



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the

Parish Council Meeting

held on 13 November 2014 @7:30pm

at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road Mortimer

Present:

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

Clerk: Mrs J Kirk

Public & Press: One

Before the commencement of the meeting a minute's silence was held to remember Cllr John Morden who had sadly passed away. Cllr Morden had been a member of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council for 23 years.

14/207 To receive any Apologies for Absence: Cllr A Colaço

14/208 To receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations and to consider any Applications for the Grant of a Dispensation from Members and whether the Full Council grants itself a Dispensation in accordance with the Localism Act 2011: The Clerk advised that all members present had applied for a Grant of Dispensation. Cllr Dennett proposed that the Council grant itself a Dispensation. This was seconded by Cllr Kiley and carried unanimously.

14/209 To resolve to Approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 09.10.2014:

The Parish Council Meeting Minutes of 9 October 2014 were unanimously approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

14/210 To receive Clerk's update (for information only):

- The Clerk advised that following the death of Cllr Morden she had advised West Berkshire Council (WBC) and the vacancy has been advertised and will be filled by a by-election if one is called by 10 electors.
- 14/193: Question re Openness Regulations. Details of the full response from the BALC solicitor can be seen in the F & GP Minutes of 03.11.2014.
- Inspector McKeown of Thames Valley Police (TVP) advised that the current partially funded PCSO Olivia Davies had left TVP on 13 October 2014 which has currently left the part funded position vacant. The partner councils will therefore cease payment until the post is filled and TVP will advise when this is the case.

14/211 To receive the Finance and General Purposes (F & GP) Committee Minutes (Part 1) of 03.11.2014: The Minutes of this meeting were approved, endorsed and adopted. Cllr Wingfield drew attention to Minute No 11 which asks if any Council member had a request for a budget item for the 2015/2016 budget for consideration by the F & GP Committee to submit them to the Clerk by 30 November 2014.

14/212 To receive Internal Auditor's half yearly report: The Internal Auditor's report, advised "During my visits on 22nd and 23rd October 2014 I reviewed the accounts for the first six months of the current financial year. The internal controls appear to be working satisfactorily. I would however like to make the following observations.

Payroll

The Employment Allowance, which gives relief on the first £2,000 of Employer National Insurance contributions, was claimed in month 5 of the current financial year. Unfortunately public bodies (including parish and town councils) are not eligible for this allowance. During my visit, the settings in the payroll software were adjusted to notify HMRC that the Council is not

eligible for the allowance. The reports run for the October payroll should be checked to ensure that the software is once again including the Employer National Insurance contributions in its calculations. I note that Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council have adopted a triple authority procedure for the online payment of payroll via Unity Bank. This fulfils the requirement to “maintain robust controls on payments as an integrated part of [the] overall financial control system”.

- 14/213 To consider, following an earlier meeting with Thames Valley Police and supporting information, whether or not the Full Council recommends to the F & GP Committee that SMPC enters into a new one year tripartite Contract for a Partially Funded PCSO from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, at an annual contribution of £7,870.44 (increase from £7,792.50) and whether to include this in the Draft Precept Budget for 2015/2016:** Parish Councillors had a meeting with Inspector McKeown of Thames Valley Police (TVP) prior to this meeting regarding a further one year PCSO contract for 2015/2016. Further Information was previously circulated to all Councillors and this was discussed at length. The proposed new contract received from TVP by the three Partner Councils from Thames Valley Police is for a period of one year from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. Cllr Butcher proposed that Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council continues with the part funded PCSO contract for a period of one year. This was seconded by Cllr Richardson and carried by 11 votes in favour to 2 against. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the partner Councils. It was agreed to raise the profile of the PCSO in the Parish Council Newsletter and also request that the PCSO attends Council Meetings on a regular basis.
- 14/214 To receive update from the Clerk on the current position with the Cemetery Extension and agree the Clerk may put in place the works needed to comply with the WBC Planning Consent and the terms of the Lease within the permitted time scales using budgeted earmarked funds:** The Clerk reported that the meeting took place to mark out the Cemetery extension with Englefield Estate and the tenant farmer. In order to meet the terms of the planning consent before it expires at the end date of September 2015 and to be in line with the terms of the Lease Cllr Dennett proposed from the chair that the Clerk could put the work in place up to a cost of £3,000 and this was unanimously agreed. Clerk to action.
- 14/215 To receive any update on the Tennis Court refurbishment and to agree to settle the invoices of £50,342.40 for the tennis court refurbishment works and £146.10 inc VAT for the 2 x signs to be paid once the corresponding funding to reimburse is received from the Sport England Grant and the receipt of the Completion Certificate from the Contractor:** Cllr Bull reported that the contractor Blakedown is still to come back to address some minor snagging matters such as fitting centre straps to the court nets. Cllrs Richardson, Bull and Dennett are to assess the courts and once the details are received by the Clerk she will go back to the contractors and Sport England to try and get these matters resolved. Cllr Dennett proposed from the chair that once everything is in order the payment can be made to the contractor. This was unanimously agreed.
- 14/216 To receive and agree the proposal set up document for a separate Stratfield Mortimer Community Plan (formerly Parish Plan) 2nd Refresh Group:** The draft document was previously circulated. Cllr Dennett advised that he and the Clerk had had a conference call with West Berkshire Council and taken advice on the draft document and subsequently met with Rebecca Barker. £2,000 of funding for the Community Plan Refresh was included in the 2014/2015 Parish Council budget. It was agreed the Parish Council will fund the group to go away and independently draw up the plan. The document was discussed and paragraph 7 was highlighted which states that the Parish Council would need to be consulted on questions to be included in any public questionnaires. Cllr Dennett proposed that document be adopted and the following wording be included: ‘that the Group would seek to include a good cross section of representation from other community groups in the village and give regular updates to the Parish Council’. This was seconded by Cllr Earl and carried unanimously.

- 14/217 1. To receive update on the Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group:** Cllr Dennett advised that the Steering Group had met three times on the 10 and 24 October and 7 November. The Minutes of these meetings are available on request to the Parish Clerk. The Group has met with representatives from land owners Englefield Estate and developers Barton Wilmore. They have discussed and are looking into administrative support and how to get options to go out to public consultation. It was agreed that the doctor's surgery and Heads of St John's and St Mary's should be approached to discuss any requirement for a new enlarged surgery, provision for increased school places at St John's and possible relocation of St Mary's onto a site near the centre of the village. This was as a result of feedback from the public consultation held in July 2014.

14/218 In accordance with the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group Terms of Reference to receive, consider and approve:

a) revised budget request from the NDP for additional funding for 2013/2015: The Parish Council allocated £8000 to the NDP in its 2014/15 budget. There was little expenditure in that year and the balance £7,700 was transferred to an earmarked reserve at the end of that financial year, noting that £2000 of this was to be reserved for the Community (Parish) Plan Refresh (see Minute Number 14/216 above).

The Council approved the NDP's budget for 2014/15 on 8 May 2014 (Minute 14/104) (budget can be seen below). This inadvertently did not include the £2000 for the Community Plan Refresh.

Expenditure so far has been modest. However time is pressing as the timescale involves consulting the community in January and submitting a draft plan to West Berkshire Council by the end of March 2015. To enable the Steering Group to deliver the draft plan a revised budget is requested. The two major items of expenditure are shown in the next two parts of this agenda item. The request is to transfer a total of £8,900 (including £2000 for Community Plan Refresh) from general reserves to the NDP earmarked reserves.

Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group Budget 2014/15				
Item	Original Budget	Expenditure to 30 Sept	Revised Budget	Assumption (original revised below)
Ad hoc Administrative Support	£3,600		£1,800	up to 30 h per month @ say £ 10 per hour ad hoc for 12 months now 6 months
Website setup	£800		£0	typical cost provided free by John Hanawin with setup by member of group
Hall & Venue Rental	£500		£500	10*£50 some costs still to be charged
Printing, Photocopying	£1,000		£1,000	might include paper survey
Publicity and Advertising	£1,000	£549	£1,000	
Postage, Consumables	£700		£700	
Data Costs	£100		£100	may need to pay some costs
Planning Consultant			£9,500	may be partially offset by grant for £7000
Total	£7,700	£549	£14,600	
Additional Request NDP			£6,900	
Community Plan Refresh			£2,000	
Total Requested			£8,900	

Cllr Dennett proposed the additional budget request for the remainder of 2014/2015 of £8,900, this was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried by 12 votes in favour to 1 abstention.

b) Proposed terms and conditions for a temporary tender contract for the appointment of administrative support for the Steering Group: The details for a self employed person/contractor to provide ad hoc administrative and research services for a limited period.

- Circa 30 hours/month – home-based apart from attendance at meetings, including some evenings, initially for three months, potentially extendable for a further three to six months.

- Requires use of own computing and Internet services (no equipment provided).
- Payment will be paid on an agreed rate per hour upon the submission of an invoice for payment

It was noted that the person appointed would not be an employee by the Parish Council.

Cllr Dennett proposed that the steering group could advertise and make the above appointment, this was seconded by Cllr Wingfield and carried by 10 votes in favour to 1 against and 2 abstentions.

c) The proposed terms and conditions for a temporary tender contract for the appointment of a planning consultant to assist the NDP Steering Group with the development options for consultation and with other ongoing matters: The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Steering Group has decided that the next step in the process is to go out to consultation on some strategic options. It is intended that the consultation should take place in the new year. The precise form of the consultation has not yet been decided.

In the most contentious area of new residential development the strategic options being considered for consultation are

- The development of the field behind St John's School linked with enhancing/improving the centre of the village to make it a more attractive place for the community.
- A strategy of developing a series of smaller dispersed sites.
- To undertake a mixture of the above two options which would provide for an enhanced centre and a less dominating core, large development with a more open airy design able to accommodate a new surgery and a new primary school. This would be allied with some smaller dispersed sites which the community has expressed a preference for.

It was emphasised that the dispersed sites that are being used to pilot this idea are simply first attempts at identifying sites and that no approaches to land owners etc. have been undertaken.

Cllr Wingfield proposed to agree the appointment of a Planning Consultant by the Steering Group (as above) and this was seconded by Cllr Kiley and carried by 10 votes in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

14/219 To consider appointing the new Council members to the Parish Council's Standing Committees to serve until May 2015: Cllr Dennett proposed that Cllr Richardson be appointed onto the Communications and Fairground, Trees and Amenities Committees and that Cllr Butcher be appointed to the Roads, Footpaths & Commons and Planning Committees. This was seconded by Cllr Earl and agreed unanimously.

14/220 To appoint a Parish Council Representative onto the Willink Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee Meeting in place of the late Cllr John Morden: As Cllr Butcher had kindly attended the last JAC Meeting at short notice Cllr Dennett proposed that he be appointed. This was seconded by Cllr Earl and agreed unanimously.

14/221 To receive a report from Cllr Butcher on the Willink Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) Meeting held on 22.10.2014:

Cllr Butcher attended the meeting on behalf of SMPC. The main points from this meeting were:-

- Councillor Royce Longton expressed the meeting's condolences and thanks for Cllr John Morden's commitment and support over the years to the Willink JAC;
- Overall satisfactory reports were supplied for attendance at the centre including holiday activities. There had been increases in attendance in some areas with the continuing objective to increase membership as an alternative to casual attendance;
- WBC regularly compares the Willink Leisure Centre with the performance at the two other comparable leisure centres in West Berkshire; at Hungerford and the Kennet Leisure Centre (Northcroft in Newbury is much bigger). Satisfaction levels in surveys has increased overall. The only areas of specific concern expressed by Willink users is

the capacity of the car park and the wet side changing facilities at the swimming pool. There is little that could be done about the car park. Remedial and improvement work has already started on the wet side changing areas and these should be very much improved prior to Christmas 2014;

- The 2015 increase in charges for use of the facilities averaged 1.5% across the leisure centre;
- Bids for capital expenditure of various kinds were currently being prepared for 2015. Of potential major concern in the medium term was the deteriorating quality of the all-weather playing surface. Partly because of environment issues of the surrounding vegetation but also a slight slope on the area, the surface was deteriorating to an extent where it would need replacement in the near future. The approximate cost involved to carry out this work would be approximately £100,000. Already sources of grants are being considered;
- Parkwood Leisure has been granted a further contract to run the leisure centre until June 2022. In common with what was said to be the practice across the industry, Parkwood Leisure actually subcontracted the operation of the centre to its charitable subdivision. Date of next meeting – 22nd April 2015

A vote of thanks was offered to Cllr Butcher for his report and for attending the meeting at short notice.

14/222 To receive Planning Committee Minutes of 03.11.2014: The Minutes of this Meeting was received, endorsed and adopted.

14/223 To receive planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council (WBC):

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

14/02245/HOUSE 36 Croft Road. Front and rear ground floor extension. Granted.

14/02106/HOUSE 15 Orchard Road. Front garage extension and partial conversion of existing garage to utility room. Granted

14/01913/HOUSE 23 King Street. Extension to rear of existing dwelling inclusive of link corridor, WC and Garden Room with attached Store. Granted

Notice of Appeal: Unit at rear of 37-39 King Street. To consider Parish Council's response to The Appeal (Town & Country Planning Act 1990 Appeal under Sec 78) by Informal Hearing. Appeal made to the Secretary of State against the decision of West Berkshire Council's decision to refuse to grant planning permission for

Retrospective: 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. The Planning Committee agreed that the Parish Council would make representation at the Informal Hearing.

14/224 To receive a précis of the Minutes of the 78th AWE Local Liaison Meeting of 17.09.2014:

Cllr Lock reported that she attended the meeting and the main points of the meeting are as follows: The new Managing Director of AWE Plc is Mr Kevin Bilger. There is an increase from 5% to 15% of female apprentices joining the Skills Academy this year. AWE's new build construction sites have gained the British Safety Council Sword of Honour award for the third year running, also five British Safety five star awards for Occupational, Health and Safety and Environ Management. The Deputy Fire Chief Officer, Mr O O'Rourke, told how the AWE Fire and Rescue Service liaised and worked with the South Central Ambulance Service and the Hazardous Area Response Team worked together to carry out reciprocal and specialist fire-fighting training. It is planned to hold local exhibitions to inform residents should either AWE Aldermaston or Burghfield be selected for the storage of intermediate nuclear waste from dismantled submarines.

A full hard copy of the Minutes are held at the Parish Council Office.

14/225 To receive Minutes from the Burghfield & Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group Meeting 7.10.2014: These were received and noted.

14/226 To agree to continue the loan agreement with Hampshire County Council (HCC) Hampshire Cultural Trust, for a further period of 25 years from 1 November 2014 for the

loan to HCC of the Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council's Strait Jacket: Further to Minute No 14/89 regarding a letter dated 7 March 2014 from Hampshire County Council advising of a change to the loan agreement for the SMPC Strait Jacket. A further letter dated 20 October 2014 has been received advising that 'Hampshire County Council has agreed, in partnership with Winchester City Council, to establish the Hampshire Cultural Trust, which will operate in its arts and museums services. The ownership of the collections and other assets will remain with the respective local authorities, who will loan their collections to the Trust for 25 years from 1 November 2014. A collections loan agreement will be put in place that sets out the Trust's obligations in relation to caring for these collections, including the item of the Strait Jacket which is on loan to Hampshire County Council.' Cllr Dennett proposed that the above be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Audsley and unanimously agreed. The Clerk to respond to Hampshire County Council and to also request a photo of the straight jacket for the Parish Council's records.

14/227 To receive District Councillors' Reports: Cllr Lock reported the Local Transport Plan for 2011-2016 is to be considered on 21 November 2014. In partnership with local transport operators WBC will facilitate and support passenger transport services operating in West Berkshire (LPP K9). Accessibility (access to services and facilities). The order of priority for Mortimer is Low if providing Sunday and Bank Holidays is unsustainable through fares and concessionary travel income. The Council will investigate the feasibility of taxi/bus schemes in 2015 and if suitable operators with appropriate vehicles are willing to run these services. The school funding for pupil premium for primary schools in WBC is to be raised to £1,320. The M4 (junctions 3 to 12) Smart motorway scheme. The Highways Agency is seeking development consent under the Planning Act 2008 to permanently convert the hard shoulder to a running lane, vary speed limits and manage traffic. Where existing bridges over or under would impede on the running lane they would be widened or demolished and re-built. There will be public and stakeholder consultations and a series of Public Exhibitions will be held. A copy of the documentation can be found on www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/m4-junctions-3-12.

Cllr Mayes reported that a special District Council Meeting on 30 October 2014 was held to discuss whether the review of the Housing Allocations DPD Preferred Options should be held in an open meeting of West Berkshire Council rather than in a WBC Planning Task Group meeting, which is held in private. The meeting resolved that the c4,500 responses and over 8,000 comments be considered by the WBC Planning Policy Task Group, in private, without the press or public being able to attend or have access to the Minutes. This has caused much criticism. The District Parish Conference was held on 14 October 2014 at WBC. The subjects discussed were the problems of speeding, broad band coverage and Green Lanes and the maintenance thereof.

WBC has received complaints on the operation of the one way system around Rectory Road and Silver Lane Padworth. This has been put in place during works by Network Rail to raise the Padworth railway bridge. With the 10th anniversary of the train crash at the Ufton Nerve Level Crossing on the 6 November Network Rail have repeated their intention to replace the crossing with a bridge. Local opinion in 2011 was for full width barriers and CCTV monitoring to be put in place. WBC planners are to attend a meeting on 12 November 2014 to discuss/consider the various options including building a bridge, level crossing/CCTV or closure of the Ufton Nerve Lane.

14/228 Finance – To resolve to agree accounts for payment for November 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 unanimously agreed.

- i. Sita UK Ltd (waste disposal Fairground) Direct Debit £46.02 inc VAT
- ii. PCS Cars of Mortimer (travel expenses to training course for Custodian) £90.00
- iii. Playsafety Limited (fee for Routine Playground Inspection Course including exam fee and training manual for Custodian) £363.40 inc VAT
- iv. Viking Ltd (stationery) £134.40 inc VAT

- v. ICON Ltd (cost of 2 x Sport England signs which formed part of the contract with and will be reimbursed by Sport England) £146.10 inc VAT
- vi. J E Kirk (reimbursable expenses) £61.60
- vii. Unity Trust Visa (McColls £7.18, Makro Ltd supplies £19.19 inc VAT, Amazon Ltd office equipment £20.97 inc VAT) £47.34 Co-Op Visa (Card Fee) £2.00
- viii. Co-Op Visa (Card Fee) £2.00
- ix. Royal British Legion (SMPC Poppy Wreath) £25.00
- x. West Berkshire Council (quarterly photocopying charges) £147.49 inc VAT
- xi. Claire Connell (internal Audit Fee) £235.00

14/229 To receive Correspondence (for information only):

- A letter received from a resident regarding the potentially dangerous position of the new bus stop on The Street (opposite 'Wendover'). The was forwarded onto WBC Highways Department for a response.
- A copy of the WBC Flood Newsletter (to be kept in the Parish Council Office).

14/230 To receive Minor Matters (for information only):

- Cllr Lock gave an update on the reported 'noise' problem and advised that she and WBC are still looking into this matter and that she will report back to the next full Council Meeting.

14/231 To receive any future Agenda Items:

- To consider a tribute to the late Cllr Morden.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 15 January 2015

The Meeting closed at 9:46pm