



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held online on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. C. Lewis, Cllr. D. Morsley.

Officers:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

There were no members of the public and no member of the press in attendance.

Part I

20/079 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

20/080 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs. G. Bridgman and N. Carter.
Cllr. D. Kilshaw was absent and no apologies received.

20/081 To receive any declarations of interest

To receive from Members at this point or at any point during the meeting, in respect of any items included on the agenda, disclosure of any interests in line with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and gifts and hospitality in line with Government legislation.

Cllr. Lewis declared an interest in agenda item 20/086 3. Service Charges, due to his association with Mortimer Cricket Club.

20/082 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of the 5th January 2021

RESOLVED unanimously that these minutes be approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.

20/083 Clerk's Report

- 1. To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 5th of January 2021 and other updates.**

Actions from Last Meeting

1. Project Management Consultant: Ridge & Partners LLP were recommended to Full Council for the role of Project Management Consultants and were appointed accordingly.
2. WBC CIL Grant: The grant application for The Street Widening Project was submitted to WBC. WBC did not approve this grant but agreed that the money could be given from the Environmental CIL fund, subject to approval by WBC's Council's Executive.
3. Health and Wellbeing Consultation: In progress. The consultation deadline was moved back to the 28th of February.
4. Budget 2021/22: The draft budget was presented to Full Council and approved accordingly.

It was noted that the response to the Health and Wellbeing Consultation was submitted on the 27th of February.

20/084 Items to be taken into private session

To determine which items, if any, of the Agenda should be taken with the public excluded

It was agreed that agenda item 20/086 9. Registers and Insurance Renewal, should be taken into Part II.

20/085 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Strategy Working Party

Cllr. Morsley gave a verbal report and the following was noted:

- The Street widening project: West Berkshire Council (WBC) are proceeding with the required surveys and reports. Confirmation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) match funding should be received in March.
- Mortimer to Burghfield Footpath & Cycleway: Ridge & Co have commenced the scoping assessment and the report is due in March. An update needs to be given to Burghfield Parish Council.
- Tumulus Public Open Space: A draft leaflet is being produced to update neighbouring residents on the plans for a bench and information board.
- Allotments: Cllr. Beard is liaising with the farmers.
- Fitness Equipment: Cllrs. Beard and Hill are investigating the options for the two possible sites.

2. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

Cllr. Morsley gave a verbal report and the following was noted:

- It is not possible to refresh the current NDP and a new one is therefore required.
- WBC are now better set up to help parishes undertake a NDP and this includes a includes a service level agreement.
- New assistance will be needed for any Steering Group. Those who led the previous NDP have limited availability this time round.
- The Working Party are likely to have recommendations for the April Full Council meeting.

- Clarification regarding aspects of the reserved land, including its status, are currently being sought from Englefield and T A Fisher.

3. Communications: campaign for new councillors.

The Communications Working Group has not met. The closing date for nominations is the 8th of April, with the elections being on May the 6th. The Annual Parish Meeting will be proceeding on the 22nd of March, where there will be an open discussion on becoming a parish councillor. Cllr. Dennett is producing a video for the website. Posters will be put on the noticeboards and a leaflet will be produced for delivery throughout the village.

4. Newsletter

The date of the next newsletter is still to be determined.

20/086 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Allowance Scheme

To consider the Independent Review Panel report and RESOLVE the councillor allowances for 2021/22 for recommendation to Full Council.

The allowance scheme was considered.

Cllr. Dennett proposed that there should be no councillor allowance and this should be the recommendation to Full Council.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

2. Review of Policies

a. To APPROVE the revised Standing Orders for recommendation to Full Council.

The proposed Standing Orders were reviewed. It was agreed that as the Council does not have a common seal, the first part of 23.b, which is applicable to a council with a common seal, should not be included.

Cllr. Dennett proposed that further to the exclusion of the first part of 23.b, as above, the revised Standing Orders, including the Appendix, be approved for recommendation to Full Council.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

APPROVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

To APPROVE the revised Financial Regulations for recommendation to Full Council.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the recommendation as above.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

APPROVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

3. Service Charges

To review the proposed charges for SMPC services and RESOLVE to adopt them for the 2021/22 financial year.

The proposed service charges increase of 3%, in line with the budget for 2021/22, were considered.

Cllr. Dennett proposed that the service charges be adopted.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED with one abstention. **ACTION: CLERK**

4. Councillor IT Survey

To receive the results of the survey and AGREE the next actions.

Further to a discussion it was agreed to 1) ask D. Sturt if he would be able to provide extra support for individual councillors as required – preferably in person when allowed 2) Cllrs. Morsley and Dennett and the Clerk, consider guidelines for the storing of documents on Office 365 3) Cllrs. Morsley and Dennett and the Clerk consider any further actions required from the responses received. **ACTION: CLLRS. DENNETT/MORSLEY, CLERK.**

Cllr. Dennett proposed that the meeting should extend beyond 2 hours if required.

Seconded by Cllr. Hill.

RESOLVED unanimously.

5. Pillbox Insurance

To RESOLVE to proceed with the indicative insurance rebuild valuation of the pillbox at a cost of £125.00 + VAT.

The Clerk summarised the current situation and confirmed that the insurance company have given details of a company who can provide a desk top valuation of the pillbox for insurance purposes.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution as above.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

6. Mortimer Tennis Club

To receive an update and:

a. RESOLVE a further reduced charge to £514.00 for the 2020/21 season.

The Clerk gave a report. The reduced rate of play, as a result of Covid 19, for the 2020/ 21 season was noted.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution as above.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED Unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

b. RESOLVE the playing and invoicing schedule as requested by Mortimer Tennis Club

The proposed playing and invoicing schedule were considered.

Cllr Dennett proposed the resolution as above with the caveat that any additional hours of play required must be booked via the Clubspark system at the public rate.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLERK**

c. RESOLVE the charge per court per hour for the 2021/22 season is £1.32.

Cllr. Dennett proposed that the rate per court per hour be increased by 3% to £1.36 in line with the increase for other Council charges for 2021/22.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

7. In Person Meetings

To consider the possible return to face-to-face council meetings and AGREE appropriate actions to be taken.

With the current lack of information, it was agreed that it is not possible to take any specific decisions, but the situation shall be monitored accordingly.

8. Emergency Active Travel Scheme Consultations

To RESOLVE that the Strategy Working Party will consider and advise on a response to the Consultations.

Cllr. Morsley gave a summary of the consultation and confirmed that whilst the Council can respond, the consultation is aimed more at the public. It was agreed to promote the consultation via social media and use it as an opportunity to raise awareness of and seek public support for the Councils own relevant projects. Cllr. Morsley will draft appropriate wording for the website and Facebook.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution as above.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: CLLR MORSLEY, CLERK**

9. Registers and Insurance Renewal

To receive the Risk Register and Asset Register and consider and AGREE the insurance requirements in line with these documents.

Moved to Part II

20/087 Items for information only

Minor Matters

- Cllr. Hill reported that the Multiplay scramble net had been repaired and thanked the Clerk for her input.

20/088 Finance

1. Accounts to 31st January 2021

To receive and APPROVE the Income and Expenditure Report and the Balance Sheet.

APPROVED unanimously.

2. Bank Reconciliation

To receive and note the report for the period 1st August 2020 – 31st December 2021.

Cllr. Lewis gave a verbal report and confirmed that all was in order.

3. Internal Control

To receive and note the report for the period 1st October 2020 – 31st January 2021.

The completed Internal Control report was received and noted.

4. The Public Sector Deposit Fund

To receive and note the rate of return currently being received.

The current low rate was noted.

20/089 Communications

To identify items for communicating

- New councillor elections.
- Active Travel Scheme consultation.

20/090 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

None.

20/091 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, items identified at 20/084 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Hill.

RESOLVED unanimously.

20/086 Items for Consideration and Resolution

9. Registers and Insurance Renewal

To receive the Risk Register and Asset Register and consider and AGREE the insurance requirements in line with these documents.

The Clerk presented a summary, and the insurance requirements were considered. In conjunction with the Chairman, it was agreed for the Clerk to make minor changes to the summary and for quotes to be sought accordingly.

Close

The meeting closed at 21.55

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 4th May 2021.