



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Finance & General Purposes Meeting

Meeting held on Monday 17 June 2013 in The Parish Office, Victoria Road, Mortimer at 7:30 pm

**Present:**

Councillors: P Wingfield (Chairman), D Ives, D Morsley, M Dennett, P Blagden, J Morden

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public/Press: None

01. **To receive any apologies:** None
02. **To receive any Declarations of Interest:** None
03. **To receive a financial update from The Clerk:** Following the recent uncertainty regarding the Co-op Bank the Clerk has contacted both SLCC and BALC to obtain advice regarding any compensation cover limit payable under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme should the Bank cease to trade and whether the £85,000 cover applies to Parish Councils. The Clerk was also asked to check with the Parish Council's insurers as to whether there is any indemnity cover. The Clerk reported that the current available s106 balance stands at £7,582.62.
04. **To discuss any possible funding for the Mortimer Link with a view to making a recommendation to the Parish Council:** Cllr Dennett reported that the part funding from West Berkshire Council (WBC) for the Mortimer Link Mini Bus Service to Mortimer Railway Station will end on the 30 September 2013. There is a legal requirement in that the Traffic Commissioner requires 56 days notice to terminate any local bus service. A note asking for feedback from residents was placed in the June Newsletter and two 'opposing' responses were received. It was therefore unanimously agreed to recommend to the July full Parish Council Meeting to cease the service from the end of September and notify the relevant parties.
05. **To receive update on Garth Hall and the Community Right to Bid:** The eight week period has now passed for any appeal on the Community Right to Bid for Garth Hall and as no Appeal was made the Hall has been listed on West Berkshire Council's Assets of Community Value Database. In order that the Parish Council can be ready to act within the two month timescale if Garth Hall was put on the market for sale it was agreed to draw up a business plan for the hall. Councillors Dennett and Morsley, in conjunction with the Clerk, are to prepare a business case and will report back to the F & GP Committee. The Clerk is to ask the solicitor for a legal opinion as to whether any purchaser of Garth Hall would have a completely standard freehold title to the property with no conditions remaining from the Trust Deed.
06. **To receive update on the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Plan process:** The next stage in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan process is to formally submit an application to WBC to designate a neighbourhood area and to draw up a project plan to include engagement with the local community. It was agreed that the Neighbourhood Planning Sub Committee would now operate under the Finance & General Purposes Committee rather than the Planning Committee.

The Parish Plan is due to be refreshed in 2014 and it was agreed that Cllr Wingfield would draft a project plan ( for consideration by the Parish Council) as to how the Parish Plan could mesh alongside the Community Development Plan in order that residents could be clear how to distinguish between them. Once agreed this will be explained in the Newsletter, website etc.

07. **To consider any future projects and capital expenditure:** The Clerk reported that the current safety surface beneath the 4 bay junior swings has worn through in at least two places especially underneath the swing seats. The whole safety surface now needs replacing (as has also been highlighted as a trip hazard all around the outside edge) and the swings themselves fail to meet current EU standards as the distance between the seat sides and the frame supports are insufficient. It was therefore unanimously resolved to recommend to the July Parish Council Meeting that a replacement 3 bay junior swing unit with new safety surface be installed into the footprint of the existing area at an estimated cost of £7,500, to be funded from the remaining s106 monies. The Clerk has obtained four quotations and will analyse these and put forward a recommendation to the Council. It is hoped to action this quickly ahead of the school summer holiday break.

The Committee also considered whether it wished to pursue installing adult outdoor exercise equipment on the Fairground (with an application for lottery grant funding). It was agreed that the Fairground has enough equipment on it at present and the Council does not want to further urbanise it so it was agreed not to pursue this at present.

08. **To further consider a request from Mortimer Youth Club that the Parish Council considers providing a lit path from the front of the Community Building to the Parish Council shed compound:** As the Minute above it was agreed that as the Parish Council do not wish to further urbanise the Fairground, no provision of funding is available and It is understood that space is being provided in the new CiC Building's extension for the use of Mortimer Youth Club not to go further with this request.

09. **To receive information on a letter of complaint received:** The Chairman advised that a letter of complaint had been received from a member of the public regarding the use of the Council's Fairground Premises Licence by other users/organisations including the music event held on the 15 June; hire fees; event advertising etc. The complaint is being dealt with in accordance with the Council's adopted Complaints Procedure and this was discussed by the Committee and a reply formulated and agreed, this to be sent by The Clerk. It was accepted that an important gap in the Parish Council's Fairground Policy framework relating to the use of its Premises Licence by other users/organisations had been identified and this will need to be addressed at a future F & GP Meeting.

10. **To receive information regarding advertising within the village etc:** Further to Minute No. 13/116 from the full Parish Council Meeting Minutes of the 13 June 2013 regarding indiscriminate advertising within the Parish and neighbouring parishes by users of The Fairground, especially for the Music Festival event, a further letter of complaint had been received.

It was agreed to recommend to the full Council that it write to the organisers of the Music Festival to complain about the significant amount of indiscriminate advertising which is in contravention of the Parish Council's Advertising and Fly Posting Policy. In addition it was brought to the Parish Council's attention that the event on the 15 June significantly overran and was in breach of the authorised

finish time of 23:00 hrs as laid down in both the SMPC Agreement to permit the use of the Parish Council's Premises Licence and Condition 5 of the SMPC Fairground Hire Agreement. This will need to be taken into consideration for any future application by the Music Festival to hire the Fairground.

11. **To consider the question of delegation to committees and the drawing up of a set of revised Standing Orders:** It was agreed/confirmed that Committees have the delegated powers to spend money so long as it is budgeted for and conforms to Policies etc.
12. **Future Committee Agenda items:** Fairground Licence Agreement Policy (see Minute 09 above)

Meeting Closed at 9:40 pm