



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Minutes of

### the Meeting of the Parish Council

held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2012 @ 7.30 p.m.

at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road Mortimer

#### Present:

Councillors: G Puddephatt (Chairman), P Blagden, J Bull, J Earl, D Ives, M Lock, J Morden, D Morsley, A Thorpe and P Wingfield.

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public & Press: None

- 12/166 **To receive Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs: P Challis, M Dennett, A Philips and N Kiley
- 12/167 **To receive any Declarations of Interest:** Cllr J Bull 12/191(vi) and 12/191(xviii).
- 12/168 **To resolve to Approve Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 12 July 2012:** The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- 12/169 **Following the presentation prior to meeting from Mortimer Fire Brigade to agree the Parish Council's response to Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services' Integrated Plan Consultation and the threat to Mortimer Fire Station:** Following the presentation by members of Mortimer Fire Brigade prior to the meeting Cllr Puddephatt proposed from the Chair that the Parish Council write a letter in response to the above consultation in respect of the review of fire cover for Mortimer. The Parish Council will express concern that if the Mortimer Fire Station is closed and fire cover is from the proposed new Fire Station in Theale then given the weight restrictions on many of the bridges over the Kennet and Avon Canal would mean that fire appliances would not therefore meet the Brigade's published response times and ask the Fire Authority to consider holding an informative public meeting. This was unanimously carried. This is also to be publicised in the Parish Council Newsletter urging residents to individually respond.
- 12/170 **In pursuant with the Localism Act 2011 to re-adopt the Code of Conduct for members of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council to include Section 4:** Cllr Puddephatt proposed from the Chair that the SMPC Code of Conduct be adopted and this was unanimously resolved.
- 12/171 **In pursuant with the Localism Act 2011 The relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 to adopt the Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council's Declaration of Interest forms:** Cllr Puddephatt proposed from the Chair that the SMPC Code of Conduct be adopted and this was unanimously resolved. The Clerk confirmed that a form would be completed by each Parish Councillor and sent to the Monitoring Officer at West Berkshire Council. Copies of the forms will also be available on the Parish Council's website.
- 12/172 **To receive Clerk's update (for information only):**  
The Clerk advised:  
**12/111: Cemetery Extension:** Planning Consent for the Parish Council Cemetery extension had been granted and Shared Legal Solutions at Wokingham Borough Council are now acting on behalf of the Parish Council with regard to the lease.  
**12/138: Proposed Allotments:** The offer of a lease on a piece of land off of Longmoor Lane has now unfortunately been withdrawn by the landowner. This now means that the Parish Council are now back to square one and will need to identify and acquire another suitable piece of land for allotment purposes.  
**12/151: Maintenance of Watercourse behind Blewburton Close:** West Berkshire Council have now subsequently written to all the residents abutting the water course withdrawing their previous letter and to advise them that the ownership of the watercourse is still with

Englefield Estates and that the residents do not therefore have any responsibility for it. The culvert will be cleared under Pitfield Lane in the next month or so.

The concrete posts that protect the Electricity Board's stays in the Car Park at West End Road have been damaged and Scottish and Southern Electricity have confirmed that they are happy for the posts to be cut off and not replaced.

- 12/173 **To receive details of Parish Council Vacancy and By Election details:** The Clerk advised the Council that Cllr Rebecca Barker had tendered her resignation from the Parish Council. The vacancy has been advertised in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and a By-Election for this vacancy has been called by ten electors. The returning officer has confirmed that the cost to Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council for the By-Election will be approximately cost of £2,400. The date of the By-Election is Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2012 and in addition to the statutory notice information will be displayed in the forthcoming Parish Council Newsletter, Notice Boards and Website asking for all persons interested in standing for election to contact either West Berkshire Council or the Clerk for more information and an election application pack.
- 12/174 **To receive SMPC External Audit Report from Mazars LLP for the year end 31.03.2012:** The Clerk reported that Messrs Mazars (external auditors) have returned the Annual Return for the year to 31 March 2012 duly audited with an unqualified opinion. A copy of the public notice advising of the conclusion of the audit has been displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards. Under Section 3 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and further to Minute No. 12/126 it was confirmed that Mazars LLP have been appointed as external auditor for five years from 2012/2013 to 2016/2017.
- 12/175 **To consider the approval of the appointment of Mrs Claire Connell as Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2012/2013 at a cost of £470.00 (unchanged) following the retirement of Mr Alan Harland:** Cllr Puddephatt proposed from the Chair that Mrs Claire Connell (Chartered Accountant) be appointed as SMPC's Internal Auditor for the year 2012/2013 at a cost of £470.00 per annum. This was carried unanimously.
- 12/176 **To receive Minutes from the Finance & General Purposes (F & GP) Committee Meeting 24 July 2012:** The Minutes of this Meeting were received, endorsed and adopted. Cllr Earl advised that the battery lights fitted to the inside of the shed were not adequate and asked if an alternative solution could be looked into. He also asked if the Council could review the need for a path now rather than after the Winter.
- 12/177 **To receive any further ideas/suggestions for consideration in the proposed new business plan:** No further items were put forward to add to the list.
- 12/178 **To receive information on Community Gathering Event for local organisations:** The Parish Council is to host an informal event to promote an increased understanding amongst all village organisations. The Clerk to find out a suitable venue and date.
- 12/179 **To consider developing a Community Development Plan: To consider recommendation from the F & GP that SMPC set up a Planning Sub Committee to take forward the proposal to develop a plan:** It was agreed that this is to be actioned and the formation of the Sub Committee at the Planning Meeting on 17th Sept 2012.
- 12/180 **To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 12.07.2012; 01.08.2012 & 23.08.2012:** The Minutes of these Meetings were received, endorsed and adopted.
- 12/181 **To Receive Planning Decisions and Information from West Berkshire Council (WBC):** Cllr Morden reported that the following decisions had been received from West Berkshire Council:
- 12/01093/OUT      Stroudens, 41 King Street. Demolition of existing and erection of one detached 3 bedroomed house with garage and two linked detached three bedroomed houses with garages. Outline permission granted. Cllr Morden attended and spoke at the Eastern Area Planning Committee on 25 July 2012 where he pointed out that notwithstanding the applicants ascertainment that each property would provide two parking spaces, one in garage and one on forecourt that this seemed unlikely as there would not be enough space to admit even a modest car and there would be possibility of exiting the car in the garage, therefore in

- his opinion each property only has one parking space not two.
- 12/01196/FULD 1 The Avenue. Demolition of existing and replace with two four bedroomed houses and garages. Granted.
- 12/01304/HOUSE The Aviary, the Street. Extension to hall and open porch, replacement of roof to existing garage. Granted.
- 12/01352/NONMAT Byways, Sweetzers Piece. Amendment to permission 12/00079 in relation to rear timber balcony screen from glass to shiplap timber. Approved.
- 12/01385/HOUSE 31 Stephens Close. Single storey kitchen and utility room to rear. Granted.
- 12/01414/HOUSE 22 The Crescent. Two storey side extension. Granted.
- 12/01415/HOUSE 44 The Avenue. Replacement of existing concrete section out building with timber framed shed. Granted.
- 12/01739/NONMAT Springfield, The Street. Amendment to approved application 11.02671, additional 300mm to depth of kitchen extension (i.e. 1ft). Approved.
- 12/01651/CERTP Stafford House, Windmill Court. Internal alterations to convert integral garage to new sitting room and store room. The alterations have been granted and a Certificate of Lawfulness under Section 192 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

The following application has been withdrawn.

- 12/182 12/01513/HOUSE 71 The Avenue. Two storey front extension and first floor extension.  
**To receive update on vandalism problems on the Fairground and update on the progress of new projects:**

The following acts of vandalism and damage have occurred over the Summer on The Fairground:

- The cricket square was damaged by being ridden over by a quad bike.
- The seat next to the Community Centre was completely destroyed in an arson attack. The replacement cost is £447 plus installation.
- 10m of fencing to the Fairground fence near the War Memorial Pond was deliberately knocked down and broken. Replacement cost £350.
- The surface of the new outside table tennis table was completely damaged with graffiti and drawings within hours of installation. Repair cost £280.

All of these acts have been reported to the Police and it was agreed to delay the repair to the table tennis table for the time being.

New projects:

The table tennis table has been installed. Two new 'wacky spinners' have been installed into the Adventure Area as a replacement for the vandalised musical chimes which have now been removed. Other equipment being installed over the next couple of weeks is a replacement picnic bench near the cricket outfield, a memorial seat for the late Cllr Steve Clark, replacement seat near to the Community Building and new litter bins and an additional dog bin.

- 12/183 **To receive update on the Garth Hall project:** Cllr Puddephatt reported that he and The Clerk had met with Barry Newton to discuss the possibility of the Parish Council leasing the and managing the hall from a trust. It was agreed that the Parish Council is interested in principle in making the hall into a community resource subject to a feasibility study. Cllr Puddephatt is to draft a proposal to go forward to the British Legion.
- 12/184 **To receive update from the PCSO for August 2012:** Previously circulated. Accepted and received. A copy is to be placed in the Parish Council Newsletter.
- 12/185 **To receive update from PCSO Joint Meeting 11.09.12:**  
 The Clerk gave an update of the joint PCSO Meeting which included a further update of reported crime within the two parishes subsequent to the above report and future Police operations.
- 12/186 **To receive draft Minutes from the NAG Meeting 21.08.2012:** The draft minutes were received and accepted.

- 12/187 **To consider proposal from WBC asking SMPC to contribute £200 towards the cost of installing a replacement kissing gate at the entrance to Footpath 18 (Hammonds Heath):** Cllr Ives moved the above proposal; this was seconded by Cllr Puddephatt and carried unanimously. The Clerk to advise WBC.
- 12/188 **To consider arrangements for the Parish Council Christmas Tree and Carol Singing for 2012:** The Clerk advised that the Englefield Estate is to kindly donate a Christmas Tree again this year for the Fairground. It was agreed that the Community Carol Singing around the Tree arranged for Saturday 15th December 2012 will be the same format as last year including a start time of 6pm.
- 12/189 **To receive information and SMPC response as appropriate on WBC draft consultations:**
- a) **Local Transport Plan Transport Strategy:** This was discussed and it was agreed that Cllr Wingfield would draft a Parish Council response.
  - b) **Gambling Act 2005 – Gambling Policy Review:** No response.
- 12/190 **To receive written report from the District Councillors (circulated):**  
Cllr Lock confirmed that she had reported that the grass had not been cut by WBC in the Drury Lane area, the footpaths between Victoria Road and West End Road and the need to cut back the vegetation and soil encroachment along the footpath from the War Memorial to the pedestrian crossing in The Street and these should be cut back in the near future. The key stage 2 results for St Mary's School this year were well above the national average.  
In the absence of Cllr Mayes the Clerk read out his report which included an update on the resurfacing of the roads in the parish over the last two months. The bus turning area on the Grazeley Road for the School Bus has been completed. Cllr Mayes is to formally propose at the WBC Council Meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012 that Network Rail upgrade the Ufton Nervet level crossing to a full barrier crossing with CCTV linkage to the signal control room.
- 12/191 **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 Puddephatt proposed from the Chair that these be paid which was carried unanimously.
- August Payments
- i. Stratfield Mortimer Fairground Trust (SMPC annual Fairground rental) £2,000 (standing order)
  - ii. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £46.10 (Martin McColl £8.10; Flexiform Ltd additional keys SMPC shed £36.00 and card fee £2.00)
  - iii. Clerk's reimbursable expenses £26.02
  - iv. Stewarts Coaches Ltd (Mortimer Link) £919.15 inc VAT
  - v. R M Weavers (grass cutting Fairground May) £629.87 inc VAT
  - vi. Dad's Shop Ltd £60.61 inc VAT
  - vii. Ed's Garden maintenance (grass cutting Cemetery) £215.00
  - viii. Oakey Garden Services (tree work Cemetery) £792.00 inc VAT
  - ix. Pest UK (Mole treatment Cemetery) £108.00 inc VAT
  - x. Mazars (external audit fee) £660.00 inc VAT
  - xi. SSE Contracting Ltd (installation of two electricity boxes on Grazing Area of the Fairground) £1,560.00 inc VAT
  - xii. Solutions 4 Playgrounds (detailed inspection & maintenance of playground equipment) £330.00 inc VAT
  - xiii. Cartridge Save Ltd (printer cartridges) £64.85 inc VAT
  - xiv. Hedley's Solicitors (professional charges) £840.00 inc VAT
  - xv. I-Next Ltd (email Account annual subscription £28.00)
- September Payments:
- xvi. Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £135.08 (Martin McColl £8.10; Screwfix Ltd £74.99; Flexiform Ltd fixtures for SMPC shed £49.99 and card fee £2.00)

- xvii. Stewarts Coaches Ltd (Mortimer Link) £919.15 inc VAT
- xviii. Dad's Shop Ltd £80.42 inc VAT
- xix. Glasdon UK Ltd (litter bins, dog bins etc for Fairground project) £1,149.51 inc VAT
- xx. Pest UK (Mole treatment equipment Cemetery) £162.00 inc VAT
- xxi. Fieldwork Rest & Play Ltd (repair – parts & labour Playground gate) £270.00 inc VAT
- xxii. Kompan Ltd (part payment for installation of 2 wacky spinners) £417.60 inc VAT
- xxiii. Ed's Garden maintenance (grass cutting Cemetery) £110.00
- xxiv. SLCC Enterprises Ltd (3 day Training Event) £462.00 inc VAT
- xxv. Thames Water (water supply Fairground) Direct Debit £14.49
- xxvi. Clerk's reimbursable expenses £43.84

12/192 **To receive Correspondence (for information only):**

- A letter from the Open Spaces Society asking for a donation. Noted.

12/193 **To receive Minor Matters (for information only):**

- Cllr Earl reported that an independent group had been formed called The Mortimer Music Festival. The group had an inaugural meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> September and is to organise a series of smaller musical events starting in the New Year leading to one bigger event possibly the evening prior to the Fun Day. The Group are looking into funding and fundraising and are to put out a plea for help with marketing. It was agreed that this would be a Parish Council Agenda item for the next meeting.
- Cllr Morsley advised that Mortimer Post Office is not now allowed to keep non delivery items and these have to be collected from Gillette Way in Reading. The Parish Council is to write to Reading Collection Office objecting to this.

12/194 **To receive next Agenda Items:**

- To consider cleaning/repairing of the War Memorial.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 10:07 p.m.