



# Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 @ 7.30 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors: R Barker (in the Chair), P. Blagden, P Challis, S Clark, A Colaço, K Davies, D Ives, N Kiley, J Morden, D Morsley, A Thorpe, P Wingfield and the Clerk.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Clerk advised members that the Chairman, Cllr Tom Shorrocks, had resigned from the Parish Council. Cllr Barker as Vice Chairman will now step up to Chairman until the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May. The Monitoring Officer has confirmed that as there is less than six months until the Parish Council elections there will be no necessity to hold an election or advertise the vacancy.

**11/01 To receive Apologies and Declaration of Interest:**

**Apologies:** Cllrs: A Philips and M Lock

**Declaration of Interest:** None

**11/02 To Approve Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> December 2010 and To Report Matters**

**Arising:** The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2010 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters Arising:**

**10/181:** The Clerk confirmed that the suitable/appropriate location identified is as considered at the December Council Meeting (see minute 10/181 point (i)) and approved by RoSPA. This is: 10m from the southern edge of the current playground and 10m from the footpath with East-West alignment.

Members of the Fairground Committee and the Clerk have met with contractors and obtained two firm quotations to re-locate both sports walls and install a green porous macadam surface (25m x 15m) between them. The Council confirmed that as this meets their agreed requirements the Clerk could accept the most suitable quotation in order that the work can commence and be completed within this financial year and in time for the annual RoSPA inspection.

**10/190:** Request by Cllr Colaço that the Council considers contributing some funds to TIM to defray some of the expenditure for the Christmas Tree and advent events on the Fairground. The Chairman reported that she had been in touch with Rev J Foley who advised that TIM are content that as the Council exercised its discretion and waived the hire charge no further contribution is being sought from the Parish Council for the 2010 Christmas events.

**11/03 To Approve Precept figure recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee**

**for the year 2011/2012:** The Chairman reported that the F & GP Committee met on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011. Cllr Wingfield proposed that any election costs be either absorbed by the Council during the year or taken from reserves and that the Precept request of £89,860 be reduced by £1,860 to £88,000 (the same figure as 2010/2011). This was seconded by Cllr Kiley and carried by 11 votes in favour to 1 vote against (Cllr Davies). The Clerk will complete the Local Government Finance Act Form and return to West Berkshire Council (WBC) requesting a precept of £88,000.

**11/04 To Receive Planning Committee Report:** Cllr Morden reported that the Planning Committee had met once since the December Parish Council Meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

10/02856/FUL Knotmead Lodge, Hammonds Heath Road. Section 73 – variation of condition 3 of 06/00835/FUL certain variations to approved drawings to be agreed in writing by L.P.A.  
No objection

10/02894/HOUSE The Old Post Office, The Street. Two storey side and single storey front and rear extensions. No objection.

10/02921/HOUSE 42 West End Road. Erection of 3 bedroom detached house with parking at the rear and stopping off front access from West End Road.

Object

1. Gross overdevelopment of site.

2. Notwithstanding the small adjustment of alignment the west wall will still compromise or destroy the established hedge.
3. Legal right of way to rear access has not been established. Failure to do so will result in considerable on road parking to front of property.

In any event rear access is only 3.6m wide (see Bob Turner's Highways) letter of 10.05.10 to Tony Derrett points 3 and 4.

10/02954/HOUSE 40 Leighfield. New pitched roof to rear existing failing flat roof. No objection.

The following decisions have been received from West Berkshire Council:

10/02007/FUL Little Park Farm Beech Hill Road. Retrospective change of use of part agricultural barn to vehicle repair. Refused. Reasons given not within reasonable walking distance of neighbouring settlements. Not readily accessible by public transport. Does not relate well to the local rural economy.

10/02075/FUL 54 West End Road. Removal of condition 17 of planning permission 08/02349/FULD. Granted.

10/02277/HOUSE 16 The Avenue. Single storey rear garden room, door and window to north elevation. Granted.

10/02563/HOUSE Sylvanway, West End Road. Replacement of existing roof to accommodate new first floor, erection of rear extension. Granted.

10/02710/HOUSE 10 Victoria Road. Two storey side extension. Granted.

10/02769/HOUSE 34 The Avenue. Rear conservatory and outbuildings. Granted.

11/05 **To Receive Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee Report:** Cllr Ives advised that the Committee had not met. He reported that he and the Clerk had met with Mr N Stacey from West Berkshire Council (WBC) on site on the 11<sup>th</sup> January (Minute No 10/180 refers) re the sight lines at the war memorial junction. He confirmed that WBC will further address the sight lines by removing the small tree on the verge and trimming back the hedge. He also confirmed they will look to rectify the recent damage to the grass surface and edge kerbing on the island. Two extra bollards have now been put in place outside the bank and the damaged bollard outside Budgens replaced.

11/06 **To receive Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committee Report:** Cllr Blagden reported that the Committee has not met. The Playbuilder project is progressing well and the musical orb and two new see saws have now been installed in the current play area. The re-location of the sports walls has been covered in Minute No 11/02 above.

*i.* **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.

11/07 **To receive Cemetery Committee Report:** No report and the next committee meeting will be held during February.

11/08 **To receive report from NAG Meeting:** Cllr Ives reported that he attended the meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2011. One of the items discussed was that the SID machine had not been available to parishes for about one year and WBC is addressing this. The lack of traffic wardens attending the village was also raised.

11/09 **To consider changes to the number of Parish Councillors to reflect the changes in electorates:** The Clerk advised that a letter had been received from WBC asking if the Parish Council would like to consider increasing the number of Parish Councillors to 17. Cllr Ives proposed that the number remain at 15 Councillors and this was seconded by Cllr Clark and unanimously carried.

11/10 **To receive update on the Localism Bill:** (For Information Only). The Clerk handed out to each Councillor a ten page NALC briefing document on The Government's Localism Bill published on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

11/11 **To receive information on BALC Chairmanship Training Course on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2011 at a cost of £35 per head:** It was agreed that Cllrs Barker and Ives attend the above course.

11/12 **To receive update on the adoption of services on the Mortimer Hill Estate:** The Clerk reported that the Council has received a response (dated 21st December 2010) from Mr N Carter, Chief Executive, WBC (Min No 10/131) in which he says the current situation regarding the Public Open Space is that WBC are chasing Taylor Wimpey's solicitor for an 'as built' plan so that adoption can be finalised. The transfer documents have been drafted by WBC's solicitor and he expects this to be signed within a few days of receiving the plan from Taylor Wimpey's solicitors. A draft Section 38 Agreement was sent to Taylor Wimpey some 6 months ago and as with the public open space, there is no reason why this cannot also progress to formal adoption now that the remedial works are

- complete. WBC will continue to apply pressure to ensure that this happens as soon as possible. There are no technical reasons why the roads and public open spaces cannot now be formally adopted and he expects this process to be completed within the next 6-8 weeks.
- 11/13 **To receive update on the provision of Allotments:** Cllr Morden reported that he has pursued this matter with Englefield Estate, the main land owner within the Parish. The Englefield Estate Trust is unable to release any land at the present time as the Trust is having to reduce its charitable work due to the current economic climate. The release of land at below value, the only way to provide allotments at reasonable rent, is clearly a charitable act. We are advised by Englefield Trust that all other land holders are looking for full value, either agricultural or development where possible. The meeting agreed to ask Cllr Morden to go back to Englefield Estates to ask about the possibility of purchasing land at agricultural rates.
- 11/14 **To receive Report from District Councillors:** No report.
- 11/15 **Finance - To agree accounts for payment for January:**  
In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Barker 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. Custodian's Salary
  - v. RBWM BACS Payment (Pension)
  - vi. Stewarts of Mortimer Ltd (Mortimer Link) £900 inc VAT.
  - vii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £122.33 McColls £9.36, PC World £110.97 (inc VAT) and £2.00 Service Charge)
  - viii. British Telecom (Parish Office) Direct Debit £67.65 inc VAT
  - ix. Wicksteed Playscapes (new see saws) £6,504.25 inc VAT
  - x. Wicksteed Playscapes (safety surface see saws) £2,636.08 inc VAT
  - xi. J R Bull (repair of West End Road Car Park Fence) £70.00
  - xii. West Berkshire Council (quarterly photocopy invoice) £15.90 inc VAT
  - xiii. West Berkshire Council (annual rent for West End Road Car Park) £10.00
  - xiv. Thames Valley Police (part funded PCSO salary Q3) £1,928.72
  - xv. Dads Shop Ltd £8.70 inc VAT
- 11/16 **To Receive Correspondence:**
- Letter from Mortimer Netball Club advising of the poor state of the outside netball courts at Willink Leisure Centre and because of this requesting the Council consider the provision of outside netball facilities in Mortimer. The Clerk has already raised this issue with WBC and Cllr Morden will also raise it at the forthcoming Willink Joint Advisory Committee Meeting and report back to the next meeting.
  - WBC invitation to Exercise Watermark on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March in Oxford.
- 11/17 **To Receive Minor Matters/Future Agenda Items:**
- The Chairman proposed that a thank you letter be sent to Tom Shorrocks for all his time and effort he has put into the work of the Parish Council over the years.
  - Cllr Morsley advised that the next Newsletter is going to be mid February and asked for any Committee input.
  - The Clerk advised that a comprehensive flooding questionnaire had been received from WBC so they could gather information on past flooding events to enable them to assess the extent and impact. Mr G Mayes has kindly completed this on behalf of the Parish Council and he noted that there are five locations where an event has occurred.
    1. Tun Bridge to Parish Boundary on Grazeley Road.
    2. Pitfield Lane Culvert and Drain behind Mortimer Men's Club (now Blewburton Close).
    3. Spring Lane (No 20).
    4. Mortimer Hill to Foudry Brook including Monkton's Brook and Foudry House.

5. Tun Bridge Grazeley Road - sewage leakage from manholes.

He also noted that since October 2000 there have been more than fifteen events under reference 5 when foul sewer effluent from Beech Hill leaked from Thames Water (TW) manholes in Grazeley Road and into Foudry Brook via the road gullies. As these were Health and Safety breaches the lack of action by the Environment Agency and TW is deplorable. The road flooding at Tun Bridge Mini Roundabout from Foudry Brook has been largely prevented by the flood bunds and the new flap valve.

- Cllr Ives reported that there has been a spate of thefts of road signs. The signs stolen from the Mortimer area include both 'Mortimer' gateway signs in Brewery Common, two warning chevrons on bend to Perrins Farm and the road signs at the junction of Goring Lane and Brewery Common.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 8:50 pm