



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Unadopted Minutes of Meeting held on 12th February 2009 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: T Shorrocks (Chairman), D Morsley, K Davies, D Ives, J Morden, P Challis, M Lock, A Smith (7:42), A Colaço, S Clark A Thorpe, A Philips, N Kiley and the Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors: P Blagden and R Barker.

Declaration of Interest: None

09/19 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting of 8th January 2009 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

- **09/09** Cllr Ives clarified that all three parishes had signed the Terms of Reference for the PCSO contract.
- **09/18 Footpath between Orchard Road and The Avenue:** The Clerk advised that WBC had replied saying it is already an offence to take a horse onto a footpath/pavement as described in rule no 54 in the Highway Code. Regulatory signs can be put up if there are some other restrictions in place. WBC will consider if advisory signs are appropriate but asked for more details and idea of the scale of the problem. Cllr Challis to provide these to the Clerk.

09/20 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee met twice since the January meeting on the 12th January and 29th January 2009:

08/02285/HOUSE Latham Cottage, The Street. Formation of new vehicular access.

Object: The proposed access onto the Street, opposite the War Memorial will compromise both roads from Hammonds Heath. It will create a traffic hazard and require moving of the bus stop.

08/02309/HOUSE Kypings, Ravensworth Road. Single storey side extension, two storey extension and loft conversion. No objection.

08/02339/FULD 9-13 Victoria Road (Budgens) mixed use development, retail on the ground floor level and 6 residential units on the first floor.

Support. A valued and much used village facility. Moving the whole operation to one site improves customer safety and tidies up a run down retail outlet.

08/02349/FULD The Red House, 54 West End Road. Erection of 7 new houses and part demolition and alterations to existing house. Improvements to existing private drive. Object:

1. Notwithstanding that the access to Plots 4,5,6,7 and 8 are described as a private drive service and delivery vehicles must be expected to enter. The drive is consequently inadequate for the proposed properties. The 2.75m pinched access adjacent to No 54 and 56 West End Road could produce a tail back onto West End Road if other vehicles occupy this area.
2. There will be a loss of amenity and privacy to Nos 50 and 56 West End Road and the garden of No 3 St Mary's Road due to overlooking.
3. All trees on this site are subject to TPO's. The red cedar adjacent to the drive and the second tree on the east boundary will be compromised.
4. The overdevelopment of the site will result in a cramped appearance out of keeping with the village scene.

09/00006/HOUSE 7 St Mary's Road. Two storey rear extension and conservatory. No objection.

09/00066/HOUSE 16 St Mary's Road. Single storey detached double garage with pitched roof in rear garden. No objection.

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

08/01923/HOUSE 3 St John's Close. Erection of timber sleeper wall and infill of top soil. Approval.

08/02046/FULMAJ 33-37 West End Road. Demolish existing 3 bungalows and re-develop with 10 houses. Refusal - see below.

08/02168/HOUSE 16 Leighfield. Two storey side extension. Approval

08/02285/HOUSE Latham Cottage, The Street (opposite War Memorial) New vehicular access onto The Street. Approval

08/02046/FULMAJ 33-37 West End Road

This application, to which the Parish Council objected, was decided at the West Berkshire Council Eastern Area Planning Committee on the 28th January 2009. The officer's recommendation was for approval. Cllr Morden spoke on behalf of the parish Council and Dr M D Dennett, a resident in Victoria Road spoke as a private objector. Ward Councillors M and K Lock argued in support of the Parish and local objectors. The application was debated for over an hour and Cllr K Lock proposed refusal and when it was put to the vote refusal was carried by 6 votes to 3. Reasons

1. Over development and sub standard garden space.
2. Fail to provide appropriate scheme of works or on and off side mitigation measures to accommodate the impact on local infrastructure, services or amenities.

Notice of Appeal:

08/00921 The Red House, 54 West End Road. Notwithstanding a new application for this site (see above 08/02349) the applicants have lodged an appeal against West Berkshire Council's refusal of the earlier application. The date of the appeal is not yet known.

The Parish Council have been notified that the new application for 'Budgens' has been withdrawn as requested on technical grounds but has since been resubmitted.

09/21 **Update on Station Car Park Planning Application:** Cllr Morden reported that the preparations for submitting the Appeal are nearly complete and this should be submitted within the next few weeks.

09/22 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Ives reported that there had been no committee meeting.

i. **Update on proposed footpath at Hammonds Heath:** Cllr Ives reported that he and the Clerk had met with Stuart Clark WBC officer on the 27th January and looked at the proposed options for a footpath on Hammonds Heath. It was agreed that the Hammonds Heath footpath project needs to be re-appraised and this has been referred back to the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Commission to consider.

ii. **Update on Mortimer Parking Strategy Consultation:** Cllr Ives gave an overview on the West Berkshire Decision on the Mortimer Parking Strategy Consultation (already circulated to all members of the Parish Council).

'The Executive Member for Highways, Transport and ICT considered the Individual Decision Report on 19th December 2008 and resolved as follows:

(1) *That the relaxations and deletions contained in Section 3.5 of the report be approved:*

It is therefore considered that the following adjustments will initially address the comments received during the consultation period and can be incorporated without the need for the re-advertisement of the TRO:

(a) *The proposal to introduce a prohibition of waiting 'At Any Time' around the island housing the War Memorial (at the junction of Victoria Road and Hammonds Heath) is deleted.*

(b) *The proposal to introduce a prohibition of waiting 'At Any Time' at the mini roundabout at the junction of Stephens Road, The Street and Groves Lea, is deleted.*

(c) *The proposal to introduce a Monday to Saturday, 8 am to 6pm restriction on Victoria Road opposite the surgery access be amended to Monday to Friday.*

(d) *The proposals for the car park fronting St John's Church be amended to increase the number of unrestricted spaces by a relaxation of part of the proposed limited waiting restriction on the south side of the car park, with a relaxation of the remaining one hour restriction to two hours.*

(2) *That the remaining proposed restrictions be introduced as advertised and the requests for additional restrictions are considered as part of the review process.*

(3) *That the respondents to the statutory consultation be informed accordingly.*

A copy of the report, together with the Decision Record can be seen on our website at <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=15612>

A works instruction will now be prepared and submitted to our contractors for the introduction of the parking scheme and I would anticipate that this work will be complete by the end of March 2009.'

In the meantime I would like to thank you for your comments during the consultation, which have helped to ensure that the final scheme best meets the needs of the local community.

After a discussion on the above it was noted that West Berkshire Council had disregarded the Parish Council's response in favour of small lobby groups. Cllr Shorrocks proposed that the Parish Council write to West Berkshire Council stating that it feels that the Officer took decisions that did not fully take into account what the Parish Council recommended as a result of the consultation process. This was seconded by Cllr Davies and put to the vote and carried by 11 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention. Clerk to action.

iii. To consider match funding the cost of additional VAS sign to be sited in The Street (by Mortimer Hill) at a match funded cost of £2,000:

After a discussion Cllr Morden proposed that the Parish Council agree to a match funded VAS sign on The Street at a cost of £2,000 to be taken from S106 money. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and put to the vote. It was carried by 10 votes for to 3 against. The Clerk to write to Mr Jon Winstanley to ask for the S106 contribution. It was agreed to refer to Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee to recommend the location of the new sign.

iv. To consider requesting that WBC look into the feasibility of changing the junction layout at the Mortimer Hill estate from a roundabout to a T Junction:

Cllr Lock reported that residents of Mortimer Hill wish to retain the roundabout but other residents think that it is dangerous. After a discussion Cllr Clark proposed that West Berkshire Council Highways Department be consulted and asked to look at the junction and advise.

09/23 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** In the absence of Cllr Blagden the Clerk read out his report which said that the Committee met on the 28th January. The main points being;

- The quotation which is the best value for money and guarantees that this work will be carried out before the nesting season will be accepted and progressed.
- The faulty play area gate on the eastern side has been padlocked and a new replacement one ordered (see below).
- A proposal to replace the safety surface under the parallel bars be put to the Parish Council (see below).
- The ditches and hedges along Hammonds Heath and Windmill Road to be cleared and cut back.
- The shrubs, brambles and low hanging branches etc on the western boundary of the fairground to be cut back.
- The removal of the gorse and other green waste on the Fairground to be removed.
- A quotation to be obtained to repair the area in front of the white (original) football goal.
- A quotation to be obtained to spread selective weed killer on the grass of the recreational areas.
- The question of an extension of the Fairground car park and the question of provision of an all weather pitch between the multi sports walls to be put in the Parish Plan Refresh Questionnaire.
- The date of the next meeting is 27th April 2009

The work around the two ponds by CROW volunteers planned for 4th February was postponed until 1st April due to bad weather.

i. Monthly Play Area Inspection Report: Cllr Smith reported that the faulty gate has been padlocked as even after a further repair was still closing too quickly and is now to be replaced (see below). The other repairs to the rocking horse and log step on the multiplay unit have now been carried out. The new safety surfaces have been installed beneath the junior swings and overhead ladder and are wider and deeper which means they comply with the recommendation by RoSPA.

ii. To consider installation of new wet pour safety surface beneath tumble bars on the play area to replace current surfacing at a cost of £3,650 plus VAT: Cllr Smith proposed that the above safety surface be installed from the current budget. This was seconded by Cllr Lock and put to the vote and carried by 13 in favour 1 abstention.

- iii. Retrospective agreement to expenditure on new play area pedestrian gate at a cost of £868.25 inc VAT:** Proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Morsley and unanimously agreed.
The existing gate on the western fence is to be painted yellow to match the new gate.
- iv. Retrospective agreement to expenditure on 2 new play area signs/notices to replace vandalised ones at a cost of £241.50 inc VAT:** Proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Kiley and unanimously agreed.
- 09/24 **Cemetery:** No report.
- 09/25 **Update on Fairfield Mobile Home Park:** An update report from Mr Brian Leahy of West Berkshire Council Licensing Department regarding the Fairfield Mobile Home Park was tabled.
- 09/26 **Update on Community Policing/BMNAG:** Cllr Ives reported that no meeting has taken place and it is hoped will happen soon. Thames Valley Police now has a good website which has information on the local area and Neighbourhood Action Group. The Neighbourhood Support Officer Constable Simon Easton has now resigned and has been temporarily replaced by Constable Perran Bateman. The Mortimer Police Office is not yet fully commissioned and only partly used. More volunteers are needed to man the office but the lack of volunteers has not prevented it from opening. The next NAG meeting is to take place on the 24th February 2009.
- 09/27 **Update on Parish Plan Refresh Open Meeting 7.2.09:** Cllr Morsley reported that the Parish Plan Refresh Group held a public meeting at St John's School on the 7th February. Despite the bad weather at least 170 attended and gave their ideas on a number of different topics: Traffic & Transport, Amenities, Activities, Youth, Energy conservation and Environmental etc. The atmosphere was very positive and will lead to many interesting discussions on many ideas. These are now being analysed and will lead to a questionnaire that will go out in April with a public meeting to present the result of the questionnaire to be held on Saturday 30th May. The parishioners that attended were very positive about Mortimer and many expressed wishes to be more involved. Quite a few ideas are not suitable for the Parish Plan as they are small points that can be dealt with routinely by the Parish Council. Many members of the public said that the meeting was very enjoyable and useful. The group would like to thank those Parish Councillors who came and helped, Cllr Philips, Cllr Clark, Cllr M Lock, Cllr A Smith and District Councillor K Lock and for handling questions in their particular area of experience. The Parish Council extended thanks to Cllrs Barker and Morsley and all the members of the Working Party.
- 09/28 **Update on Parish Emergency Planning Working Party:** Cllr Morsley reported in the absence of Cllr Blagden that a meeting of the Working Party took place on the 20th January 2009. It was agreed that Carolyn Murison, WBC's Principal Contingencies Officer should be asked to give an address to the PC this evening (this was postponed due to bad weather). The group has gathered guides and templates for developing local emergency plans together with copies from other parishes. Arrangements are in hand for the group to meet with Ms Murison to discuss specific actions for Emergency Planning to help establish the size and scope of the Emergency Plan. This is to take place in mid April.
- 09/29 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Mollie Lock reported that West Berkshire Council have announced a proposed budget based on the Council Tax increase of 3.9%. They have announced a series of investments in school buildings, some of which are part Government funded. There is to be free swimming for the over 60's. A number of cuts in services will be announced e.g. parking charges in Newbury are up to £1 per hour, charges elsewhere are to rise by 40 or 50 pence per hour. Bus tokens are to be withdrawn except for disabled people who will receive £70 worth. Twenty staff are to be made redundant and the free collection of bulky items from households will cease in April and a £25 collection charge will be made. Cllr K Lock is to ask a question of West Berkshire Council's Executive about the date for the adoption by WBC Highways from Taylor Wimpey of the street lighting and open spaces on the Mortimer Hill Estate. Veolia have written to all the residents of The Avenue warning them that unless the condition of the road improves they may suspend door to door waste collection and ask people to bring bins to collection points. A site meeting between Veolia and Officers has taken place and Cllr M Lock is to ask the Executive Meeting about Veolia's right to do this and whether this is an option in their contract. The Local Development Plan to 2028 is due to be published shortly and the total number of dwellings to be built will be approximately 11,000 of which 7,000 will be on sites to be identified. This number will include over 1,300 to be

spread around rural centres such as Burghfield, Hungerford, Lambourn and Mortimer.

It was noted that the withdrawal of bus tokens will have a drastic effect on the Volunteer Bureau as residents currently pay for this valuable service using their tokens.

After a discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would write to the Chief Executive Officer at West Berkshire Council and say that further to the District Councillor's report the Parish Council are concerned about the withdrawal of the bus tokens and the charging for removal of bulky items from households. Clerk to action.

09/30 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for February:**

In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Thorpe proposed that these be paid, this was seconded by Cllr Lock 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 £25.05 inc VAT.
- ix. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £20.83, (Showcase Cinema (PP Prize £12), McColls Ltd £6.83 and £2.00 Service Charge)
- x. Thames Valley Police Authority (PCSO Part funding quarter 3) £1,824.50
- xi. West Berkshire Council (rental of St John's School for Parish Plan Refresh Meeting 7.2.09) £34.00
- xii. West Berkshire Council (quarterly photocopying invoice £115.28 inc VAT)
- xiii. West Berkshire Council (annual emptying/cleaning dog bin contract) £859.52
- xiv. Staples (stationery) £84.26 inc VAT
- xv. Fieldwork Rest and Play (new safety surface and other repairs) £5,897.20 inc VAT
- xvi. Fieldwork Rest and Play (new Play Area Gate) £868.25 inc VAT
- xvii. Downend and Benning Signs (replacement of 2 vandalised play area notices) £241.50 inc VAT
- xviii. SLCC Enterprises Ltd (accommodation Practitioner's Conference) £82.00 inc VAT
- xix. Advance Printing and Design (printing of Newsletter & Parish Plan Refresh flyers) £455.00
- xx. Andrew Hazelden (Community Award Plate) £180.00
- xxi. Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (training event) £92.00 inc VAT
- xxii. Dads Shop Ltd £91.41 inc VAT

09/31 **Correspondence:**

- Letter from a resident of the Avenue regarding the letter from Veolia about the possible suspension of refuse collections. The Clerk to reply referring him to the District Councillors report and involvement.
- Letter from Reading Buses regarding their recent consultation and review. They say they have listened carefully to all the various comments received and have come up with a proposal which includes significant improvements for most users of existing services. For the Burghfield Common and Mortimer areas these improvements include.
 1. Buses every 30 minutes during Monday to Saturday daytimes between Mortimer and Burghfield Common and Central Reading.
 2. All route 2 buses will operate via Clay Hill Road in Burghfield Common.
 3. An improved evening and Sunday service to Burghfield Common and Mortimer.
 4. New late night buses on Friday and Saturdays to Burghfield Common and Mortimer with a last bus from Reading at 2.30am.
- Letter from the Rural Housing Trust that it will no longer continue its business of developing affordable village housing. The Trustees of the Rural Housing Trust have decided to wind down the development activities of both the Trust and its subsidiary, RHT

Developments Ltd. Although demand for affordable housing is high and there is potential value in its work, the organisation is unable to withstand the prevailing, difficult trading conditions. The Trust generated the larger part of its income from developing small village schemes for Registered Social Landlords. Since September, the Trust has been in merger discussions but that option has now been ruled out. The Trustees had no alternative to taking significant cost cutting action. Redundancies have been announced.

- WBC District Parish Conference Event to be held on 17th March at Newbury. Main topics are Access to the Countryside and Anti-Social Behaviour. All Councillors invited, Cllr Philips is to attend.

09/32 Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:

- The Clerk outlined a proposal from a resident who wishes to obtain permission from the Parish Council to operate a mobile car washing business in the West End Road Car Park. It was agreed that as this was not appropriate on Council property it would not be considered further. Clerk to advise.
- The date of the Appeal hearing for Mr Miller Great Park Farm will be 10am on the 3rd March 2009.
- The Clerk was requested to write to the residents on West End Road and request that they do not park on the pavement and have consideration for other residents.
- The footpath between Longmoor Lane and Brewery Common has been ploughed over and the Clerk was asked to report this to WBC and write to the Farmer Mr James Strang.
- It was agreed to formalise Public Questions to the Parish Council at Parish Council Meetings and this will now appear on the Agenda at 7:30pm prior to the formal proceedings starting. These will be for a maximum of 10 minutes.

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

The Meeting closed at 9:27 pm