



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

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

Present: Councillors: S Clark (In the Chair), D Morsley, K Davies, D Ives, J Morden, M Lock, A Smith, A Colaço, A Thorpe, A Philips, N Kiley, P Blagden R Barker and the Clerk.

Apologies: Councillors: T Shorrock and P Challis,

Declaration of Interest: 09/41 Cllr Philips

09/33 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Minutes: The Minutes of the Meeting of 12th February 2009 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

- 09/18 Footpath between the Orchard Road and The Avenue: Further correspondence from residents in Orchard Road was passed to WBC who confirmed that are waiting for the new signs. Have passed to PCSO to assist with this.

09/34 **Finance and General Purposes Report:** Cllr Clark reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 24th February 2009 and apart from the two items below the main items discussed were an update on the compensation claim against the Parish Council reporting that the loss adjuster is to obtain further information and the grass cutting contracts for the forthcoming season for the Fairground and Cemetery were agreed and accepted.

09/35 **To agree recommendation from Finance & General Purposes Committee to adopt the updated SMPC Financial Regulations (March 2009) Previously Circulated:**

Cllr Davies proposed that the SMPC Financial Regulations be formally adopted. This was seconded by Cllr Ives and unanimously resolved.

09/36 **To agree recommendation from Finance & General Purposes Committee to adopt the updated SMPC Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment (March 2009) Previously Circulated:**

Cllr Clark reported that the Council's Internal Auditor had advised that the Council's Risk Management Policy needed to be reviewed to comply with Statement 5 on the Annual Governance Statement (Minute Number 08/165 refers)

The Clerk, as RFO, subsequently reviewed the Policy with advice from RoSPA, NALC, SLCC and the Council's Insurance Company. The Finance and General Purposes Committee reviewed the revised document at its meeting on the 24th February and unanimously resolved to recommend its formal adoption.

The Council discussed the necessity of adopting the recommended RoSPA weekly written play area check list specific to the site, contained in Appendix 1, in place of the current weekly visual check with some members expressing concern about the need for additional record keeping.

Cllr Davies proposed that the updated SMPC Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment (to include Appendix 1) be formally adopted. This was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and put to the vote. Result: 8 in favour, 3 against and 2 abstentions. The Motion was therefore carried and the SMPC Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment document was formally adopted.

09/37 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee met once since the February meeting on the 19th February 2009:

09/00070/FUL Little Park Farm, Beech Hill Road. Change of use of part of agricultural barn to B2 Retrospective (General Industrial). No objection.

09/00159/LBC Little Park Farm, Beech Hill Road. Demolition of a redundant grain store building. Subject to comments by English Heritage the Parish Council has no fundamental objection.

09/00169/HOUSE 70 Windmill Road. Porch to side and conservatory to rear of house. No objection.

09/00200/FULD 9-13 Victoria Road (Budgens). Mixed use development. Retail on ground floor, 6

residential units on first floor. Support. A valued and much used village facility. Moving the whole operation to one site improves customer safety and tidies up a rundown retail outlet.

09/00120/HOUSE West View, Mortimer Lane. Loft conversion with dormer windows. No objection. Adjacent Parish

The Parish Council have received a notice of a grant of a Certificate of Lawfulness in respect of 11 Groves Lea, conversion of garage to living accommodation and store.

Notices of Appeal: against West Berkshire Council's refusal of Planning Permission:

08/00921 The Red House, 54 West End Road, 7 new residential units, conversion of existing garage to residence. Alteration and extension to existing residence.

08/02086 Land to rear of 33-37 West End Road. Demolition of 3 bungalows, redevelopment of site for 10 houses.

08/00311 Great Park Farm. Overnight parking for 4 lorries. The hearing arranged for 3 March has been cancelled to a date to be advised.

Rural Housing Trust Affordable Housing:

The Parish Council has been advised by the Rural Housing Trust that due to the current economic situation they have closed their development business. As the Parish Council withdrew from negotiations over possible 'Exception Sites' due to West Berkshire Council's unwillingness to ensure any unites would be used exclusively for tenants with Stratfield Mortimer Parish connections this does not affect this parish. If at some time in the future, provided the Parish Council is happy with the tenancy arrangements, we can revive our interest through the Rural Housing Enabler at the Community council for Berkshire.

The following decision has been received from West Berkshire Council:

08/02309/HOUSE Kypings, Ravensworth Road. Single storey side extension, two storey extension and loft conversion. Refused, acceptable in principle but poor design.

Tree Preservation Order:

9 Victoria Road (Budgens) one oak and one holly adjacent to the boundary with Badgers Croft currently in the garden of the right hand pair of cottages.

09/38 **Update on Station Car Park Planning Application:** Cllr Morden reported that the Parish Council's appeal against West Berkshire Council's refusal to grant planning permission has been lodged with the Planning Inspectorate. It has today been acknowledged and confirmed as correct. The start date of the Appeal, which will be dealt with by 'hearing' is the 11th March 2009. By the 25th March West Berkshire Council has to complete and send the appeal questionnaire and supporting documents. By the 22nd April 2009 the Planning Inspectorate will require from the Parish Council 2 copies of our hearing statement. By the 13th May 2009 the Parish Council can make final comments on West Berkshire Council's comments or indeed the comments of any interested party. Cllr Morden on behalf of the Council thanked the Clerk for all her hard work with regard to the Appeal Application.

09/39 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons:** Cllr Ives advised that there had been no committee meeting. He reported that the parking restrictions outlined in 09/22(ii) has now been carried out.

09/40 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities:** Cllr Blagden reported that the piles of waste on the Fairground have been removed and the tree work on the western boundary is nearing completion. As reported above the grass cutting contract for the forthcoming season has been agreed and put in place. Another pond dip is being arranged for the end of June beginning of July. The next Committee Meeting will take place on the 27th April. A question was asked regarding entry to the tennis courts via the ball hatch. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the Fairground Meeting.

i. **Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** Cllr Smith reported that since the last meeting the new play area gate has been installed and is operational. The new safety surface beneath the overhead bars has been installed. The rest of the play area equipment is in good order. The old white football goal post has broken and has now been removed and a vote of thanks was offered to Nick Olof for responding so quickly.

ii. **Retrospective agreement of purchase of new Glasdon Dog Bin to replace broken one at a cost of £133.28 inc VAT:** This was unanimously agreed.

09/41 **Cemetery:** Cllr Clark reported that the Cemetery Meeting set for 16th March was postponed due to no new agenda items.

He updated the Council on the outstanding items:

- The maintenance work of levelling the plots/graves is scheduled to take place in the next couple

of weeks.

- As reported above the grass cutting contract for the forthcoming season has been agreed and put in place (asking the contractor to cut the grass lower),
- Englefield Estates have still not yet come to a decision about providing additional land for the proposed Cemetery extension.

09/42 **Update on Community Policing:** Cllr Ives reported that the quarterly meeting was held on 4th March at Pangbourne Police Station between Councillors of Burghfield and Mortimer and Sgt Barry Walker, PC Marc Robinson and PCSO Steve Innes. The attendance figures were presented for the months of January and February and the allocation of time spent in each parish was proportional to the financial input. PCSO Steve Innes reported that over the last two months there had been a number of arrests of persons in the Burghfield Mortimer area who have been carrying out local crime, car thefts and burglary. The Police were acting on the input of local information from the PCSOs. In addition PCSO Innes has been involved in the creation of a number of youth activity schemes at Willink School, one of which may be moved to the new Mortimer Community Building. A discussion took place on the PCSOs role over the last 18 months and the way forward in the next 2 year period. From April the Police (PCSOs) will not be involved in parking problems this will become the responsibility of Traffic Wardens controlled by West Berkshire Council. The Police Office in Mortimer has still not opened due to Health and Safety concerns.

09/43 **Report from BMNAG Meeting held on 24.2.09:** Cllr Morsley reported that the NAG met on the 24th February 2009. There was a good attendance and positive atmosphere. There has been a further change of Police personnel. PC Perrin Bateman is fulfilling the role of NSO until a new one is appointed (he is applying for the job). He is temporarily based at Newbury but will soon be based locally. The NAG Secretary requested a review of the Mortimer and Burghfield NAG terms of reference. The membership list was reviewed and some amendments made. Ufton Nerve and Padworth will be approached to see if they wish to join, also the Burghfield Residents Association and Wokefield Neighbourhood Watch. Four people have been arrested and charged with shed break ins in Mortimer. Problems at Burghfield surgery have completely stopped and Burghfield PC is to consider a new priority profile for their village. It was decided to invite an officer from West Berkshire Highways Department to attend the next meeting to discuss HGV traffic through the area.

09/44 **Update on Parish Plan Refresh Open Meeting 7.2.09:** Cllr Morsley reported that the Parish Plan Refresh Group has met several times to analyse all the ideas received from the public on the 7th February. These have now been combined into a draft questionnaire which has been sent to Green Common Trust for professional editing. A youth questionnaire is also being produced in the same way. Both questionnaires will be presented for Parish Council approval at the 9th April meeting. The questionnaires will be distributed to residents as soon as possible after that meeting. Sarah Ward from the CCB has requested that some members of the Group get involved in Collaboration Benefits, a scheme which she is promoting for getting organisations to look at working together. It was agreed that Cllr Morsley could attend meetings of this group.

09/45 **To agree action recommended by Parish Plan Working Party regarding matters raised at Public Meeting which are not suitable for inclusion in the Parish Plan (previously circulated):** Cllr Morsley reported that some ideas which were not suitable for a parish plan are being presented today with a request that they be considered and dealt with directly. The Refresh Group plan to use the Parish Council Newsletter to keep residents informed of the whole process and where their ideas have gone. It was unanimously agreed that the actions recommended above be actioned by the Parish Council. Cllr Clark offered a further vote of thanks to the refresh group for their continued work.

09/46 **Update on Parish Emergency Planning Working Party:** Cllr Blagden reported that Carolyn Murison has given a very informative presentation to Councillors before the start of this meeting and the working party is to set up a meeting to go forward.

09/47 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock reported that the West Berkshire Council budget has been passed with a Council Tax increase of 3.9%. They have announced a series of investments in school buildings, some of which is part Government funded. There is to be free swimming for over 60s, which is a national scheme but not all Councils have taken it up. A number of cuts in services have been announced, twenty staff are to be made redundant, the free collection of bulky items is to

end and a £25 collection charge will be made and parking charges are to rise across the district. Travel tokens have been withdrawn except for disabled people who will get £70 worth. There are ongoing discussions about the issue of free school transport and there are plans to make cuts where possible. The Rural Housing Trust has ceased operations in this area and their work will be taken over by Hastoe Housing Association who will contact Parish Councils. In April West Berkshire Council are taking over responsibility for the enforcement of parking regulations on streets around the District. There will be a team of 20 Civil Enforcement Officers working to tackle the problem of illegal parking. There are to be some changes in the penalty charges, the top charge will be £70 with £50 for lesser offences and a 50% discount if payment is made within 14 days. Taylor Wimpey is not complying with the various planning conditions for the Mortimer Hill estate which is preventing WBC from adopting the estate. The residents have booked St John's Hall for a meeting on the 20th March and Council officers have been asked to attend. In the meantime the District Councillors have written to all residents outlining what has been happening. They have also written to all residents in the Avenue after Veolia threatened to stop door to door collection of rubbish unless the road is repaired. They are able to do this under the law and would empty bins from specific points. The Council has agreed that even if this goes ahead elderly, infirm and disabled residents will still receive an assisted collection from their properties if needed. West Berkshire Council have given the go ahead for a new nuclear warhead factory at the Atomic Weapons Establishment's Burghfield site. Work will begin in the next few months and it is expected that the building work will take four years and when it is finished, nuclear warheads will be stored, assembled and dismantled on site.

09/48 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for March:**

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 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 £25.52 inc VAT
- ix. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £128.38, (McColls Ltd £10.00, Print Room £10.00, Post Office £76.86, Best Western Stoke on Trent £24.82 inc VAT, Midland Expressway Ltd Toll Tariff £4.70 and £2.00 Service Charge)
- x. Thames Water Utilities Ltd (water trough Fairground) Direct Debit £12.98
- xi. Thames Valley Police Authority (PCSO Part funding quarter 4) £1,824.50
- xii. T B Estates Ltd (work on Fairground) £741.75 inc VAT
- xiii. Fieldwork Rest and Play (new safety surface) £4,197.50 inc VAT
- xiv. Mortimer Methodist Church (hall rental) £216.00
- xv. SLCC (update pages for Working With Your Council Manual) £19.50
- xvi. T B Estates Ltd (tree work) invoice not received
- xvii. Glasdon UK Ltd (purchase of new dog bin) £133.28 inc VAT

09/49 **Correspondence:**

None

09/50 **Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- Cllr Ives reported that he had attended the AWE Local Liaison Meeting and that this will be reported to the next meeting.
- Cllr Ives reported that there will be a Neighbourhood Watch meeting for all residents to be held on Wednesday 18th March.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 9th April 2009 at 7:30 p.m.
Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 22nd April 2009 at 7:30 St John's Hall

The Meeting closed at 9:10 pm