



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 8th January 2009 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: T Shorrocks (Chairman), D Morsley, K Davies, P Blagden, D Ives, J Morden, P Challis, M Lock, R Barker, A Smith, A Colaço, S Clark and the Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors: A Thorpe and A Philips

Declaration of Interest: None

09/01 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting of 11th December 2008 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

- **08/169(ii)** The Clerk confirmed that the wet pour safety surfacing will be carried out during the week commencing 26th January 2009.
- **08/168** Further to the Parish Council's letter to West Berkshire Council Mr May, Highways Manager, replied saying that in order to maintain footway width 'siding' has been added to the safety inspection reporting form. This will ensure that the footways in question are inspected/actioned on a routine basis. With regards to the footpath section on The Street between St. Mary's School and the Station, this section will be assessed along with similar sections of footway across the district for possible inclusion in next year's programme of works. Until West Berkshire's budget has been set they are unable to provide a positive response at this time but will arrange for this section to be inspected and made safe as required.
- **08/172** The Clerk reported that Dr B Baldwin, Chair of Burghfield and Mortimer Friday Club, has written and informed the Parish Council that the Club will not now need the agreed grant for 09/10 from the Parish Council as unfortunately the Club discontinued at the end of December, this was due to the very sudden and unexpected death of the worker allocated from Community Action in West Berkshire to facilitate the Club over the coming months and they had no replacement to offer. Dr Baldwin said that it is very sad in many ways that the Club has discontinued but they celebrate that it made a difference to a vulnerable group of people over the last 11 years and thanked the Parish Council for their support and help over several years.
- **08/168** At the December meeting the Clerk was asked to obtain an update on the outstanding proposed Hammonds Heath footway. She advised that she had been unable to do this due to Christmas break and annual leave by the person dealing with this at West Berkshire Council. She will make enquiries and report back to the February meeting.

09/02 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee met once since the December meeting on the 17th December 2008:

08/01923/HOUSE 3 St John's Close. Erection of timber sleeper wall and infill with top soil. No objection.

08/02168/HOUSE 16 Leighfield. Two storey side extension. No objection.

08/02037/FUL 17 Campbell's Green. Section 73 variation of conditions 2,3,4,5,6,8 9 and 10 - relax conditions until the dwelling is habitable.

Object. The conditions were imposed with good and valid reasons. To relax until property is completed invites the probability that they will never be met. In which event are West Berkshire Council prepared to enforce demolition of the building?

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

08/01992/LBC Little Park Farm, Beech Hill Road. Retrospective application for roofing and structural repairs to implement shed. Approval.

08/02037/FUL 17 Campbell's Green. Section 73 variation of conditions 2,3,4,5,6,8 9 and 10 - relax conditions until the dwelling is habitable. Notwithstanding the Parish Council's objections (see above) West Berkshire Council have seen fit to grant Approval.

Cllr Shorrock asked if the Planning Chairman could ascertain whether planning permission is required for the spectator barriers erected on the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field. This will be reported back to the next meeting.

09/03 **Update on Station Car Park Planning Application:** Cllr Morden reported that a draft rebuttal of West Berkshire Council's five reasons for refusal has been drafted and a definitive version will be prepared shortly and the Appeal application will be submitted without delay (deadline 30th March 2009)

09/04 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Ives reported that the Committee had not met since the last Parish Council meeting. Quotations for the tree work in Windmill Common are being obtained (see 09/05). Cllr Ives reported that he has spoken to West Berkshire Council regarding the Proposed Traffic Regulation Order Consultation (re proposed street lining and amended reduced/restricted parking in the car park outside St John's Church) and this work is to proceed shortly (in approximately 6/8 weeks). He was advised that there were objections to the restricted parking but mainly from those who wish for unlimited parking for the whole day.

i. **To agree to investigate the feasibility of funding, providing and maintaining a salt bin on WBC Highway Lane outside St John's School:** Cllr Ives proposed that this be referred to the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and agreed.

ii. **Update on SMPC Lease of West End Road Car Park and agreement to pay back rent from 1.1.1998 at a cost of £100.00:** The Clerk advised that further to Minute No 08/86(i) which confirmed the area of the car park is in the ownership of West Berkshire District Council and that the Parish Council would endeavour to reinstate their tenancy of the car park. West Berkshire Council has now issued a summons for the payment of back rent to 1.1.1998 of £100 and in order to regularise the situation it was unanimously agreed to pay this.

iii. **Update on West Berkshire Council Freight Route Network (December 2008):** Cllr Ives reported that further to Minute No 07/111 (12.7.07) an update had been received from West Berkshire Council. Cllr Ives commented that the update does not refer to the Easter Park Development at Aldermaston (mentioned by SMPC in reply to the original consultation) and vehicles will naturally pass through Mortimer if M4 access is required (particularly to the East). It was agreed that the Clerk would write to West Berkshire to formally ask about Easter Park and mention that there appears to be no control/enforcement of the current regulations.

09/05 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Blagden reported that one quotation for the tree work on the Fairground (and Windmill Common) had been received and that he will strive to obtain two further quotes for this work. Cllr Blagden proposed that as time is tight to get quotations in and get the work completed before the nesting season (mid-February) that the Council allow for the work to go ahead and be carried out (up to a figure of £2,200 plus VAT) with retrospective agreement to be given at the February council meeting. This was unanimously agreed. The next Committee meeting will be on 28th January 2009 and Groundwork Thames Valley is to carry out further work on the Fairground on the 4th February.

i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported as above (minute No 09/01) the installation of the new safety surface beneath the junior swings and overhead ladder is scheduled to take place on the 26th January. The new safety surface beneath the overhead bars will be made larger and deeper to comply with current legislation. The repairs to the rocking horse, log step on the multiplay unit and gate are now in progress and being actioned. The rest of the play area is in good order.

ii. **Update on Sub-Lease:** The Chairman reported that permission had been given to the CiC to lay a gas pipe from the road across the Fairground to the new building. It is envisaged that the building will be completed at the beginning of May. The Clerk reported that a notice had been received from the Land Registry.

09/06 **Cemetery:** No report.

09/07 **To agree to investigate the feasibility of SMPC leasing the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field from the Trustees:** Cllr Shorrock gave an update on the background to the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field. He advised that there were two options the Council could consider

1. Agreement to continue as is and support the trustees with a match funded grant etc or
2. Approach the trustees with a view to the Parish Council obtaining a lease of the field (and possibly sub leasing it to the football club).

After some discussion Cllr Davies asked whether the Parish Council wanted to approach the trustees regarding obtaining a lease. This was seconded by Cllr Shorrocks and put to the vote.

3 in favour, 8 against and 1 abstention. Motion defeated.

09/08 **AWE Local Liaison Committee Quarterly Report:** Cllr Ives circulated the notes from the Local Liaison Committee Meeting on the 11th December 2008. These were duly noted and a copy will be held at the Parish Office. Additionally a copy of the Management of AWE letter dated January 2009 will also be held in the Parish Office.

09/09 **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 further to the Parish Council's request (minute no 08/175 refers) Thames Valley Police have now reinstated the missing paragraph (3) of the appendix of the time and location report for the PCSO. Cllr Ives proposed that the above PCSO Contract Terms and Conditions between Thames Valley Police and Burghfield, Stratfield Mortimer and Sulhamstead Parish Councils for the term from 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2011 be signed by the Clerk provided that Burghfield Parish Council does the same. This was seconded by Cllr Blagden and put to the vote. 11 in favour and 1 abstention. Carried. Clerk to action.

09/10 **Report from the BMNAG Meeting held on 6th January 2009:** Cllr Ives reported that he attended the BMNAG Meeting and that PC Matt Allen has moved onto new duties in Newbury and has been replaced by PC Simon Easton. A new NAG Clerk has been appointed (Mrs Mary Green from Wokefield Parish Council) who will take the minutes etc. Cllr Ives hopes that the NAG can be rejuvenated with PC Easton leading the Police contingent in future but new members from the community are needed.

09/11 **To discuss possibility of changing the existing long standing advertising policy within the village:** Following a meeting of the Parish Plan Refresh Group Councillors Barker and Morsley requested clarification of the existing advertising policy so that an effective advertising campaign could be mounted in respect of forthcoming public meetings and other future initiatives. The question was posed as to whether the existing policy would need amendment to accommodate the Group's requirements following the research done by the Councillors into planning restrictions regarding the sizes of signs etc. The Clerk circulated a document outlining the Parish Council's existing long standing Policy on advertising within the village:

The existing Policy does not allow indiscriminate advertising/fly posting on telegraph poles, trees, street furniture, road signs, fences or highway verges etc and any advertising material which contravenes this Policy is removed. The existing Policy for advertising on the Village Notice Boards states that the Boards are set aside for use by organisations within the village only and that they are not for commercial or personal use. An official SMPC sign outlining this policy is displayed on each board. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove any notices that do not fall within the guidelines. Finally there is also an existing Policy controlling advertising on the Fairground Fence. This requires local organisations wishing advertise on the Fairground Fence to apply in writing to the Parish Council to obtain permission each time. This Policy includes the size and content of the advertisement and also the method of fixing to the fence.

Following discussion on the advertising plans proposed by the Parish Plan Refresh Group it was agreed that the above SMPC Advertising Policies did not need to be changed. It was also agreed that the Parish Plan Refresh Working Party could advertise within the existing guidelines and that three adjacent signs publicising the Parish Plan Update Meeting could be placed on the Fairground Fence in the normal way.

09/12 **Update on Parish Plan Refresh working party:** Cllr Morsley reported that the public event on 7th February will now be at St. John's School from 10 - 12. The format will be as described at the last PC meeting: a short introductory talk (repeated at 11) followed by separate groups discussing Village Amenities, Village Activities, Traffic & Transport, Green Issues, Young People and Other. People will be greeted at the door, and directed towards a group corresponding to their main interest. A presentation of what the original Parish Plan achieved will be run as a looping background. Coffee and cakes will be provided free of charge and there will be a free prize draw for participants. Participants will be encouraged to continue work together with the Refresh Group

over the next month after the event on generating draft questions for the questionnaire. The key to the success of the Parish Plan Refresh is getting the maximum possible number of people to fill in and return the best possible questionnaire. The key to that is getting the maximum number of people to attend the 7th Feb event. Members of the Refresh Group are visiting various groups in the village and spreading the word. An A5 flyer will be delivered with the next PC newsletter. The flyer will also be handed out outside McColls and Budgens on the previous Saturday. Posters will be put up around the village. Placards on the Fairground fence for 1 week will provide a countdown to the date (and can be reused in similar manner with questionnaire and later events). Usual press will be contacted. A WBC youth worker and Sarah Ward will visit St .Mary's School before 7th Feb to do a related activity with children.

i. To approve expenditure of not more than £1,500 in connection with the Parish Plan Refresh: Cllr Morsley proposed that the Parish Plan Refresh Group have a budget of £300 for this financial year and a budget of £1,100 for the financial year 09/10, this was seconded by Cllr Ives and unanimously agreed.

09/13 **Update on Parish Emergency Planning working party:** 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.

09/14 **Stratfield Mortimer Community Award 2009:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that the Award Committee met on the 5th January and considered five nominations. All nominations were carefully discussed and the Committee unanimously decided that Mr Lawrence Picking would be the recipient of the 2009 Stratfield Mortimer Community Award.

09/15 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Mollie Lock reported that West Berkshire Council has increased the number of Council Staff by 156 since 2006. Nearly 100 of these were required to meet the demands of Central Government but other front line departments still have vacancies including the Highways Department. The next stage of highway improvement works associated with the re-development of AWE is due to commence on the 12th January and will last for 20 weeks.

09/16 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for January:**
In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Clark proposed that these be paid, this was seconded by Cllr Davies and 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 £24.47 inc VAT.
- ix. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £87.32, (Post Office, £76.90, McColls Ltd £8.42 and £2.00 Service Charge)
- x. Econet (gorse clearance on the Fairground) £75.00.
- xi. West Berkshire Council (payment of back rent for SMPC Lease on West End Road Car Park from 1.10.1998) £100.00
- xii. West Berkshire Council (By-Election 6.11.08 costs) £2,393.27.
- xiii. T B Estates Ltd (cost of installing seat) £148.29 inc VAT.
- xiv. SLCC (Clerk's attendance at SLCC 2 day Practitioner's Training/Conference event (27/28 February 2009 in Stoke on Trent) £218.50 inc VAT.
- xv. British Telecom (line rental Parish Office) Direct Debit £60.90 inc VAT

09/17 **Correspondence:**

- Communities in Control Consultation. Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity. A copy will be held in the Parish Office.

09/18 **Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- Cllr Lock requested an Agenda item for the February meeting for SMPC to consider match funding the cost of an additional VAS sign for The Street by Mortimer Hill at a match funded cost of £2,000.
- Cllr Lock requested an Agenda item for the February meeting for SMPC to consider requesting that West Berkshire Highways Department change the junction layout at Mortimer Hill onto The Street from a roundabout to a T Junction.
- Cllr Barker reported that businesses and homes around the St John's Road/Close and the area around the shops at the end of St John's Road and Methodist church have been experiencing a large number of electricity cuts apparently due to an overload in the system caused by the new houses in the area. The businesses are losing money because of the power cuts. It was agreed that the Chairman would draft a letter for the Clerk to send to the Electricity Board.
- Cllr Challis reported that there had been a problem with horses on the path between the end of Orchard Road and The Avenue. The Clerk said she would report this to Streetcare.
- Cllr Ives reported that although the Police Office has now been finished it is still not in use and while no firm date has been given it is hoped it will be open soon.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 12th February 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 9:35pm