



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th September 2010 @ 7.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: T Shorrock (Chairman), P. Blagden, P Challis, D Ives, M Lock, J Morden, A Thorpe, K Davies and the Clerk.

3 Members of the Public were present`

- 10/117 **To receive Apologies and Declaration of Interest:**
Apologies: Cllrs: R Barker, S Clark, A Colaço, D Morsley and A Phillips
Declaration of Interest: None
- 10/118 **To Approve Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 8th July 2010 and To Report Matters Arising:**
The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 8th July 2010 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
Matters Arising:
10/116: The Clerk confirmed that West Berkshire Council (WBC) have confirmed that the Gypsy and Traveller Protocol document had been sent for information only and was not for discussion.
10/116: Cllr Challis advised that he had reported the condition of footpath No 23 from Longmoor Lane to Brewery Common to West Berkshire Council (mentioned but not actually minuted at the July Parish Council Meeting).
- 10/119 **To receive recommendation from F & GP Committee on choice of candidate to fill vacancy for Parish Councillor by co-option:** The Chairman reported further to Minute No 10/89 that 4 candidates had applied to be considered for the vacancy and had been interviewed. The recommended and agreed procedure had been strictly followed by the interview panel. The panel recommended that the best candidate was Mr Patrick Wingfield and that he should be chosen to fill the vacancy. This was put to the vote and carried by 7 votes in favour to 1 abstention. The Clerk to write to all the candidates.
- 10/120 **To receive Finance and General Purposes Committee Report:** The Chairman reported that the Committee met on the 10th August 2010 and the items discussed that are not on this agenda were:
- An update on the meeting with WBC re the renewal of the Lease for the Parish Office. Some members of the F & GP Committee met with Mr David Appleton and Ms Christine Owen of WBC where it was agreed that a new Lease would be drawn up by WBC Legal Department. It will be a rolling 12 month lease with a 6 month notice period. The new lease is to commence on the 31st March 2011. They warned that if any future work should need to be carried out to the Library it may be necessary to close the Library (and Parish Office) for a period of a few months to do this.
 - The RFO gave a financial update and the reconciled balance as at the 31.7.2010 was £103,527. The new accounts package is now up and running and working well.
 - The balance of the Guaranteed Investment Account which expires on the 25th August has been invested for a further period of three months.
 - Correspondence from the Council's insurance company in respect of the compensation claim on the Fairground was received and noted.
- 10/121 **To Receive Planning Committee Report:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met twice since the July Parish Council Meeting on the 28th July and the 24th August.
10/01409/FUL Victoria Arms, Victoria Road. Change of use from Public House to 3 self contained flats plus 2 storey side extension to provide additional flat.
No objection subject to a strict understanding that there is no alteration to the existing façade and the side extension is built to match in both style and materials.

10/01688/LBC	Mortimer Railway Station. Removal of existing customer information system and P A speakers and replacement with new display systems and speakers. No objection.
10/01806/HOUSE	10 Asparagus Close. Single storey rear extension and front extension of existing garage. No objection.
10/01210/FUL	23 Stephens Firs. Single storey front extension. No objection.

The following recommendations have been received from the Officers at West Berkshire Council under delegated powers.

10/01065/FUL	6 Victoria Road (Budgens). Temporary change of use to contractors' office for 18 months. Approved – temporary provision.
10/01210/FUL	The Fairground. Installation of Play Equipment. Approved.
10/01281/HOUSE	12 Victoria Road. Rear extension and garage. Approved.
10/01404/CERTP	81 West End Road. Single storey side extension. Lawful permitted development.
10/01409/FULD	Victoria Arms, Victoria Road. Change of use to 3 flats and extension to contain further flat. Refused. Insufficient information to enable the council to make a reasoned decision.
10/01526/FULC	9-13 Victoria Road (Budgens). Temporary supermarket store for 18 months. Variation of section 73 conditions. Approved
10/01529/FULC	
10/01688/LBC	Mortimer Railway Station. Removal of existing and replacing of new Customer Information System and new P.A. speakers. Approved.

10/122 **To Consider the provision of Low Cost Housing:** Cllr Morden proposed that due to the inability of WBC to definitely confirm that SMPC will not be granted the final say as to the tenancy of any low cost units that SMPC, for the time being, cease to seek Rural Exception Sites for the erection of Low Cost Housing. The Council accepts that any large scale development within the Parish which will inevitably include the provision of affordable housing, such housing tenancies will be at the discretion of WBC. This was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and carried unanimously.

10/123 **To Receive Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee Report:** Cllr Ives reported that the Committee had not met since the last council meeting but that Victoria and West End Road had been re-surfaced, the work around the war memorial had been carried out during the summer. Cllr Shorrock advised that he had reported a problem with the skid resistance on the road surface at St Catherine's Hill. West Berkshire have replied saying that they will carry out tests for skidding resistance and will let the Parish Council have the results once the findings have been analysed.

- i) To receive report from WBC Highways on the Winter Service: The Clerk reported that WBC had asked for input from Parishes following the investigation into the impact of last winter's severe weather. It was unanimously resolved to pass this to the Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee to consider and report back.

10/124 **To receive Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committee Report:** Cllr Blagden reported that the Committee met on the 27th July 2010 and considered the following items that are not agenda items (for this meeting) below:

- Report on the 2010 RoSPA Safety Inspection: The Clerk reported that the overall rating for the play space is Medium Risk. There is no immediate action identified. The individual items have each been assessed by the RoSPA Inspector and the highest risk assessment given is 10.
 - A review of the grass management regime for the Grazing Area was considered and agreed would remain mainly the same for 2011.
 - The Committee considered the feasibility of extending the Fairground Car Park and concluded that no action was needed.
 - Some general maintenance items were discussed.
- i. **To consider recommendation to purchase a replacement picnic table at a cost of £537.03 in VAT:** The current picnic table was recommended for replacement by RoSPA and Cllr Blagden proposed the above, this was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and carried by 7 votes to 1 abstention. Clerk to action.
- ii. **To consider recommendation to replace dilapidated kissing gate adjacent to the Hammonds Heath entrance at a cost of £396 plus VAT:** Cllr Blagden proposed the above,

this was seconded by Cllr Davies and carried unanimously. Clerk to action

- iii. To consider recommendation to install a green acrylic surface between the two sports walls at a cost of £30,000 plus VAT (to be funded from s106 monies):** After a discussion it was agreed to ask the Clerk to obtain further quotes to install surfaces in the areas in front of the goals only.
 - iv. To receive Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** The Clerk reported that the play area is in good order and the contractor is to mend the vandalised spring bike very shortly.
 - v. To consider request from Cricket Club to use the paved area adjacent to the Community Building for refreshments on 12.9.2010:** Cllr Lock proposed the above and this was seconded by Cllr Challis and carried by 7 votes to 1 abstention.
- 10/125 **To receive update on Playbuilder Project:** This is on hold until funding answer received.
- 10/126 **To consider applying for a part funded Community Plan Fund Grant of £2,500 towards the cost of supply and installation of 2 new see saws in the existing playground at a total cost of £5,704.00 (£3,204 contribution to come from SMPC/s106):** Cllrs Lock and Blagden declared and interest and did not vote on this item:
Cllr Ives proposed the above; this was seconded by Cllr Morden and carried unanimously. As agreed in Minute 10/92 the Clerk will now co-ordinate a joint application with the MVP.
- 10/127 **To receive Cemetery Committee Report:** The Committee met on the 11th August and it was agreed that a further review of the Cemetery Regulations, Forms and Fees was needed to make them clearer and to tighten up any loopholes in order to assist the Clerk in the overall statutory management of the Cemetery. Cllr Clark and the Clerk are to review all of the above for consideration at the next Committee Meeting. An update on Cemetery Maintenance was reviewed. The Committee decided to write formally to Englefield Estate to press for a decision regarding the proposed extension of the Cemetery.
- 10/128 **To consider request from Mortimer Youth Club for storage facilities on the tennis courts:** This was discussed at some length and although it received a positive response it was agreed to take it forward to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for further investigation/consideration who will report back.
- 10/129 **To receive Meeting Report from BMNAG meeting held on 7.9.10:** Cllr Ives reported that Andrew Garratt had explained to the meeting that the system of using Community Enforcement Officers, implemented when WBC took over this responsibility from the Police, was working well. The officers work from 7am until midnight on staggered shifts. Parking schemes were being implemented and Burghfield had already been covered with Mortimer due for a review soon. He asked that if any specific times and locations were of concern, to let him know. Cllr Ives advised that meeting that he had not seen any parking enforcement officers over the past year and felt there was little point in having yellow lines when they were just being ignored. He thought that, in the past, the PCSOs had been effective in issuing warnings to those incorrectly parked. His opinion was that WBC was concentrating its efforts on urban areas, where the income from parking fines would obviously be higher. Andrew Garratt had replied that this was not the case and enforcement officers had been to Mortimer several times. He would try and provide an attendance list. The rest of the NAG Meeting was dominated by issues in other Councils. Cllr Shorrock, SMPC's representative, asked if members could give some thought to items he could raise at future meetings. He was asked to raise cycling/riding fast on footpaths at the next NAG meeting.
- 10/130 **To receive report on the contamination of the Foudry Brook:** The Clerk reported that Mr Geoff Mayes had advised that there had been a sewage release into the Foudry Brook from the Thames Water (TW) Silchester Sewage Works which discharges into Silchester Brook, an upstream tributary of the Foudry Brook, which passes through the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer to the River Kennet. The release killed fish including large trout and pike, other fauna and aquatic weed growth. The Environment Agency (EA) attended and took samples of the waters, removed dead fish and foul matter. They dosed the water with Peroxide to try and maintain the oxygen levels. The Clerk confirmed that responses have been received from both TW and EA. Thames Water has offered to re-stock the watercourses and it is highly likely that the EA will take legal action and criminal investigations against TW.
- 10/131 **To receive update on the adoption of services etc. on the Mortimer Hill Estate:** Cllr Shorrock advised that the S38 Agreement has still not been completed and signed and after a discussion it

was unanimously agreed that SMPC send letters be sent to both Taylor Wimpey and West Berkshire Council regarding the lack of a S38 and formal adoption of the roads. This item is to continue to be an agenda item until resolved.

- 10/132 **To Receive Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock reported that Willink School performed well in the A level and GCSE exams this year with 61% gaining 5 GCSE passes at grades A to C and all students who wanted to go to university obtained the places they wanted. She also reported that following the problem in the Avenue with rubbish collections WBC have confirmed that Veolia's contract does not include a duty to collect refuse in Unadopted roads which are not made up. A similar clause had applied in the previous contract with Biffa Cllr K Lock has been informed that if the residents of The Avenue fail to maintain the road to the standard expected then WBC will arrange a number of collection points in the road and the residents will then be expected to bring the refuse to them. At the NAG Meeting held on the 7th September (See 10/129) Cllr Keith Lock asked how frequently the Council's parking wardens visited Burghfield and Mortimer. He was told that the wardens had always visited this area but not every day as they do in Newbury, Thatcham and Theale. 'Flying' visits had been stepped up after Mortimer Parish Council had complained. The matter had been raised at the NAG Meeting and WBC have promised to supply to him a schedule of the visits made to Mortimer. The Burghfield Children's Centre, which also does outreach work at the Community Building on the Fairground, is to have its official opening on the 25th September. Cllr Morden asked Cllr Lock whether when next renewing the refuse collection contract WBC should be asked to not have the clause regarding Unadopted roads included.

- 10/133 **To receive External Audit Report from Mazars for year end to 31.3.10:** The Clerk reported that Messrs Mazars (the Parish Council's external auditors) have returned the Annual Return for the year to 31 March 2010 duly audited with an unqualified opinion. A copy of the public notice advising of the conclusion of the audit will be displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards. A vote of thanks was offered to the Clerk for all her hard work in completing the audit.

- 10/134 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for August/September:** In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Davies proposed that these be paid; this was seconded by Cllr Ives and carried unanimously.

August

- i. Clerk's Salary
- ii. H M Revenue & Customs (Tax and NI)
- iii. Clerk's Expenses
- iv. 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 £28.98 inc VAT
- viii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £11.15, (£9.15 McColls (papers) and £2.00 Service Charge)
- ix. Ian Philips Farm and Garden Service (grass cutting Cemetery) £174.23 inc VAT
- x. T B Estate Services Ltd (Fairground repairs) £106.98 inc VAT
- xi. Stratfield Mortimer Fairground Trust (annual rental) (Standing Order) £1,000
- xii. D G Nickless (sign writing Community Award Board) £39.60
- xiii. Mortimer Garden Services Ltd (part for brushcutter) £19.00 inc VAT
- xiv. Warenes Wood Guides s137 grant £500.00
- xv. T B Estate Services Ltd (aeration Fairground) £432.40 inc VAT
- xvi. R M Weavers (grass cutting Fairground) £446.52 inc VAT
- xvii. September
 - Clerk's Salary
 - xviii. H M Revenue and Customs (Tax and NI)
 - xix. Clerk's Expenses
 - xx. Custodian's Salary

- xxi. RBWM (Pension by BACS payment)
- xxii. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900
- xxiii. Pipex Homecall Ltd (telephone PO) Direct Debit £24.99 inc VAT
- xxiv. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £194.20 (£175.90 stationery, £10.10 postage, £6.20 papers and £2.00 service charge).
- xxv. Ian Philips (grass cutting Cemetery) £174.23 inc VAT
- xxvi. I Next Ltd (renewal of email account for one year) £25.30 inc VAT
- xxvii Mazars (Audit Fee)£646.25 inc VAT
- xxvii Dads Shop Ltd £95.19 inc VAT
- xxix. West Berkshire Council (proportion of bills for Parish Office for 3 years) £2,256.00
- xxx. West Berkshire Council (proportion of rates for Parish Office 2010/2011) £324.00
- + xxxi. T B Estate Services Ltd (surface improvements to lychgate) £848.35 inc VAT
- xxxii Thames Water Direct Debit (water trough Fairground) £9.44

10/135 **To Receive Correspondence:**

- A letter from TIM requesting permission to erect a Christmas Tree on the Fairground. This will be an Agenda Item for the October Meeting.
- Letter from AWE regarding the fire on the 3rd August 2010
- Letter from WBC asking for opinion on the change in policy in respect of the leadership of the council. Noted.

10/136 **To Receive Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- All Committee Chairman were asked for all items for the next Newsletter by the beginning of October.
- An in-house Code of Conduct training for all Councillors is being held on Thursday 11th November at 6pm.
- The damaged 'Mortimer' Sign on the Grazeley Road was reported to the Clerk.
- The damaged bollards at Summerlug are still not fixed.

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

The Meeting closed at 10:11pm

Signed:

(Chairman):

Dated: