate beside Windmill Court) £89.30 inc VAT

08/180 Correspondence:

- WBC re District Parish Conference Agenda items for 2009

08/181 Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:

- Deadline for Agenda items for the next meeting will be 10am Tuesday 30th December 2008.
- To consider leasing the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field from the Trustees so that it could be run and managed by the Parish Council.
- The next Newsletter is planned for distribution over the weekend 24th/25th January

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 8th January 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 9:15pm