



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting

held on 10th December 2009 @ 7.30 p.m.

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

Apologies: Councillors R Barker, P Blagden, N Kiley, A Smith and A Thorpe

Declaration of Interest: None

09/178 **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

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

Matters Arising:

09/168 (iii): Cllr Clark advised that he and the Clerk met with the contractor to discuss an electricity supply to the Fairground and to obtain a quotation.

09/179 **Planning:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met once since the November meeting on the 1st December 2009:

09/02163/FUL Little Park Farm, Beech Hill Road. Retrospective change of use of part of agricultural barn to vehicle repair. No objection provided that a condition is imposed that usage is restricted for all time to that defined in Para 3.2 of the applicants Transport Statement dated 18th May 2009.

09/02073/HOUSE 28 The Avenue. Two storey and first floor single storey rear extension. No objection. The following decisions have been received from the Officers at West Berkshire Council under delegated powers.

09/01617/REM Longmoor Cottage, Longmoor Lane. This concerns the demolition of existing property and erection of 3 new two storey houses which have received outline planning permission. This application is in respect of reserved matters of Appearance, Landscaping and Scale. The reserved matters are now Approved.

09/01809/FULD 36 Stephens Road. New 3 bed house and car port on adjacent land. Approved.

09/01814/HOUSE 9-11 King Street. Conversion of 2 semi-detached cottages to one detached dwelling with extensions. Approved.

09/01828/HOUSE 27 Damson Drive. Conservatory. Approved.

09/01854/HOUSE 55 The Avenue. Rear single storey addition with part two storey element to lower garden area. Approved.

Affordable Housing: Cllr Morden advised that the English Rural Housing Association (ERHA) have replied to our letter of 16th November 2009 in a positive manner. The issue of Choice Based Lettings overriding the Local Connection in the choice of tenant is being raised by them as an issue that is having an impact in some areas, not just West Berkshire. However, until such time as a cast iron guarantee is received from West Berkshire Council regarding the primary of Local Connection SMPC should not pursue the hunt for a Rural Exception Site. ERHA confirm that they now manage and own the 4 shared ownership units in Woodside Close and will work with the Parish Council should any of these properties become available for re-sale. Cllr Lock advised that a recent house swap of a tenant with a house in Woodside Close had taken place with a tenant in Tadley. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to ERHA to express SMPC's displeasure at allowing this house swap.

09/180 **Report from Finance & General Purposes Meeting of non agenda items:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee met on the 23rd November 2009 and the items discussed that are not already agenda items below were:

- Prior to the Committee Meeting a delegation from the Tennis Club gave a presentation and a financial overview. The Committee appraised the pricing for 2010 (already resolved) in conjunction with charges in previous years (not changed since 2000) and recommended that no changes be made to the SMPC adopted charges already agreed for 2010 and this was

unanimously agreed.

- The Committee discussed a pre prepared spreadsheet showing the estimated income and expenditure for the financial year 09/10 and the projected carry forward balance.
- The Clerk advised that that the Internal Auditor carried out a very thorough six monthly audit and found everything to be in order. The council offered a vote of thanks to the Clerk for keeping the accounts in good order.
- A holding reply has been received from West Berkshire Council regarding the renewal of the Parish Office Lease which expires 4th April 2011 but it was noted from the WBC file that they had no previous objections and could not see a problem.
- Cllr Ives and the Clerk met with Sgt Barry Walker to discuss the role of the PCSO. A joint meeting between representatives from the three participating parishes and Thames Valley Police is being arranged for February 2010.

i) To agree recommendation from F & GP Committee to purchase a replacement Parish Council Notice Board at The Post Office at a cost of £677 plus VAT: This was proposed by Cllr Shorrocks and seconded by Cllr Davies and unanimously resolved. Clerk to action.

ii) To agree recommendation from F & GP Committee to adopt Cricket Club Agreement (previously circulated): This was proposed by Cllr Shorrocks and seconded by Cllr Ives and carried by 7 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. Clerk to action.

09/181 **To consider letter received from PCC regarding St Mary's Churchyard:** Cllr Clark explained that due to an administrative oversight at the Church the PCC had missed the deadline for applying for a grant. This was discussed at length and it was unanimously resolved that on this occasion only a match funded grant of £859 would be granted for the financial year 2010/2011.

09/182 **To approve Precept figure recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee for the year 2010/2011 (previously circulated):** A discussion took place regarding the S137 grant applications for 2010/2011:

- Cllr Davies proposed that the Council do not allow the grant application for £5,000 for the playgroup as the application should have been made by the trustees of St John's hall. This was seconded by Cllr Morden and carried by 9 in favour and 1 abstention. Clerk to action.
- Cllr Clark proposed that the Council reserve an additional amount of £5,000 against S137 (the total of the recommended budget would remain the same) out of which the £859 for the Church would come and the remaining amount could be used by other applicants during the budget year. This was seconded by Cllr Morden and carried by 9 in favour and 1 abstention. This is to be referred to the F & GP Committee to recommend an application procedure.

Cllr Shorrocks then proposed that the Council accept the Finance and General Purposes Committee's recommendation of a Precept budget requirement for the financial year 2010/2011 of £88,000 (an increase of £4,311 on 2009/2010). This was seconded by Cllr Davies and unanimously resolved. The Clerk to complete the Local Government Finance Act Form and return to West Berkshire Council

09/183 **Roads, Footpaths and Commons Report:** Cllr Ives reported that the committee had not met. The TRL traffic flows survey report has just been received and will be analysed and passed to the next Roads Footpaths and Commons Committee Meeting for consideration.

09/184 **Further to Minute No 09/167 to consider updated information and costing of £61,200.00 (using S106 money) to implement junction improvements by the War Memorial:** It was agreed to hold this over until more information is available about the BT costs and funding.

09/185 **Fairground, Trees and Amenities Report:** No report.

- Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** In the absence of Cllr Smith the Clerk reported that the play area is in good condition and the new bench has now been installed. The bad weather and dark evenings seem to have reduced the frequency of the graffiti. The heavy rain has brought many stones to the surface around the sports wall particularly the one with the rubber matting. Cllr Smith suggests that the Fairground Committee consider what the options might be to resolve this.
- To consider planting trees donated by The Woodland Trust (Rowan, Wild Cherry and Silver Birch), it is proposed that ten trees be planted at each of the following locations:**

- **The Fairground (locations in front of Badgers Croft and along Windmill Road boundary) and in compliance with the Mortimer Ecological Survey and Conservation Plan 2008:**
- **Victoria Road (large grass verge opposite Stephens Firs)***
- **Brewery Common***

***Consent will be required from West Berkshire Council**

The above was proposed by Cllr Clark and seconded by Cllr Lock and unanimously resolved.

- 09/186 **Cemetery:** Cllr Clark reported that arrangements have been made for the trees to be topped and graves levelled. A vote of thanks was made to Cllr Challis for his work in clearing the ditch and pipe during the recent high volume of rain.
- 09/187 **Confirmation of the role of the Communications Committee including the production and editorial policy of the Parish Council Newsletter:** It was agreed a meeting would be convened of the Communications Committee to discuss this.
- 09/188 **To consider whether the MVP Newsletter could be delivered at the same time as the Parish Council Newsletter by the volunteer delivery team:** Cllr Morsley proposed the above, this was seconded by Cllr Colaço and carried by 8 votes in favour and 2 against.
- 09/189 **Update on Community Policing:** Cllr Ives reported that he and the Clerk attended a meeting at Pangbourne Police Station on the 18th November regarding the role of the PCSO. No directional changes have taken place since that meeting and it was agreed a letter would be sent to the Chief Constable and as reported above (09/180) a joint meeting is being arranged for February.
- 09/190 **Report from the Willink JMC Meeting:** Cllr Morden attended the JMC as the Parish Council representative on 16th November 2009. The centre continues to be well used. The swimming and gym use is slightly down on the 2008 figures but overall attendance for the year to September 2009 was 54,113. Free swimming for the 60+ showed 1609 users for the six months from 1st April which compared favourably with Northcroft, Kennet and Hungerford which are situated in more urban areas. Parkwood Leisure now manages all 9 public facilities in West Berkshire and will continue to do so for the remainder of the contract (2017). Unfortunately the boxing club which used the facilities has had to close.
- 09/191 **To agree the distribution of those actions in the Parish Plan Refresh Action Plan for which SMPC is the Project Manager to the appropriate committees:** Cllr Morsley proposed the above motion this was seconded by Cllr Clark and unanimously resolved. It was agreed that Cllr Morsley would draw up a list and pass to the Clerk.
- 09/192 **Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Mollie Lock reported that Network Rail had been considering the permanent closure of the Ufton Nervet level crossing. Network Rail have taken account of local objections and have now confirmed that the crossing will remain open and be updated in a 'modern equivalent form'. West Berkshire Council (WBC) is meeting to consider cuts to adult care services. Seven trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) have been cut down on the vacant plot in Loves Wood (6 oaks and a large pine have been cut down). WBC is investigating this with a view to taking legal action. The ongoing situation continues at 14 Longmoor Lane and the WBC is pressing to take action to clear the site.
- 09/193 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for December:**
The payment of the TRL invoice was carried by 7 votes in favour and 3 abstentions. In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the remaining items for payment were considered together. Cllr Davies proposed that these be paid; this was seconded by Cllr Clark and carried unanimously.
- i. Clerk's Salary
 - ii. H M Revenue & Customs (Tax and NI)
 - iii. Clerk's Expenses
 - iv. Temporary Custodian's Salary
 - v. RBWM BACS Payment (Pension)
 - vi. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900 inc VAT.
 - vii. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone Parish Office) Direct Debit £32.66 inc VAT
 - viii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £54.44 (McColls £7.45, AVG (internet security renewal 2 years) £44.99 and £2.00 Service Charge)

- ix. Burghfield Village Hall (adjustment to bill for hall rental for NAG Meetings) £1.00
- x. Simone Surveys Ltd (Report on traffic flows survey) £1,150.00 inc VAT
- xi. SLCC (purchase of reference book) £11.95
- xii. SLCC (purchase of reference book) £12.75
- xiii. TB Estate Services Ltd (Installation of kissing gates on Fairground, removal of dead tree etc. and installation of 2 benches) £575.00 inc VAT
- xiv. SLCC (annual membership) £151.00
- xv. Tennis Court Services Ltd (power clean and moss kill tennis courts) £782.00 in VAT
- xvi. R M Weavers (grass cutting Fairground Aug and Sept.) £849.52 inc VAT
- xvii. Dads Shop Ltd £54.98 inc VAT
- xviii. I-next Ltd (website refresh design) £273.13 inc VAT
- xix. Econet (maintenance Fairground) £40.00

09/194 **Correspondence:**

- West Berkshire Council. Receipt of S106 funding for Open Spaces (Fairground) of £351 and £4,133.
- West Berkshire Council invitation to the West Berkshire partnership's annual event on 21st January 2010.
- Letter of thanks from a resident re the installation of a new seat on the grazing area.
- West Berkshire Council Winter Service and Adverse Weather Policy and Plan 2009/10.

09/195 Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:

- Cllr Lock requested that the Finance and General Purposes Committee consider reviewing the grants policy.
- AWE Report for next Agenda.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 14th January 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 09:55 p.m.