



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council
Unadopted Minutes of the
Parish Council Meeting
held on 11 September 2014 @7:30pm
at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road Mortimer

Present:

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

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public & Press: Ten

14/163 To receive any Apologies for Absence: Cllrs P Blagden, N Kiley, J Morden.

14/164 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations: Cllrs Wingfield, Ives and Dennett declared a personal Interest in item no. 14/171 as members of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group.

14/165 To resolve to Approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 10 July 2014:

Cllr Wingfield asked that the abstention in Minute No 14/159 be annotated to reflect that he declared an interest and to read ('Cllr Wingfield as he Declared an Interest in this item re reimbursement of expenses xviii below). This change was made and initialled by the Chairman and the Parish Council Meeting Minutes of 10 July 2014 were then unanimously approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Dennett moved from the Chair to move to Agenda Item No 14/167 before Agenda Item 14/166 below.

14/166 To receive Clerk's update (for information only):

- **14/89 Small Business Rates Relief** After much correspondence West Berkshire Council (WBC) have applied the Small Business Rates Relief to the Parish Council Office for the financial year 2014/2015 and therefore have amended their records and reversed the charge of £800.70 previously invoiced but not paid.
- **13/139 Tennis Court Refurbishment:** The contractors for the project are to carry out some remedial work to the newly laid tarmac surface on the tennis courts. Because sections of the court surface are being re-laid this unfortunately means that following this work a further three week period has to pass before the acrylic coating and marking can be applied to the surface and unfortunately this will delay the completion of the project until mid October.
- **14/44 Sports Shelter Tennis Courts:** The new sports shelter has now been delivered and erected. Thanks to the Custodian and Cllr Bull for their help with this.
- WBC have agreed to refund the annual charge for 2013/2014 of £976.64 for the play equipment inspections carried out by them due to the fact that SMPC have not been receiving any reports or have been unable to access the WBC online system to view. The custodian has been booked onto a RoSPA Playsafety Routine Playground Inspection Course on 9 October with a view that he will in future carry out the weekly inspections on behalf of SMPC.
- S106 developer contribution has been received from WBC of £920.65 this is in relation to the planning application for the conversion of outbuildings adjacent to Little Park Farm.
- Superfast Broadband: WBC have advised that Cabinets P1 and P2 (Drury Lane and Victoria Road) have been upgraded to enable access for over 1000 premises to fibre broadband to those wishing to upgrade their broadband service. The article to be displayed on the SMPC website and Newsletter. Cllr Challis advised that the seat by the old telephone exchange (Victoria Road) which was moved for the installation had

not been put back correctly and the Clerk will look into this.

14/167 To consider options regarding the current Adopted SMPC Advertising Policy:

Cllr J Earl declared a personal interest in this item as a member of Mortimer Music Live. Information and current policy previously circulated to all councillors. Cllr Dennett gave a background to the policy and explained that following recent complaints on the restriction of advertising an article was placed in the September issue of the SMPC Newsletter asking for public opinion on this matter. Following discussion and consideration of comments received and from the public session prior to this Council Meeting Cllr Dennett proposed from the Chair that a small working group be set up to look at the SMPC Policy and legal implications etc. and report back to the full Council. This was put to the vote and carried by 7 votes in favour with 1 against and 2 abstentions. It was then further agreed that the membership of the working group be Cllrs Earl, Audsley, Ives and Dennett. The Chairman concluded by thanking the public for their comments and confirmed that these will be fed into the process.

14/168 To receive and confirm Finance & General Purposes Committee (F & GP) Part 1 Minutes of 1 September 2014: The F & GP Committee Minutes of 1 September 2014 were received, endorsed and adopted.

14/169 To agree recommendation from the F & GP Committee regarding the procedure for the forthcoming Co-Option for 2 councillors for Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council:

The F & GP Committee recommended to follow the previously used/agreed procedure followed i.e. that the interview of and selection of candidates be delegated to the members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It did consider whether all members of the Full Parish Council should be invited to participate and vote at the co-option interviews but it was felt that this could be off putting to candidates. The Committee also agreed to recommend the following:

- To employ a fair and transparent process to assess the suitability of proposed candidates;
- To use the procedure used previously by SMPC and laid down by NALC to include the confidential cascading voting procedure.
- That the Chairman and Vice Chairman review and agree the interview questions.

The closing date for applications is Noon on Tuesday 23 September 2014 and it was agreed to hold the interviews in the Methodist Church Hall on Monday 29 September 2014. It was further agreed to recommend to the Full Council that the Chairman calls an Extraordinary Council Meeting on Wednesday 1 October 2014 to formally agree the recommendations of the Committee. By having this meeting it would enable the successful candidates to attend the next full Parish Council Meeting on the 9 October 2014 as Parish Councillors.

The Chairman asked Committee Members to be mindful of SMPC Standing Orders 27.1 and 27.2 'Canvassing of and Recommendation by Members'.

Cllr Dennett proposed that the above recommended procedure for co-option from the F & GP Committee be followed and this was seconded by Cllr Bull, put to the vote and carried by 5 votes in favour, 3 against and 2 abstentions.

Cllr Dennett then further proposed that he call an Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 1 October to discuss just this one item. This was seconded by Cllr Bull and carried by 8 votes in favour with 2 abstentions.

The Clerk to check the hall availability for these dates and co-ordinate the interviews etc.

14/170 To receive update from the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and agree nomination for the replacement SMPC Councillor position on the NDP Steering Group:

Results of the exhibition held on the Fairground on July 6th are on the SMPC website. The posters from this exhibition were subsequently displayed in Budgens and provided additional feedback. Cllr Ives expressed an interest in July in joining the Steering Group. Cllr Dennett (as Chairman of the Steering Group) had invited him to join the group, given his experience in planning issues and the heavy workload of the group. According to the Terms of Reference, Parish Councillors should be nominated and Cllr Dennett proposed that Cllr Ives nomination be retrospectively from the chair and this was carried unanimously.

The Steering Group had concentrated on formulating a response to the WBC Housing Sites

DPD Preferred Options Consultation. It has met with two senior planners at WBC and with Englefield Estates and had submitted its response online. This response, with some additional material, was formed the basis of the SMPC response agreed by F&GP (see next item). The Steering Group is in the process of setting up its own website (as done by most NDPs), which has been donated by Mr John Hanawin. The next stage is to develop policies which will guide the allocation of sites if option 1 is accepted by WBC.

14/171 To agree the F & GP Committee's response to the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD Preferred Options Consultation: previously circulated.

Cllr Dennett outlined the response to this consultation which had been agreed by F&GP. The major points were:

There appeared to be a gross over allocation of dwellings in the East Kennet Valley and that Mortimer allocation was a disproportionate share in EKV and that the correct number for Mortimer was 100 ± 10 up to 2026;

Settlement boundaries should be tightly drawn around the preferred sites;

SMPC strongly supports option 1 (NDP allocates housing sites);

The criteria for Gypsies and Traveller Sites do not appear to have been applied consistently;

The residential Parking Policy for New Development appears to underestimate requirements.

Cllr Dennett proposed that the Parish Council approve this response. This was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks was offered to the NDP Steering Group for preparing a detailed and comprehensive document. The Clerk to submit the consultation responses tomorrow (Friday 12 September) in order to meet the WBC deadline for comments.

14/172 To receive information on the part funded PCSO role in preparation for a joint meeting with members of the Partner Parish Councils (Burghfield and Sulhamstead) and Thames Valley Police:

The Clerk advised that a joint presentation to the three partner parish Councils (SMPC, Burghfield and Sulhamstead) by Thames Valley Police on the current and future role of the part funded PCSO is to take place on 8 October. All council members from the three partner councils are invited to attend but the meeting is not open to members of the public.

14/173 To advise SMPC of the outcome of a Councillor Complaint from WBC (for information only):

The Monitoring Officer from West Berkshire Council advised SMPC of the outcome of a complaint made against Cllr Julian Earl which the Assessment Sub-Committee found there was a breach of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. A notice has been placed in the Reading Chronicle Newspaper (4 September 2014) and on the WBC website. The Monitoring Officer asked SMPC to ensure the Decision Notice was read out at the next Parish Council Meeting and reported in the Parish Council's Minutes.

The Clerk read out the following statement:-

'A formal complaint was made to West Berkshire Council's Monitoring Officer against Councillor Julian Earl (Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council).

The Council's Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person undertook an initial assessment of the complaint.

At a meeting held on 21 August 2014, having taken into account the complaint, information supplied by the clerk, and a response from the subject member the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person found that Councillor Earl failed to comply with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

The failure was as follows:

Councillor Earl breached the Code of Conduct by failing to register an interest on his Register of Interests form within the prescribed 28 day period. The breach occurred for the period January 2013 to June 2014. As the breach had subsequently been rectified it was inappropriate to refer the matter to the Police particularly in view of the disclosures made by Councillor Earl at various meetings which were recorded in the minutes.

It was agreed that a notice of the breach should be placed in a local newspaper.'

To receive information on the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (which allows people to film, blog, tweet or use other types of social media to report on Council Meetings): This item was held over until the 9 October Meeting as the Clerk is to attend a briefing session on the new Regulations which will give an overview and practical advice on how to meet the new requirements on 2 October 2014.

14/174 To receive SMPC External Audit Report from Mazars for year ended 31.3.2014: The Clerk/RFO reported that Messrs Mazars (external auditors) have returned the Council's Annual Audit Return for the year to 31 March 2014 duly audited with an unqualified opinion. A copy of the public notice advising of the conclusion of the audit will be displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards.

14/175 To consider under Standing Order No. 36.1 to suspend Standing Order No 1.1 (Meeting Dates) in order to change the date of the January 2015 Full Parish Council Meeting to Thursday 15 January 2015 due to the New Year Bank Holiday: Cllr Dennett proposed the above resolution. This was seconded by Cllr Earl and carried unanimously. Therefore the date of the January 2015 full Council Meeting will be held on Thursday 15 January 2015.

14/176 To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 10.07.2014, 05.08.2014 and 01.09.2014: The Minutes of these Meetings were received, endorsed and adopted.

14/177 To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council (WBC):

In the absence of Cllr Kiley Cllr Audsley reported that the following decisions had been received from WBC:

14/00572/FUL 37-39 King Street. Change of use from a workshop for the maintenance of motor vehicles owned and/or operated by the lawful occupiers of the site only to a B2 (General Industrial) for vehicle servicing repair and the touching up of vehicle bodywork using odourless low VOC spray paint.

Refusal:

The B2 general industrial use results in an over intensification of a commercial use within an established residential area. The site is bordered by residential properties along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries. The servicing and repair of vehicles at the site would generate a level of noise which is harmful to the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore odour from the spraying of vehicles at the premises would impact on the quality of the residential environment. For these reasons the development fails to make a positive contribution to the quality of life in Mortimer and is therefore contrary to various planning policies. The proposal is supported by a contrived parking layout which in practice, due to issues with manoeuvring vehicles into and out of spaces, will provide for less parking than demonstrated. A number of the spaces are not accessible when others are in use. The lack of parking on site will result in on street parking on King Street and Windmill Road, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic, contrary to the National Policy Framework and WBC Core Strategy documents.

14/01154/HOUSE Pine Dene Sweetzers Piece. Two storey side extension, dormer window to rear and single storey rear extension. Granted.

14/01194/HOUSE 7 Sweetzers Piece. Demolish existing side extension. Construct new two storey side extension. New dormer to rear. Two roof windows to front elevation. Granted.

14/01350/HOUSE 42 St John's Road. Rear ground floor extension. Granted.

14/01666/FUL Sewage Treatment Works, The Street. Proposed MCC Kiosk to house electrical control equipment associated with sewage treatment works upgrade scheme. Granted.

14/01731/FUL Budgens Stores, 9-11 Victoria Road. The retention of an Automated Teller Machine. Granted.

14/01527/HOUSE 20 Stephens Close. Conservatory. Granted.

- 14/01549/HOUSE Proposed extended dormer. Granted.
 14/01671/HOUSE Seasons, Summerlug. Single storey side extension and re-roof rear extension following demolition of existing side extension.

14/178 To receive information on the review of Polling Stations within the District (WBC): It is a requirement of Parliament that a review of Polling Places is held on a regular five yearly cycle by District Councils. WBC is proposing that the Polling Place for Stratfield Mortimer will continue to be at the Community Centre, The Fairground Mortimer.

14/179 To receive the Burghfield and Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) AGM Minutes of 05.08.2014: These were received.

14/180 To receive District Councillors' Reports: Cllr Lock's report included:

- Due to the railway bridge being temporarily closed for renovation the Padworth Recycling Site is to be closed to the public from 22 September for approximately six months.
- The Number 2 Lime Bus Service for Sundays and Bank Holidays between Burghfield and Mortimer ceased on 1 September. Cllr Lock reported that Reading Buses said the service was not commercially viable unless West Berkshire Council agreed to part fund the service on those days so now the buses terminate at Burghfield Village Hall. There is a petition being circulated in both Mortimer and Burghfield which asks for the decision to be re-considered.

Cllr Mayes' report included

- **Forestry Felling Licence for land at College Piece:** There is no update on the Forestry Commission on the licence Application.
- **Longmore Lane:** The potholes have been repaired and the fly tipped Sofa removed by Veolia for WBC. The asset sale of WBC land near the Lukin Spur driveway is being reviewed and is likely to be refused by WBC Officers.
- **Bus Transport Contracts:** The 2/2A service on Sundays between Mortimer and Burghfield from 1st September 2014 is being heavily criticised by the District Councillors who will continue to press for its re-instatement and have criticised the economic logic behind Reading Buses' decision. WBC has not been able to provide a Link mini bus service. The petition will be presented to WBC at the next opportunity.
- **Flooding in Mortimer:** WBC is monitoring infrastructural proposals by Thames Water and on the Monkton's Brook drainage catchment area feasibility study being undertaken by WBC Consulting Engineers.

14/181 Finance – To resolve to agree accounts for payment for August/September 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.

August:

- i. Sita UK Ltd (waste disposal Fairground) Direct Debit £46.02 inc VAT
- ii. Southern Electric (Fairground) Direct Debit £52.44
- iii. Co-Op Visa (The Big Print Ltd (NDP) £183.00 inc VAT and £2 Card Fee) £185.00
- iv. Unity Trust Visa (Martin McColl (papers) £7.16, Post Office £13.75) £20.91
- v. Stratfield Mortimer Fairground Trust (annual lease rental Fairground) £2,000.00
- vi. Mortimer Maintenance £1,250.00 (£1,000 base sports shelter (grant WBC) and £250 for replacement permanent hole for Christmas Tree)
- vii. BALC (new Councillor Training Course x 2) £96.00 inc VAT
- viii. J E Kirk (reimbursable expenses) £30.32
- ix. Metrosigns 2000 Ltd (replacement part for Notice Board £15.60 inc VAT)
- x. C & D Facilities Ltd £1,158.12 inc VAT (Grass Cutting July Fairground (F/G) £378.12 inc VAT; Watering Lime Trees Fairground £360, Grass Cutting Cemetery x 2 £420.00)
- xi. Dads Shop Ltd £27.40 inc VAT

September:

- xii. Sita UK Ltd (waste disposal Fairground) Direct Debit £46.02 inc VAT

- xiii. Thames Water (Fairground) Direct Debit £18.91
- xiv. Co-Op Visa (£2 Card Fee – Account to now be closed) £2.00
- xv. Unity Trust Visa (Doubles Garage – fuel £6.50, Post Office £7.15, Lister Wilder Ltd (equipment) £588.98 inc VAT, Cartridgesave (printer cartridges) £160.22 inc VAT, Martin McColl (papers) £10.74, £773.59 inc some VAT
- xvi. Mazars LLP (external audit fee) £480.00 inc VAT
- xvii. J E Kirk (reimbursable expenses) £44.60
- xviii. Oakdale Services (Newsletter printing) £438.90
- xix. Mant Leisure (sports shelter Tennis Courts – grant WBC) £4,039.20 inc VAT
- xx. C & D Facilities Ltd £1,391.16 inc VAT (Grass Cutting August Fairground (F/G) £383.16 inc VAT; maint. work pond area £84.00, Grazing Area grass cut £309.00, Heath End Common Pond area £195.00, Grass Cutting Cemetery x 2 £420.00)
- xxi. Metrosigns 2000 Ltd (replacement part for notice board) £15.60 inc VAT
- xxii. Mr J Bull (reimbursement for Council Expenses) £8.36 inc VAT
- xxiii. Dads Shop Ltd £43.30 inc VAT

14/182 To receive Correspondence (for information only):

- Letter from a parishioner regarding Pavement Parking.
- Letter from a parishioner regarding the cessation of the Lime 2 bus service to Mortimer on Sundays.

14/183 To receive Minor Matters (for information only):

- WBC has adopted its Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule on 4 March 2014 and will implement the Charging Schedule on 1 April 2015. This will largely replace S106.
- To report to WBC that there are no middle line road markings outside Budgens and the roundabout at Strawberry Fields needs re-painting.
- To be made aware of speeding within the village and of vehicles taking a short cut through the car park outside St John's Church.

14/184 To receive any future Agenda Items:

- To receive recommendations from the working group on the Advertising Policy.
- The setting up of a Parish Plan Refresh 2 Group.
- To consider the SMPC Premises Licence for the Fairground for 2015.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 9 October 2014

The Meeting closed at 9:55pm