



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2010 @ 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors: T Shorrocks (Chairman), R Barker, P. Blagden, P Challis, S Clark, A Colaço, K Davies, D Ives, N Kiley, M Lock, J Morden, D Morsley, A Thorpe, P Wingfield and the Clerk.  
2 Members of the Public were present.

10/174 **To receive Apologies and Declaration of Interest:**

**Apologies:** Cllr A Philips

**Declaration of Interest:**

**10/182** Cllrs Morsley, Barker and Blagden declared a personal interest (as members of the MVP working with TIM on this event).

**10/179** Cllr Challis declared a personal interest (as an employee of Budgens) and did not vote.

10/175 **To Approve Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and To Report Matters Arising:** The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2010 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Clark temporarily left the meeting.

**Matters Arising:**

10/173 West End Road Car Park Fence. The Clerk advised that following investigation arrangements are in hand to rectify this.

10/176 **To receive Finance & General Purposes Committee (F & GP) Meeting Report:** The Chairman reported that the F & GP Committee met on the 16<sup>th</sup> November and the items discussed not covered by an agenda item for this meeting were:

- Proposed storage shed inside the tennis courts for use by Mortimer Youth Club (MYC). A comprehensive proposal document submitted by MYC and a document from the Clerk advising on the legal and financial liabilities and risk management issues were considered by the Committee. It was resolved that Cllrs Barker, Morsley, Blagden and Ives would explore the matter further in order to compose a firm recommendation to go to the full council, taking into account the advice tendered by the Clerk. The Clerk was asked to look into and advise on ownership options etc for the site.
- It was agreed to re-invest the balance of the Guaranteed Investment Account for a further period of three months.
- The draft precept budget for 2011/2012 was discussed and it was agreed that the budget figures would be discussed and agreed at the next F & GP Meeting in order that a recommendation can be made to the full Council at the January 2011 Meeting.
- Cllrs Morsley, Blagden and Barker are to come back to the next full F & GP Meeting with a proposed set of Core Values for SMPC for the Committee to consider.
- It was agreed to ask the Clerk to investigate criteria parameters and TOR for working parties which could be considered by the F & GP at that time if required.

10/177 **To agree recommendation from F & GP Committee to agree to the new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (contract terms and conditions) with Thames Valley Police for the partial funding of a PCSO (with Burghfield and Sulhamstead Parish Councils) for a two year period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013:** The above recommendation was proposed by Cllr Ives and seconded by Cllr Morsley and carried unanimously. The Clerk duly signed the contract which had already been signed by the other two Parish Councils.

10/178 **To Receive Planning Committee Report:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met once since the November Parish Council Meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

10/02563/HOUSE Sylvanway, West End Road. Replacement of existing roof to accommodate new first floor. Erection of rear extension. No objection.

10/02605/HOUSE 24 Damson Drive. Conservatory to side of property. No objection.  
10/02710/HOUSE 10 Victoria Road. Two storey side extension. No objection.  
10/02769/HOUSE 34 The Avenue. Rear conservatory and outbuildings. No objection.  
No decisions have been received from West Berkshire Council during the past month.

10/179 **To consider supporting extended Sunday opening hours for Budgens Supermarket once the premises have been extended:** Prior to the meeting a brief report was given by Mr C Mills, Manager of Budgens Supermarket. He explained that when the new Budgens store is completed it will increase in area from 3000 sq ft to 5000 sq ft and be restricted by Sunday trading laws. Approximately 40/50% of trade on Sundays is after 4pm.

Cllr Clark returned.

Cllr Morden proposed that the Parish Council support the application of Mr C Mills to waive the Sunday Trading hours of opening when the new Budgens store with its enlarged retail floor area is completed. This was seconded by Cllr Shorrocks and carried by 12 votes in favour to 1 abstention (Cllr Challis as he had declared an interest).

10/180 **To Receive Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee Report:** Cllr Ives advised that an email had been received Mr N Stacey from WBC Highways Department addressing SMPC's concerns that the visibility for pedestrians crossing Hammonds Heath from west to east has not been sufficiently improved. He advises that WBC cannot move the eastern kerb line out any further as this would restrict the turning space for larger vehicles which could have safety implications. In order to maximise visibility for pedestrians WBC have cut back the vegetation on the inside of the curve although could not be done as much as they would have liked due to tree trunks. He says despite the above from the pedestrian's point of view the junction is much safer and easier to negotiate than it was previously.

1. The distance pedestrians have to cross have been reduced from 16 metres to 12 metres.
2. Traffic now only approaches from one direction.
3. As a result of the amended kerb line visibility for pedestrians waiting to cross looking along Hammond Heath has been increased from approx. 30 to 45 metres.
4. Vehicles have to slow down more to negotiate the junction.

Mr Stacey said that WBC have now exhausted the project's budget but will however return to the site in early spring to cut back the verge.

Cllr Shorrocks proposed that the Council ask WBC to come out and re-visit the site and do all that can be done to remove the trees and cut back the hedge to improve the sight lines. This was seconded by Cllr Kiley and unanimously resolved. The Clerk to action.

Heath Elm Pond (near war memorial). The Clerk advised that further to minute number 10/161(November) the Environment Agency (EA) have determined that WBC have not followed their own process and are being put under pressure from their own ecology and conservation team. The EA are hoping that this will get highways to put in an interceptor but if not they will take the matter further using their powers.

10/181 **To receive Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committee Report:** Cllr Blagden reported that the Committee met on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2010 and items discussed not covered by an agenda item for this meeting were:

- An update on the 2010 outstanding RoSPA Inspection items.
- A review of unspent S106 monies for Open Spaces.
- The installation date for the new Playbuilder Adventure area has been set for 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010.
- The installation date for the two new see saws (and safety surface) has been set for the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2010.
- The Committee are to consider making provision for spraying the Grazing Area with weed killer. Cllr Blagden is to refer to the 2008 Ecological Survey and Conservation Plan and take advice on whether to use a selective weed killer on the Grazing Area and report back to the next Committee Meeting.
- The Committee's budget requirements for 2011/2012 were discussed and agreed and will be forwarded to the F & GP Committee for consideration.

- A maintenance work programme procedure for volunteer workers was agreed. Cllr Blagden proposed that the Council co-opt Cllr Wingfield onto the F T & A Committee and this was unanimously agreed.

- i. The F T & A Committee recommend that in consideration of safety issues the Council agree one of the following options for the MUGA Sports Walls:**
- a) To remove and dispose of sports walls at a cost of £6,000**
  - b) To surface between present sports walls at a cost of £30,000**
  - c) To re-locate both sports walls to another location with a surface between them at a cost of £40,000**
  - d) To re-locate one sports wall and surface in front of it at a cost of £20,000**

Cllr Lock arrived (8:40)

The Council considered all of the above options for the MUGA Sports Walls taking into account advice from RoSPA. Item C - to re-locate both sports walls to an appropriate location, with a porous macadam green acrylic coated surface between them at a cost of £40,000 was carried by 9 votes in favour to 5 votes against.

- ii. To receive Monthly Play Area Inspection Report:** The Clerk reported that the three items previously reported are being addressed and the rest of the play area is in good order.

10/182 **To consider whether the Parish Council exercises its discretion to agree that no charge be made to Together in Mission (TIM) for the tree lighting ceremony and the Carol Singing Event on the Fairground:**

Cllrs Lock, Morsley, Barker and Blagden declared a personal interest in this item (as members of the MVP working with TIM on this event).

Cllr Clark proposed that further to minute 10/15 of 11 February 2010 the Parish Council exercise its discretion and agree that Fairground hire charge to TIM for the two Christmas Tree events be waived. This was seconded by Cllr Davies and carried by 12 votes in favour to 2 votes against.

10/183 **To receive Cemetery Committee Report:** No report.

10/184 **To receive report from NAG Meeting:** Cllr Ives reported that Mr Garratt from WBC Highways Department had still not released the parking data.

Cllr Barker left the meeting.

10/185 **To receive update on the adoption of services on the Mortimer Hill Estate:** The Chairman reported that as requested in Minute Number 10/131 he has sent the two letters to The Chief Executives of West Berkshire Council and Taylor Wimpey outlining the Parish Council's disappointment at the lack of progress with the adoption of the services.

10/186 **To receive Report from District Councillors:** Cllr Lock reported that the only item to report was that she had arranged and presented a petition to WBC (with just under 300 signatures from Mortimer Residents) asking for the decision to close the Windmill Court Day centre to be reversed.

10/187 **To receive report on Internal Audit:** The Clerk reported that Mr Harland, the Internal Auditor, had carried out his half yearly review of the Council's systems of accounting and internal control and his observations were that the implementation of the new Alpha Accounts Package has gone well and as the RFO becomes more familiar with the system explores the report options. He reminded the Council that its Risk Management Policy will need to be reviewed in February 2011 so that an affirmative response to Statement 5 on the Annual Return Section 2 (31.3.2011) may be provided. He also advised that his fees for the forthcoming year to 31.3.2012 will remain unchanged.

10/188 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for December:**

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 Blagden and carried unanimously.

- Clerk's Salary
- H M Revenue & Customs (Tax and NI)
- Clerk's Expenses
- Custodian's Salary
- RBWM BACS Payment (Pension)

- vi. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900 inc VAT.
- vii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £154.14 (£73.00 Post Office Ltd, £13.77 McColls, Warings Bakery £56.65 and Budgens £11.72 (councillor training) and £2.00 Service Charge)
- viii. Thames Water (water trough Fairground) Direct Debit £6.79
- ix. R M Weavers (grass cutting Fairground October) £205.23 inc VAT
- x. Advance Printing & Design (printing newsletter) £370.00
- xi. Alan Harland (Internal Audit Fee) £276.13 inc VAT
- xii. SLCC (annual membership) £168.00
- xiii. West Berkshire Council (dog bin emptying 2010) £470.08 inc VAT
- xiv. Dads Shop Ltd £41.10

10/189 **To Receive Correspondence:**

- Letter from WBC advising of District Parish Conference Event on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2011 at 6pm. The main Agenda item will be to discuss flooding.
- Letter from Mortimer Football Club inviting the Parish Council to enter into a venture to develop an all weather pitch at the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field. It was agreed to put this on the February Agenda and to invite Mr Keep to give a presentation to the Council prior to that meeting.
- Letter from the CiC saying they wish to explore the possibility of extending the existing Community Building on the Fairground to provide additional storage space. It was agreed to pass this to the F & GP Committee so it could consider the provisions in the sub-lease and come back with a recommendation.

10/190 **To Receive Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**

- Cllr Challis asked whether the Clerk could report that the hedge adjacent to Mortimer Hall on The Street needs cutting back.
- Cllr Wingfield asked for an update on the Allotments planning.
- Cllr Lock asked if residents in West End Road could be asked not to leave their dustbins out on the pavement all week as they are a trip hazard.
- Cllr Colaço asked for an agenda item for the Council to consider making a donation to the Christmas Tree event.
- Cllr Morsley advised that the Mortimer Village Partnership were awarded joint 1st prize in the Berkshire Community Empowerment Awards and had been presented with a trophy and a cheque for £1750.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 9:40 pm