



## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

### Unadopted Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12 June 2014 @7:30pm

at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road Mortimer

**Present:**

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

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public & Press: Three (two left after public questions and one remained for the duration of the meeting).

Due to the overrun of the public questions prior to the meeting the meeting itself did not commence until 07:55 pm

**14/116 To receive any Apologies for Absence:** Cllr J Morden.

**14/117 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:** Cllrs J Bull, J Earl and N Kiley declared a Personal and Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 14/124, Mortimer Music Live (Abba Tribute Night event) and Cllrs Morsley and Blagden declared a Personal and Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 14/124, Mortimer Village Partnership (Fun Day event).

**14/118 To resolve to Approve Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of 8 May 2014:** One sentence that was omitted in Minute No. 14/103 was added and the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of 8 May 2014 were then approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**14/119 To consider appointing further members to the Parish Council's Standing Committees to May 2015:** Cllr A Colaço was appointed to the following Committees; Planning, Communications and Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committees. Cllr T Audsley was appointed to the Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committee and resigned from the Communications Committee.

**14/120 To receive Clerk's update (for information only):**

- **Traveller Encroachment:** The 18 traveller caravans that had forced entry onto the Grazing Area of the Fairground on the 12 May 2014 were served a 24 hour Eviction Notice by the Clerk on the 13 May and the travellers left later that day. The total cost of the encroachment is not yet available but high security padlocks, chains etc have had to be purchased and a vast amount of waste disposed of. The Chairman gave a vote of thanks to the Clerk for her efficient handling of the situation and to the Custodian for his invaluable help.
- **Lime 2 Reading Bus Service:** A letter has been received from West Berkshire Council (WBC) who advise that Reading Buses have informed them of their decision not to serve Mortimer on their Lime 2 (previously known as Vitality 2) local bus service on Sundays from the 1 September 2014. Reading Buses is to withdraw the section of route between Burghfield and Mortimer on Sundays and therefore the service will terminate in Burghfield. The letter explains that it is not commercially viable to extend to Mortimer on the Sunday service. Patronage in Mortimer does appear to be low, with only around 30 people per Sunday from Mortimer travelling on the service.
- **14/105 Renewal of SMPC Annual Insurance:** The annual insurance policy with AoN Insurance has been renewed and the Clerk secured a reduction in premium of £113.00 to £543.79 for the same cover.
- **14/106 Councillor Vacancy:** A notice advertising the vacancy was published on 6 June 2014 and a by-election will be held if at least ten electors of the Parish give notice in writing to WBC by 26 June 2014 claiming such an election. The notice has

been published on the Parish Council Notice Boards, Village Notice Boards, SMPC Newsletter and Website.

- **14/101 Asset Register – depreciation of assets:** This is to be taken to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F & GP).
- **14/65: The post and rail fencing between the grazing area and the environmental strip:** The date for the installation of the fence had to be postponed due to the travellers and was subsequently carried out on 10 June.
- **14/89: Business Rates Relief for properties under £6,000.** Further to minute 14/106 it was reported that the small business rate relief is to continue for 2014/15. As such the clerk would contact WBC and seek to claim such relief for this (and previous years) for the Parish Council Office.
- **14/33 Council Tax Support Grant:** Still no communication from WBC regarding this although an additional £4,083.24 was received within the Precept payment from WBC. This will be taken to F & GP.
- **Cricket Net:** The Cricket Club have written (and Mr A Smith spoke in person in the public questions section of the meeting) to advise that they will be proceeding with the purchase of the mobile cricket net in the coming weeks and thanked SMPC for the constructive help that it has given as to where the net would be placed.

**14/121 To receive a letter from the Planning and Transport Manager, West Berkshire Council regarding Housing Allocation for Stratfield Mortimer:** (previously circulated).

The Planning and Transport Policy Manager from West Berkshire Council said in his letter:

"West Berkshire Council will be consulting on the Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Document (HSADPD) over the summer. This document will allocate the remaining non strategic sites in West Berkshire to meet the Core Strategy requirement for provision of a minimum of 10,500 dwellings for the period 2006 - 2026. This document will be sent for independent examination in spring 2015.

West Berkshire council has also agreed that Stratfield Mortimer can produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the parish.

The NDP should include policies for providing additional new development in the parish but it also has to comply with the West Berkshire planning policies, which is an issue that, due to the timing needs to be addressed.

There are a number of different ways this may be progressed: the clearest two options are;

Option A - West Berkshire council could directly consult on proposals submitted as potential development sites in Stratfield Mortimer as part of the Housing Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD, or alternatively,

Option B - through the Housing Sites Allocation and Delivery DPD, West Berkshire Council could propose that, "A minimum of 100 dwellings will be provided for through the Stratfield Mortimer NDP".

West Berkshire Council members will not make the final decision on any number to be provided in Stratfield Mortimer until its meeting on the 22nd July 2014 so the figure quoted must be treated as indicative. However, if Option B is chosen, then the Parish Council is not limited to just the sites that have been submitted to West Berkshire Council for consideration nor is it restricted by the West Berkshire Council timetable. Any proposed site would however, need to be consistent with the policies of the Core Strategy and be capable of being justified.

I would be grateful therefore, if the Parish Council could indicate if it wishes for option A or option B to be progressed via the July meeting of West Berkshire Council."

**14/122 To agree that the responsibility for the housing site allocations for Stratfield Mortimer will rest with the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group.**

**West Berkshire Council (WBC) will supply the number of dwellings to be allocated through the NDP following consultation and examination of the West Berkshire Council Housing and Delivery Development Plan Document:**

The Council considered the information in Agenda Item 14/121 and Cllr Wingfield proposed that SMPC agree to Option B (that the Housing sites Allocation and Delivery (DPD) for Mortimer be provided for through the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This was seconded by Cllr Audsley and resolved unanimously. Clerk to action.

- 14/123 To receive update from the NDP Steering Group:** Cllr Dennett reported that the Steering Group had met on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> June and with two representatives of WBC Planning Department on 28<sup>th</sup> May. An exhibition/consultation event is planned for 2pm to 4pm on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July in the Fun Day Marquee (on the Fairground). The exhibition will pose a series of questions and responses will be used to formulate a questionnaire to be distributed later in the year. An NDP stall will be present at The Fun Day with a leaflet giving basic facts on the village and the NDP.

Cllr Wingfield requested that the MVP Facebook page be used to help publicise the event on 6<sup>th</sup> July and Cllr Dennett confirmed that this was desirable and permissible under the terms of reference for the Steering Group.

- 14/124 To consider whether to permit the use of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council's Premises Licence (for music and entertainment) for The Fairground by other organisations.** Cllrs J Bull, J Earl and N Kiley declared a Personal and Pecuniary Interest in Mortimer Music Live (Abba Tribute Night event) and Cllrs Morsley and Blagden declared a Personal and Pecuniary Interest in Mortimer Village Partnership (Fun Day event). Cllrs Bull, Earl, Morsley and Blagden left the room for this item, at 08:30 pm. Cllr Kiley remained in the Meeting despite being advised by the Clerk and Chairman that the Code required him to leave the room (6.1). Cllr Dennett advised that Minute No 14/109 (9 May 2014) had agreed to renew the Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Premises Licence for the Fairground. He confirmed that as stated in Minute No 14/109 "the full legal responsibility for compliance with the Licence rests with the licence holder and this cannot be offset, by civil agreement, to any other party." Penalties for non compliance with the condition of licence range up to 6 months imprisonment and/or £20,000 fine for the licence holder.

Cllr Dennett stated that the Parish Council had renewed its Premises Licence (Minute No 14/109). In view of the complaints (and Council resolution No 13/126 11 July 2013) following a breach of the Licence last year it had to ensure that the conditions would not be breached in future.

Cllr Audsley stated that the Parish Council had a duty of care to its employees, specifically the Clerk who as the Licence Holder would be liable for any breaches.

The meeting was informed that the Mortimer Village Partnership Fun Day and the Mortimer Music Live concert scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> July 2014 was being run as one booking on the Fairground and Mortimer Village Partnership had full responsibility for both events which would be covered under their insurance.

After considerable discussion and because the Council wishes to support village events on the Fairground Cllr Dennett proposed that permission be granted for Mortimer Village Partnership to use the SMPC Premises Licence provided that the event be policed by Parish Councillors not connected with either event. This was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried by 7 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention (Cllr Kiley). The Clerk to arrange for a rota to cover the event.

9:00 pm. Cllrs Bull, Earl, Morsley and Blagden returned to the meeting.

- 14/125 To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 08.05.2014:** The Minutes of this Meeting were received, endorsed and adopted.

- 14/126 To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council (WBC):**

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

14/00740/HOUSE	12 Orchard Road. 2 storey rear and side extension. Approved.
14/00725/HOUSE	78 The Avenue. Fencing replacement. Approved.
14/01065/HOUSE	2 Gordon Palmer Close. Garden store. Application not required.
14/00295/HOUSE	75 The Avenue. First Floor extension. Approved.

- 14/127 To consider a way forward for undertaking a Community Plan (formerly called a Parish Plan) Refresh:** Cllr Morsley advised that the current Parish Plan (refresh) expires in November this year and that it would be very beneficial to village organisations and SMPC for a new refresh to be undertaken (the existence of a current Community Plan is very positive in grant applications by village organisations and SMPC in enabling projects wished for by residents to be undertaken). A new Community Plan refresh could be done in parallel with the

NDP and some information gathering could be combined (this has been confirmed as possible by WBC) but it was felt that to do this might cause much confusion with the public. Cllr Morsley also explained that the majority or indeed all the work on a parish plan could be undertaken by members of the public and village organisations rather than members of SMPC (and that there are already such willing to be part of this) but it would be better if there was an SMPC involvement as it is necessary for SMPC to adopt the resultant plan. Cllr Wingfield proposed that the Parish Council supports the Community Plan Refresh and that it considers this again in the Autumn. This was seconded by Cllr Blagden and carried unanimously. It was agreed that this item would be considered at the October Parish Council Meeting.

**14/128 To consider response to WBC re the Tree Felling Application for the triangle of woodland to rear of College Piece and Groves Lea:** Information previously circulated. Cllr Ives reported that WBC Senior Tree Officer had advised that the land owner had applied for a Licence to Fell Growing Trees (with Tree Preservation Orders) on the triangle section of woodland (0.36ha) to the rear of College Piece/Groves Lea. The Application is to fell all of the trees within the middle of the site, leaving a 3/4m buffer around the outside. Once the felling is complete the site will be re-stocked with sweet chestnut to be managed on a 10-20 year coppice rotation. It was agreed to ask for a site visit with the Agent, Forestry Commission and WBC Tree Officer. The Clerk to action. Parish Councillors wishing to attend are Cllrs Ives, Dennett, Audsley, Lock, Earl and Philips.

**14/129 To consider response to WBC Consultation on the Draft Revised Statement of Community Involvement for West Berkshire:** Previously circulated. Cllr Dennett advised that WBC is to consult on the above from Friday 23 May to Friday 4 July 2014. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 WBC is required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI which sets out how it intends to achieve the principle of continuous community involvement). WBC is expected to tailor its SCI to the specific needs and characteristics of the District and involve representatives of all those interested in planning of the area. WBC adopted its first SCI in July 2006. As the planning process has gone through some changes since then, such as the revocation of regional strategies, publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the introduction of Neighbourhood Planning and the Community Infrastructure Levy, the SCI now needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect these. It was agreed that the Clerk, Chairman and Chairman of Planning would respond on behalf of SMPC before the end of the consultation period.

**14/130 To consider response to WBC (Highways & Transport) Permits Scheme Consultation (regarding a revised street works permit scheme):** Previously circulated. Cllr Wingfield advised that WBC are consulting on a proposed new scheme to operate a street works permit scheme. Currently work promoters notify WBC of their intention to occupy the highway to conduct works whereby under the new proposed permit scheme the works promoters would apply for a permit to occupy the highway and conditions to minimise disruption could be imposed. It was agreed to give authority to Cllrs Ives and Wingfield in conjunction with the clerk to respond to the consultation on behalf of SMPC.

**14/131 To consider WBC Traffic and Road Safety's Team's assessment and costing for possible works to the footway area fronting 36/38 Victoria Road (the Café and empty shop unit):**

Cllr M Dennett (Chairman) declared a Personal and Pecuniary Interest as a neighbouring property and left the room at 09:35pm.

Cllr Earl (Vice Chairman) took the Chair for this item.

Cllr Ives advised that WBC Traffic and Road Safety Team (following a site visit) sent in their assessment of what works may be required to provide a raised kerb footway at the location fronting No. 36/38 Victoria Road (outside the café and the unoccupied shop/business) a an estimated cost of £5,500. This figure does not take into account any shallow depth underground services such as BT or fibre-optic cabling which may have to be relocated at additional cost following a Utility C2 search. WBC confirmed that these works would not fall into their approved works programme for 2014/2015 and asked whether the Parish Council may consider funding if they consider it a high priority. They also advised that a number of

matters should be considered when assessing whether the benefits outweigh any potential negative impact this change of layout may have. The removal of the 'layby' may have a detrimental effect on the businesses which rely heavily on attracting passing trade. After a discussion Cllr Ives proposed that WBC's proposal be accepted. This was not seconded and Cllr Bull proposed that SMPC approach the land owner to try and enable the marking of a pathway outside the shop (on their land). This was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried by 10 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. The Clerk to action.

Cllr Dennett returned to the room at 09:45pm and returned to the meeting and took the Chair.

- 14/132 To receive a précis of the Play Space RoSPA annual Safety Inspection Report for 2014:** The Clerk reported that a Play Area Safety Inspection was carried out by a RoSPA Inspector on 28 April 2014 and the overall risk rating for the play space on the Fairground is a Medium Risk with no immediate action identified. The Inspector commented overall the playground is in good condition and appears to be well maintained. Each individual item is assessed and given a risk level and risk scores e.g. a score of 4 to 7 Low Risk and 8 to 12 Medium Risk. Only one piece of equipment was scored a medium risk (of 8) which is the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) which affected the whole overall rating. The inspector explains that there is nothing wrong with the MUGAs but this is just the universal risk rating for a MUGA. The other scores for all the other equipment were in the very low and low risk categories.
- 14/133 To receive update on the Tennis Courts Refurbishment Project:** Cllr Dennett that the contractors have provided a revised quotation. This is to remove the windbreak netting following recommendation from the fencing contractors who advised that they do not recommend any type of windbreak is fitted to the existing fencing as strong winds could cause damage to the existing fencing by causing the posts and concrete foundations to lean over. The netting item has been replaced with a 'Serve Ace tennis practice wall' to be inserted into the fence itself. The fencing contractors have confirmed that there are no problems with wind loading. This is to be installed at the end of one of the courts. The local tennis coach is very enthusiastic about such a facility which would be helpful in coaching as will enable individuals to practice by themselves. Sport England has confirmed that they are happy with the proposed changes and the project can now progress.
- 14/134 To receive update on the Cemetery Maintenance Contract:** Cllr Wingfield advised that the grass cutting contractor for the Cemetery is not able to continue with his contract. C & D Facilities who are the contractors for the Fairground stepped in and carried out the routine grass cutting and hedge cutting. They will continue to do this for the time being until such time as other contractors can be asked to quote for the work.
- 14/135 To receive report from the Willink Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee:** In the absence of Cllr Morden the Chairman read out his written report which advised that a meeting took place on 23 April and Cllr Morden attended. Parkwood Community Leisure is meeting all the terms of the contract with WBC. Usage for the year 2013-2014 shows an increase of 18.1% over 2012-2013. A new pool water temperature control has been installed. The refurbishment of the male and female 'dry side' (i.e. not swimming) has now been completed and has received positive comments. Lack of parking at peak times continues to be a problem and constraints of space make it insolvable.
- 14/136 To discuss marking Alan Thorpe's retirement from the Parish Council:** Cllr Blagden asked for ideas to mark the retirement of Alan Thorpe. After a discussion Cllr Audsley proposed that a framed certificate be presented by the Parish Council Chairman at the Fun Day. This was seconded by Cllr Ives and carried unanimously.
- 14/137 To receive Minutes from NAG Meeting 8 April 2014:** Previously circulated. These were received and accepted.
- 14/138 To receive District Councillors' Reports:** Cllr Lock's report included: The Padworth Bridge is to be reconstructed to enable the electrification of the line and the road will be closed from mid September for approximately six months. A planning application was passed in April 2008 for the Bevers but the site has been left in a hazardous state. Local residents have made complaints and WBC officers are to inspect the site to see if there is a breach of the original planning consent.
- 14/139 Finance – To resolve to agree accounts for payment for June 2014:**

In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations all the following items for payment were considered together. Cllr Dennett proposed from the Chair that these be paid which was carried unanimously.

- i. Sita UK Ltd (Fairground bin) Direct Debit £46.02 inc VAT
- ii. Thames Water (Fairground) Direct Debit £8.82
- iii. Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Berkshire Branch (training day) £25.00
- iv. Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA Annual Report Fairground) £168.00
- v. Nothing But Padlocks (replacement padlocks etc for Fairground gates) £689.36 inc VAT
- vi. J B Corrie & Co. Ltd (repairs to shed compound gates Fairground) £570.00 inc VAT
- vii. C & D Facilities Ltd (grass cutting April/May Fairground) £766.32 inc VAT
- viii. Oakdale Services (PC Newsletter) £315.00
- ix. Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) (annual membership) £36.00
- x. The Benyon Trust (quarterly lease rental Cemetery Extension) £62.50
- xi. Ed's Garden Maintenance (grass cutting Cemetery) £150.00
- xii. Dads Shop Ltd £45.79 inc VAT
- xiii. Clerk's reimbursable expenses £36.33
- xiv. The Co-Operative Visa Direct Debit £795.37 (Flexiform Repairs for damage to shed £449.48 inc VAT; Post Office Counters £20.00; McColls £8.95; McVeigh Parker & Co Ltd replacement part for Fairground gate £30.80; Aldermaston Recycling skip hire for Fairground £216.00 inc VAT; Rawlins Paints anticlimb paint for tennis courts £68.14 inc VAT and card Fee £2.00)
- xv. West Berkshire Council (quarterly lease rental for Parish Council Office) £750.00
- xvi. Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd (SMPC accounts package annual support and maintenance fee) £130.80 inc VAT
- xvii. Open Spaces Society (annual subscription) £45.00

**14/140 To receive Correspondence (for information only):**

None

**14/141 To receive Minor Matters (for information only):**

- Cllr Earl advised that Mortimer Youth Club unfortunately closed on the 11 June 2014 mainly due to lack of leaders. The Duke of Edinburgh 'Mortimer Open Award' will continue and the residual money from the Youth Club has been transferred.
- Cllr Earl advised of the 'Village Cup' an annual cricket match the village v Mortimer Cricket Club to be held on the 29 June. It was suggested that it might be a good idea for the Parish Council to purchase a cup for the event and dedicate it to Alan Thorpe for his service to the Village.
- Cllr Audsley proposed that the Parish Council offer the MVP congratulations on being awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. The Clerk was asked to send an official letter of congratulations from the Council.

**14/142 To receive any future Agenda Items:**

- The St John's Hall Management Committee have requested that SMPC considers having a Village Notice Board to be sited outside St John's Hall alongside the St John's Hall Notice Board.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 10 July 2014

The Meeting closed at 10:30pm