



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the

Meeting of the Parish Council

held on 9 January 2014 @ 7.30 p.m.

at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road Mortimer

Present:

Councillors: P Wingfield (Chairman), T Audsley, P Blagden, J Bull, P Challis, A Colaço, M Dennett, J Earl, D Ives, N Kiley, M Lock, J Morden, D Morsley and A Philips.

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public & Press: Two

14/01 To receive Apologies for Absence: Cllr A Thorpe.

14/02 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

Declarations of Interest: Cllr D Ives (Agenda Item 14/17)

Dispensations: The Clerk confirmed that in accordance with Minute No. 13/203 14.11.2013 dispensation completed forms relating to the Precept/Budget setting had been received from all councillors.

14/03 To resolve to Approve Minutes of Parish Council 14 November 2013: The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 14 November 2013 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

14/04 To receive Clerk's update (for information only):

- **13/146:** The damaged bench outside St John's School: A new bench has been installed by West Berkshire Council.
- **13/186:** Marking out area of Cemetery Extension: Have been in communication with Englefield Estates who are to liaise with the tenant farmer so that we can gain access when the weather improves.
- **13/169:** Sport England Inspired Facilities Grant for tennis court surface: A grant application for £45,000 has been submitted to Sport England to relay the tennis court surface. A response was received on the 8 January advising that one document was missing to complete the application, a Child Protection/Vulnerable Adults Policy. This is to be addressed as a matter of urgency in Agenda item No 14/26 (Minor Matters) below.
- **13/187:** New Lease with West Berkshire Council (WBC) for the Parish Council Office. This was executed on the 5 December 2013.
- **13/192:** Application for WBC Members Bid: We have submitted a Members Bid via Cllr Mollie Lock to WBC for a sports shelter to be placed inside of the tennis courts. We are awaiting a decision.
- Extension to CiC Building: We have been advised that the building works are to start on Tuesday 14 January. The Clerk has liaised with the CiC and the contractor for arrangements for the area of the heras fencing etc.
- **13/151:** Works to Fire Station: Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue have written to advise that the works are now completed and to thank the Parish Council for their support which made it easier. They confirmed that they are now happy to proceed with the arrangements re the formalisation of the double gate access to the Parish Council's car park (raised at the September 2013 Parish Council Meeting). This has now been passed to WBC (landlord) who will now liaise with the Fire Authority.
- Disposal of Refuse from the Community Centre: It has been brought to the Parish Council's attention that on a couple of occasions refuse from Community Centre is being left beside the litter bin in the bus stop layby. The Clerk has liaised with the Community Interest Company (CiC) who run the Community Centre. The CiC thanked her for her efforts in trying to sort this out and have advised that they are now contacting all their users to highlight the part in their hire agreement regarding the taking away any rubbish

after using the hall.

- 14/05 To receive Finance and General Purposes Committee (F & GP) Minutes of 28.11.2013:** The Minutes of this Meeting were received, endorsed and adopted.
- 14/06 To receive Auditor's advice on existing internal processes:** The advice from the Auditor on existing internal financial processes was considered and accepted.
- 14/07 To receive recommendation from F & GP Committee to close the Business Current Account with the Co-Operative Bank Plc:** It was resolved not to close the Co-Operative Bank account at this time. As new regulations concerning the use of electronic banking were about to be enacted a further report would be brought forward when the code of practice dealing with these new regulations had been published. In the interim unity bank would be approached to see if there were any transaction limits which could be put in place on the existing account.
- 14/08 To consider and agree recommendation from F & GP Committee for the scale of Fairground Hire Fees for 2014:** Cllr Wingfield proposed the recommended scale of hire fees for the Fairground as follows:
1. Daily Hire Charges for businesses/profit making organisations, e.g. Fair/Circus etc Increase from £85 to £100 per day.
 2. Daily (event) Hire Charge for non profit organisations to remain at £10 per day. With an addition of £25 for electricity usage (if used).
 3. Annual Hire Charge for Business Use to increase from £285 to £325 per annum.
 4. Annual Hire Charge Tennis Club increase from £700 To £850 per annum (excluding matches)
 5. Annual Hire Charge Cricket Club to remain at £10 per annum
 6. Ad hoc public tennis Adults from £4 per hour per court £5 per hour
 7. Ad hoc public tennis Juniors from £1.50 per hour per court £2 per hour
- This was seconded by Cllr Lock and carried by 12 votes in favour with 2 abstentions.
- 14/09 To consider and agree recommendation from F & GP Committee for the scale of Cemetery Fees for 2014:** Cllr Wingfield proposed the recommended scale of fees for the Cemetery as follows:
- | | Resident | Non-Resident |
|---|----------|--------------|
| Burial Plot | | |
| Interment of adults | 630 | 1840 |
| Interment of children (up to age 16) | 315 | 910 |
| Cremation Plot | | |
| Interment of cremated remains | 200 | 600 |
| Memorial Permit | | |
| Permission to erect a memorial (full burial plot) | 190 | 550 |
| Permission to erect a cremation tablet | 125 | 350 |
| To add 2 nd inscription/replace memorial | 50 | 150 |
- This was seconded by Cllr Kiley and carried unanimously.
- 14/10 To agree recommendation from F & GP to adopt SMPC Facebook Policy:** Cllr Dennett proposed that the Council adopt the SMPC Facebook Policy; this was seconded by Cllr Earl and carried by 13 in favour with 1 abstention.
- 14/11 To consider advice from the National Association of Local Councils regarding a Statement from The House dated 19.12.2013 which states that it is the Government's expectation that all billing authorities continue to pass on the Council Tax Support Grant to Town and Parish Councils to help mitigate any reduction in their taxbase due to the local council tax support scheme:** It was unanimously agreed to write to West Berkshire Council to ask them to strongly re-consider their stance in not passing on any of their grant funding to Town and Parish Councils in West Berkshire. It was also agreed to copy this letter to the Berkshire Association of Local Councils (BALC), the Rt Hon John Redwood MP (Wokingham Constituency), the Rt Hon Richard Benyon MP (Newbury Constituency and the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP (Minister DCLG).

- 14/12 To receive update on West Berkshire Council's (WBC) proposed cuts to bus services affecting Mortimer (13/190):** Cllr Dennett advised that further to Minute Number 13/191 a meeting was held with WBC to discuss their proposed funding cuts to bus services that affect Mortimer:

Route 75/75A Beech Hill to Newbury (calling at Mortimer) Service (one return journey on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays). All Parish Councils on the route were asked to cover the cost. The general consensus among the Parish Councils was that whilst it was a useful service for a relatively small number of passengers, the funds required were far more than could be justified. At present WBC has not made a decision and investigating whether changes in the route and frequency of service would be feasible.

Route 2/2A (Mortimer to Reading) Proposed reduction in late night weekday buses and a possible cessation of Sunday Services. The Parish Council urged WBC to continue to negotiate with Reading Transport to continue these services on a commercial basis. This has been done and it is understood that Reading Transport is now to continue and fully fund these services.

- 14/13 To receive update on WBC's proposed bus infrastructure improvements for Mortimer:**

Cllr Dennett reported that following on from the Agenda Item above, West Berkshire Council is to upgrade those bus stops (7 within the parish) that are regularly served by the Vitality 2, 2A and X2 services. These capital works will be funded by WBC using earmarked S106 monies and will compliment further planned investment during 2014 by the operator Reading Transport Ltd including new vehicles and the availability of the 'NextBuses Real Time Passenger Information' which will enable passengers to use mobile phones to obtain real time bus arrival timings at individual stops. The objectives are also to make boarding and alighting easier, to encourage further use of these high quality frequent services and to improve the look of the village. There will also be minor works and improved signage on the other fourteen stops that are served by limited/school services. It was agreed that this was a positive input and that the Clerk would respond to WBC advising that SMPC support and welcome these proposals.

- 14/14 To receive update on SMPC's responses to the WBC's Consultation to its proposed cuts to services within their 2014/2015 Budget:** Cllr Dennett reported that further to Minute 13/190 the designated councillors duly met and that the Clerk has submitted the responses to the WBC consultation on the proposals that particularly affect Mortimer such as public transport, roads and verge maintenance, libraries, school crossing patrols and planning enforcement. It is understood that the results of the WBC consultation will be published at the end of February.

- 14/15 To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 14.11.2013 and 28.11.2013:** The Minutes of these Meetings were received, endorsed and adopted.

- 14/16 To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council (WBC):**

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

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 13/01552/CERTP | 37 West End Road. A 3m rear extension from the original dwelling. Grant of Lawfulness. Certificate granted under Section 192 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. |
| 13/01826/FUL | Cherry Tree House, Drury Lane. Garage conversion into home office – change of previously approved materials. Approved. |
| 13/01832/FUL | 37 King Street. Change of use from retail A1 (shop/office) to mixed use as retail and dog grooming. Approved. |
| 13/01986/CERTP | 20 Leighfield. Single storey side and rear extension. Grant of Lawfulness. Certificate granted under Section 192 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990. |
| 13/02565/HOUSE | 3 Garth Road. Front single storey and 2 storey side extension. Approved. |
| 13/02567/HOUSE | 43 West End Road. Single storey side and rear extension, tiled lean-to roof to existing rear flat roof. Approved. |

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 201/21/0883. Land at Tower House, The Street. As no representations have been received the TPO is confirmed with effect 3 December 2013, one

Poplar Tree adjacent to the public footpath 50m south of The Street.

14/17 To receive outcome of SMPC Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP):

- The Clerk advised that WBC had advised that when the consultation on the Parish Council's application to designate a Neighbourhood Area closed they had received 10 responses which included one objection to the proposed area. This has now been passed to the Planning Policy Task Group who will make a recommendation.
- As a matter of urgency Cllr Wingfield advised that on the 6 January 2014 WBC Planning Policy Team had sent an invitation to a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) consultation event for Burghfield and Mortimer. The purpose of the PC discussion was to give a mandate and nominate two Councillors to attend the Meeting on the 10 February.

Cllr Ives declared a prejudicial and pecuniary interest in this item:

Cllr Wingfield advised that West Berkshire Council has published its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). This document lists sites that may have potential for housing development and states: *"Most of the sites have been put forward by landowners and developers for future development potential. It is important to note that they are **NOT sites allocated for development**. The decisions as to which sites will actually be allocated will be made in the Local Plan documents and subject to full public consultation before any decision is made."*

The Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) could play an important role in these allocations. From the submitted sites for Mortimer, there are five potentially developable sites which are either within or adjacent to the present settlement boundary. These sites are shown on the summary map for Stratfield Mortimer (available on the Parish Council website). This was debated and Cllr Wingfield proposed that the mandate for those attending the SHLAA event be that the Parish Council's general view favour sustainable development sites that were closer to the village centre. This was seconded by Cllr Earl and carried unanimously. It was further agreed that Cllrs Wingfield and Dennett would attend the meeting on the 10 February 2014.

14/18 To receive information on the next steps for the SMPC NDP:

Cllr Wingfield reported that some draft Visions and Objectives for the NDP to match the subject areas covered by the West Berkshire Plan are to be worked on to be able to take to a public meeting to be arranged for March as it is vital to the success of the NDP to gain input from residents. The NDP Sub Committee will meet and draw up some draft objectives with the aim of bringing these back to the February Parish Council Meeting. Following requests in the Newsletter, website etc so far only one member of the public has come forward to help and a further request for residents to volunteer will be placed in the February Newsletter. A separate information leaflet about the Plan and the Public Meeting will be distributed to every property in the Parish about two weeks before the Meeting. It was agreed that Cllrs Morsley, Audsley and Kiley join the Sub Committee.

14/19 To receive report on the AWE Liaison Committee Meeting of 11 December 2013:

Although Cllr Lock gave a very brief verbal report this item was held over until the next Parish Council Meeting as the Minutes from the AWE Meeting have not yet been received.

14/20 To receive draft Minutes from the NAG Meeting held on 03.12.2013 and any subsequent matters arising: The draft Minutes were received and accepted.

14/21 To receive update on the Parish Council Christmas Tree: Cllr Dennett reported that the Christmas Tree on the Fairground was erected at the end of November and thanked The Englefield Estate for donating and erecting it. Unfortunately due to the very strong winds during December the upper part of the tree became permanently bent (even in calm conditions) and that the decision was taken on Christmas Eve that it would be prudent to fell it. This was properly carried out by the Village Custodian. A vote of thanks was offered to all that helped.

14/22 To receive update and consider further request from Mortimer Cricket Club regarding the installation of cricket nets on the Fairground: The Council considered specific information received from Mortimer Cricket Club regarding the proposed cricket nets, storage location etc and also their benefit to the Club and Village. A storage location, adjacent to the Cricket screens was identified and Cllr Kiley proposed that the Cricket Club be advised that the Parish Council agree in principle, subject to insurance etc, to the Cricket nets on The Fairground. This was seconded by Cllr Bull and carried by 13 votes in favour with one abstention. The Clerk will write and inform the Cricket Club and also advise them of the agreed storage location.

14/23 To receive written report from District Councillors (circulated): The Clerk read out a summary of the report from Cllr Mayes. He reported that the double yellow lines in the lower parts of The Street have reduced the hazards on the bend between Church Lane and Church Farm Barns. He clarified that the regulations regarding parking, ownership and responsibility for maintenance of Church Lane (Byway 7) rests with WBC.

Flooding – There was more sewage flooding in Grazeley Road, at near the mini roundabout at The Street over the Christmas and New Year period, due to storm water from Mortimer Common over loading the foul sewer causing it to flow onto the roadway from the manholes. This situation has existed since before the year 2000 and was being investigated by Thames Water in May 2013 when the cause of the pollution was identified. Cllr Mayes is now pressing Thames Water for their planned course of action to solve the problem. WBC (in conjunction with and funded by The Environment Agency) is expected to undertake a surface water drainage study for the Mortimer Hill – Monkton's Brook – Tun Bridge catchment, starting in late January 2014

14/24 Finance - To resolve to agree accounts for payment for December 2013 and January 2014:

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.

December 2013 Payments:

- i. Ed's Garden Maintenance (grass cutting Cemetery) £150.00
- ii. Oakdale Services (printing Carol Sheets and Poster) £59.40 inc VAT
- iii. i.next Ltd (invoice relating to previous email account) £28.80 inc VAT
- iv. The Benyon Trust (quarterly rental Cemetery Extension) £62.50
- v. Dads Shop Ltd £117.88
- vi. WBC (annual rental West End Road Car Park) £10.00
- vii. Claire Connell (internal audit fee) £235.00
- viii. Wokingham Borough Council (legal advice) £130.00
- ix. The Society of Local Council Clerks (annual subscription) £250.00
- x. Thames Water (Fairground) Direct Debit £10.22
- xi. J E Kirk (reimbursable expenses) £80.02
- xii. The Co-Operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £575.59 (AVG computer antivirus (2 years) £50.99 inc VAT; Cartridgesave (toner cartridge) £73.01 inc VAT; Martin McColls papers £10.74; Post Office (re direction of mail) £120.00; Grabloader Ltd (supply and delivery of top soil) £66.00 inc VAT; Post Office (postage) £6.95; Printerinks.com (toner cartridges) £71.90; Aldermaston Recycling (hire of skip) £174.00 inc VAT and card fee £2.00)
- xiii. SITA (waste disposal Fairground) £72.18 inc VAT

January 2014 Payments:

- xiv. Ed's Garden Maintenance (grass cutting Cemetery) £75.00
- xv. Engravaservice (sign for tennis court) £38.40 inc VAT
- xvi. BT Plc (quarterly bill) Direct Debit £261.12 inc VAT
- xvii. The Co-operative Bank Visa Direct Debit £25.70 (Post Office £16.95; Martin McColl (papers) £6.75 and £2 card fee.
- xviii. Thames Valley Police (PCSO) £1,928.75

- xix. J E Kirk (reimbursable expenses) £51.85
- xx. Dads Shop Ltd £92.25 inc VAT
- xxi. Get Mapping Plc (renewal of map subscription) £84.00 inc VAT

14/25 To receive Correspondence (for information only):

- WBC, Safer Communities Partnership invitation on 3 Feb 2014 to local councils to a presentation by Thames Valley Probation and the Berkshire Magistrates' Bench on the issues involved with a court case in deciding whether an offender should go to prison or receive a community sentence.
- BALC asking for nominations to attend the Royal Garden Party on 21 May 2014 (2 invitations for Berkshire). It was agreed that Cllr Philips could be nominated.
- Emails from Mr Jewell regarding the trees on his boundary with the Fairground. A meeting is to be arranged to meet Mr Jewell along with the Tree Officer from WBC.
- Information leaflet from the Restorative Justice Service West Berkshire on the aims of their service, how it works etc.
- West Berkshire Council's Licensing Newsletter re the Licensing Act 2003 and recent changes. The Clerk is to obtain an electronic copy and will display this on the SMPC website.
- WBC scheduled dates for the WBC District/Parish Conferences are 14 October 2014 and 10 March 2015.

14/26 To receive Minor Matters (for information only):

- Further to Minute Number 14/04 (above) and as a matter of urgency Cllr Wingfield proposed from the Chair that in order to complete the Funding Application to Sport England that the circulated SMPC Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy Statement be adopted. This was carried by 13 votes in favour with 1 abstention.
- The Deformation Act 2013 Order 2013 came into force on 1 January 2014.

14/27 To receive any future Agenda Items:

- To consider whether the Parish Council wish to mark the anniversary of the First World War (2014 – 2018).
- To consider contributing towards the purchase of a 15m tripod ladder for Together in Mission (TIM) for use with the Christmas Tree next year.
- To consider a different arrangement for the Parish Council Christmas Tree.
- To again add a way forward for an additional Station Car Park (already raised in November 2013) in addition to an holistic view on parking in The Street.
- To consider a report on the maintenance/upkeep of the triangle of privately owned woods on the east side of Hammonds Heath. This was passed to the next meeting of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 13 February 2014.

The Meeting closed at 9:50pm