



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Parish Council

held on 14 March 2013 @ 7.30 p.m.

at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road Mortimer

Present:

Councillors: P Wingfield (in the Chair), P Blagden, J Bull, P Challis, A Colaço, M Dennett, J Earl, D Ives, N Kiley, J Morden, D Morsley, A Phillips and A Thorpe.

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public & Press: Three

In the Absence of the Chairman Cllr Puddephatt the Vice Chairman Cllr Wingfield took the Chair.

- 13/45 **To receive Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs: M Lock and G Puddephatt
- 13/46 **To receive any Declarations of Interest:** None
- 13/47 **To resolve to Approve Minutes of Parish Council Meeting 14 February 2013:** The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 14 February 2013 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- 13/48 **To receive Clerk's update (for information only):**
- 13/39** Mortimer Link: Following a conversation with Mr Nick Carter the CEO of West Berkshire Council (WBC) he advised that WBC will continue their contribution towards the Mortimer Link bus service until the end of September 2013. Cllr Wingfield and the Clerk have subsequently met with WBC's Senior Transport Services Officer and discussed some possible options to be able to continue the service and these will be progressed.
- 13/51:** Replacement Christmas Lights: Have now been purchased and a seasonal discount of 20% plus a 10% trade discount was received. The lights will now be stored until needed.
- 13/35:** SMPC contribution towards Willink LC: The Parish Council have realised that a mistake had been made in the calculation for this year's contribution. The Arts & Leisure Dept at WBC has subsequently confirmed this, apologised and sent a revised invoice for £9,478.09 (instead of £9,700).
Further to the previous Minute WBC were also asked for a detailed breakdown of all the town and parish councils in WB district showing their contribution (from their precept) towards the cost of their closest leisure centre. WBC have responded saying to this request saying that as the information requested relates to agreements and contracts other than the agreement with Stratfield Mortimer they will only provide the information on the basis that it is discussed as a closed item and not discussed or minuted as an item for the public or to be published in the minutes.
- 13/17:** The Parochial Church Council have withdrawn their request for a meeting following the statement that SMPC will not be giving any grants at all this year.
- 13/28:** The new website is proceeding.
- 13/23:** The Lottery fund are looking into the Parish Council's concerns over the award made to Mortimer Football Club and will advise of the outcome in due course.
- 12/238:** An email received from the residents of Stephens Close/Stephens Firs enquiring as to whether the Alfred Palmer Trustees have responded to the PC's letter of the 11 January which asked the Trust to draw up a strategic document. The residents are concerned that decisions are being made without the opportunity of all interested parties being given the opportunity to contribute to discussions. When asked the Clerk confirmed that no reply has yet been received and the Clerk was then requested by the meeting to write again requesting a response.
- 13/11:** The promised hire fees from the Hunt have still not been received. A further reminder will now be sent.

12/111: Cemetery extension: The tenant farmer has now surrendered the relevant part of the agricultural tenancy and once SMPC's solicitor receives this document the Clerk will be able to sign the new lease/paperwork.

13/07: Parish Council Office: The terms of reference for the new lease from WBC have not yet been agreed or signed as they are still being negotiated. The current lease is due to expire on 28 March 2013 although SMPC has the assurance of the CEO that WBC will not make the Parish Council homeless whilst on-going negotiations are taking place.

13/30: Parking at the bottom of The Street: Thames Valley Police (TVP) have now taken away the temporary cones as they were being moved further down The Street from where they had originally placed them. They say that this cannot happen as it is not the responsibility of the public to move or place these cones wherever they deem necessary. As a result they have been removed and they will not be put back. PC Hatfield has said that the Police is doing everything they can to deal with this problem; leaflet drops, speed enforcement on The Street and are closely monitoring the situation. He believes that TVP are investing a disproportionately large amount of time on this matter.

13/49 **To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 14.02.2013:**

The Minutes of this Meeting were received, endorsed and adopted. Cllr Morden also gave a verbal update from the planning meeting held earlier that evening on the 14 March 2013.

13/50 **To Receive Planning Decisions and Information from West Berkshire Council (WBC):**

Cllr Morden reported that the following decisions had been received from WBC:

12/0354/FUL 26 Windmill Road. Variation of condition of permission 06/01970/FULD (not built in accordance with approved plans). Variation granted.

Planning Inspectorate appeal decision:

12/01007/FULD: Squirrels Lodge, West End Road. Demolition of existing and replace with 4 bed houses. The appeal is allowed. The road safety issue was the main reason for WBC's refusal in conjunction with the Parish Council's objections. The Inspector has acknowledged that the observed vehicle speeds exceed the 30mph restriction but he believes the visibility splays are adequate.

12/02781/FUL: Alfred Palmer Field Flood Lights: Cllr Morden attended the site visit and subsequent Eastern Area Planning Meeting. The lights as erected, subject to certain baffles and switch off at 8pm were Approved.

13/51 **To consider the content for the Annual Parish Meeting on 17.04.2013:**

Following comments received following last year's Annual Parish Meeting and time restraints for the meeting Cllr Earl proposed to have no verbal reports from local organisations/charities/District Councillors/Police etc and that a better format for the evening would be to ask all the various bodies if they would like to come to what would effectively be a pre-meeting between 7:00pm and 7:30pm where they could talk to interested parishioners with refreshments available. The idea being that they could either sit at a table or in front of a display board (showing information/reports of their organisation) rather than reading a report in the body of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried unanimously.

It was agreed that the format for the main body of the evening would include:

The Parish Council Annual Report

Presentation on the 2013 Community Award

Presentation on the Neighbourhood Development Plan (see Min 13/52)

The parking situation on The Street with representatives from WBC and TVP

Alfred Palmer Memorial Field

Open Forum

It was agreed that the next issue of the Newsletter (delivery 6/7 April) would contain information, Agenda etc. on the Annual Parish Meeting with the aim of encouraging greater attendance.

13/52 **To receive report from the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and an update on the presentation on the NDP to the Annual Parish Meeting:**

The Neighbourhood Development Planning Sub-Committee met on 4th and 11th March. An article on Neighbourhood Plans was published in the February Newsletter and a letter

has been sent to WBC requesting clarification on their help and support and requesting a meeting. Cllr Dennett proposed that the presentation to the Annual Parish Meeting should be structured as: What is a Neighbourhood Plan; the benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan (with examples): a brief explanation of the process of achieving a Neighbourhood Plan; the process of engaging with the Community and a call for issues expertise and volunteers. This was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried unanimously.

13/53 **To receive report on the current West Berkshire Council (WBC) planning consultations:**

The Neighbourhood Development Planning Sub-Committee has considered four planning communications from WBC.

The first required information to update the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as a result of development proposed in the Core Strategy. A potential list has been sent to WBC consisting of: car parking at the station and at St John's and St Mary's schools, provision of toilets on the Fairground, pavements within village, allotment infrastructure, cycleway Mortimer to Burghfield, disabled access at Mortimer station, additional community buildings and additional leisure equipment.

There are currently two public consultations from WBC on 'Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development' and on 'Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL): Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule'. It was agreed that more information was required from WBC to enable the Council to comment sensibly and it was agreed that the Sub-Committee together with the Clerk would obtain this and reply to the consultations.

For information, WBC has issued 'a call for sites' to update the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

13/54 **To receive update on grass cutting for the Fairground:**

Cllr Blagden advised that RM Weavers who have cut the grass on the Fairground for about ten years advised the Parish Council on the 18 February that a decision has been made to close the business. The Clerk using the existing specifically drawn up grass cutting specification is obtaining quotations.

Cllr Blagden proposed that as the grass cutting season is nearly upon us that the Clerk in conjunction with himself and Cllr Wingfield go through the quotations and decide upon and engage the best provider in line with the Parish Council's requirements up to say an annual figure of £3,000 (if there are no surplus funds in the agreed budget at the end of the next financial year the difference to be met from reserves). This was seconded by Cllr Thorpe and carried by 8 in favour to 5 abstentions.

13/55 **To receive update an update on Garth Hall and to agree the next steps:** Cllr Morsley confirmed that the letter had been sent to the Charity Commission. Cllr Morsley gave an overview of her research of the file and advised that she had attended a further meeting with Barry Newton and the Clerk to gain a better understanding of the current situation.

- Cllr Morsley proposed that SMPC register Garth Hall with WBC under the Community Right to Bid Scheme. This was seconded by Cllr Dennett and carried unanimously.
- Cllr Morsley further proposed that to enable SMPC to be prepared and be able to proceed promptly legal advice and a legal opinion would be required from SMPC's solicitors and that the Clerk be authorised to go ahead and engage the Council's solicitors up to a figure of £500. If the quotation is for a figure of between £500 to £1,000 that the Clerk can still proceed after the agreement of the Chairman and/or the Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Dennett and carried unanimously.

13/56 **To receive update and consider the purchase of a replacement picnic bench for the Fairground to replace the one destroyed by arson at a cost of £440.79 plus VAT plus installation costs:** Cllr Wingfield reported that following the last meeting he and the Clerk had investigated alternative picnic tables, including concrete ones, he advised that there are very few on the market and the tables that are cost in the region of £2,000. Cllr Wingfield therefore proposed that the recycled picnic bench stated above be purchased at a cost of £440 plus VAT and installation and this was carried unanimously. The Clerk to action.

- 13/57 **To consider not holding a full Parish Council Meeting in December:** Cllr Wingfield proposed from the Chair that the Parish Council does not hold a Full Parish Council Meeting in December and that in an urgent situation an extraordinary meeting could be called by the Chairman. This was carried unanimously.
- 13/58 **To receive report on The General Power of Competence:** The Clerk had previously circulated a paper outlining the criteria for eligibility to use The General Power of Competence power and scope within the power. It was agreed that a resolution would be put on the April Agenda in order to resolve to use the Power by SMPC. The Clerk was asked to clarify for the next meeting the range of sector specific qualifications a qualified Clerk is required to have.
- 13/59 **To receive written report from the District Councillors:** The Clerk read out a report from Cllr G Mayes and this was received and accepted.
- 13/60 **Finance - To resolve to agree accounts for payment for March:**
 In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Wingfield proposed from the Chair that these be paid which was carried unanimously.
- i. Tennis Court Services Ltd (court cleaning and treatment) £816.00 inc VAT
 - ii. West Berkshire Council (Parish Council Office utility) £486.00
 - iii. A F Jones Stonemasons Ltd (cleaning and restoration of war memorial) £3,039.90 inc VAT
 - iv. Tennis Court Services Ltd (new nets and centre bands) £283.20 inc VAT
 - v. Stratfield Mortimer Community Centre (reimbursement for water used for cleaning tennis courts and hire of Community Centre) £55.00
 - vi. Stewarts Coaches Ltd (Mortimer Link) £919.15
 - vii. Co-Operative Bank Visa, Direct Debit £297.16 (Martin McColls (papers) £9.78; Grabloader (soil for Cemetery) £66.00 inc VAT, Festive Lights (replacement Christmas Lights) £219.38 inc VAT; Card Fee £2.00)
 - viii. Clerk's reimbursable expenses £172.00
 - ix. Thames Water Utilities Ltd (Fairground) D/D £10.74
 - x. Andrew Hazelden (Community Award Plate) £240.00
 - xi. Vision ICT Limited (new website, support and domain name) £630.00 inc VAT
 - xii. Mortimer Maintenance (installation of picnic bench etc) £150.00
 - xiii. Thames Valley Police (PCSO part funding Quarter 4) £1,928.75
 - xiv. BT (Parish Council Office) Direct Debit £220.20 inc VAT
 - xv. West Berkshire Council (photocopying charges) £41.22 inc VAT
 - xvi. Glasdon UK Ltd (picnic table) £528.94 inc VAT
- 13/61 **To receive Correspondence (for information only):**
- Letter from Mid and West Berkshire Local Access Forum asking for volunteer members to sit on the forum.
- 13/62 **To receive Minor Matters (for information only):**
- McColls have advised that they do not wish to continue to administer the tennis court bookings on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Blagden and the Clerk have subsequently made arrangements for the tennis court bookings to be administered by Budgens who have kindly agreed to do this. A letter of thanks to be sent to McColls thanking them for their help and invaluable contribution to the community over many years.
 - Cllr Challis asked if the Clerk could investigate the removal of the unauthorised cars parked on the green and on the entrance to Windmill Common in Longmoor Lane.
 - Cllr Morsley advised that Mr Tom Shorrocks, the Parish Council's representative on Clark's Charity had not attended a meeting for quite some time and asked the Clerk to check when his term or office expires.
 - The Clerk read out a report from Cllr Lock on the AWE Meeting held on 13 March.
 - The Clerk advised that £249.00 of S106 monies has been received from WBC.

13/63 **To receive next Agenda Items:**

- Resolution to use The General Power of Competence.
- The next Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting that SMPC re-consider the proposal to construct (and finance) a path (with security lights) from the Community Centre to the shed on the tennis courts for use by the Youth Club.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 11 April 2013 at 7:30 p.m.

Annual Parish Meeting: Wednesday 17 April 2013 at 7pm St John's Hall

The Meeting closed at 09:05 p.m.