



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the grounds of the Scout Hut, Birch Lane, Mortimer, RG7 3UB on Thursday, 24th June 2021 @ 7.30pm

Present

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. G. Canton, Cllr. K. Field, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. D. Ives, Cllr. D. Kilshaw (arrived late), Cllr. C. Lewis, Cllr. M. Lock, Cllr. A. Marsden, Cllr. D. Morsley, and Cllr. J. Wells.

Clerk:

Ms. B. O'Reilly

Public/Press:

There was one member of the public present and no members of the press.

Part I

21/034 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

A member of the public advised the Parish Council of a planning application, 20/02029/COMIND, currently with West Berkshire Council for an incinerator site to be developed in the Burghfield area and requested Parish Council support in raising concerns about the development, including the air pollution and traffic increase this would cause the local area. Cllr. Bridgman confirmed that it had been seen by Burghfield Parish Council and would be seen by the Eastern Area Planning Committee to consider shortly.

21/035 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. S. Beard, Cllr. N. Carter and Cllr. K. Johnson.

21/036 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.

None.

21/037 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council of the 6th May 2021.

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

21/038 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the online advisory meeting held on the 10th June 2021 and other updates.

Updates from Last Meeting

- Telephone Box Defibrillator: the order has been placed. This will include the repainting of the phone box. The charity was seeking confirmation that their paint sponsors could provide the blue paint as requested. It was noted that an undercoat of paint will be required on the kiosk.
- Pillbox Insurance: further to the desk-based valuation of £113,000 including the removal of debris, professional fees and VAT, the insurance premium is £57.43.

Other Updates

- Tennis Courts: the surface repairs have been undertaken and the lines repainted.
- MUGA: the lines have been painted and lines for a Mini Bee Netball Court added.

The report was received.

21/039 Items to be taken into private session

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

None.

21/040 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Planning Committee

Cllr. Morsley reported that an online advisory meeting had taken place on 22nd June to consider responses required to four new planning applications received since May.

2. Strategy Working Party.

Cllr. Morsley reported that Cllr. N. Carter had offered to take over as Chairman of the Strategy Working Party and Cllr. S. Beard has asked to leave due to other commitments.

21/041 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Internal Auditor's Report

To receive the Internal Auditor's Report for the year ended 31st March 2021.

The Chairman summarised the Internal Auditor's Report and this was received.

2. Annual Governance and Accountability Return – Section 1

To receive and APPROVE for signing the 2020/2021 Annual Governance Statement.

In line with the Annual Governance Statement Guidance, which the Chairman confirmed was previously considered, each assertion on Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement was reviewed and agreed. Proposed by Cllr Dennett and seconded by Cllr Morsley, Section 1 was

APPROVED for signing with ten votes for and two abstentions and signed by the Chairman and the Clerk of the meeting in presence of the Council.

3. Annual Governance and Accountability Return – Section 2

To receive and APPROVE for signing the 2020/2021 Accounting Statements.

The Chairman confirmed that the figures on the accounting statements were identical to those considered in detail at an online advisory meeting of the Council on 10th June 2021 which had confirmed these had been correctly calculated from the year end accounts approved by Council at its meeting of 6th May 2021. Proposed by Cllr Dennett and seconded by Cllr Morsley, Section 2 was **APPROVED** for signing with ten votes for and two abstentions and signed by the Chairman in presence of the Council.

4. Annual Governance and Accountability Return – additional documents

To receive the following documents which will be submitted to the External Auditor:

- a. **SMPC Notification for the Exercise of Public Rights 2020-21**
- b. **Bank Reconciliation as of 31 March 2021**
- c. **Explanation of variances**
- d. **Explanation of High Reserves**
- e. **Reconciliation between Box 7 and Box 8**

The documents were received.

Cllr. Bridgman proposed that the Clerk receives thanks from the Parish Council for her work involved in successfully producing the approved Annual Governance and Accountability Returns.

Proposed by Cllr. Bridgman.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett

RESOLVED unanimously.

5. Committees and Working Parties

To RESOLVE the appointment of Cllrs. Canton, Johnson and Marsden onto the committees and working parties as follows:

- a. **Cllr. Canton: Fairground & Cemetery Committee, Planning Committee, Garth Hall Working party and Communications Working Party.**
- b. **Cllr. Johnson: Fairground & Cemetery Committee, Planning Committee and Roads, Footpath & Commons Committee.**
- c. **Cllr. Marsden: Roads, Footpaths & Commons Committee and Strategy Working Party.**

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett to amend 21/043 5.c to include Fairground and Cemetery Committee, Planning Committee, Communications Working Party and Garth Hall Working Party.

RESOLVED by majority with one abstention.

Cllr. M. Lock confirmed agreement to be included in the Fairground and Cemetery Committee.

Cllr. S. Beard to be removed from the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee and Strategy Working Group.

The Committees and Working Parties appointments were **RESOLVED** unanimously

6. Council Representative(s)

To RESOLVE to appoint Cllr. Lock as the Parish Council representative to:

- a. **Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need Charity.**
- b. **AWE Local Liaison Committee.**

c. Wokefield Common Advisory Committee.

Parish Council representative appointments **RESOLVED** unanimously.

7. Neighbourhood Development Plan

To **RESOLVE** that SMPC proceed with the development of a new Neighbourhood Development Plan for Stratfield Mortimer and will:

- a. set up 'The Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group', to comprise of both nominated parish councillors and members of the public in accordance with Government guidelines, to oversee and deliver the Plan.
- b. ask F&GP to produce terms of reference for the Steering Group, for approval by Full Council, to include the sequential production of two editions of the plan 1) which concentrates on the review of policy SDB1 regarding the area of land for St John's School and the doctor's surgery 2) the longer term consideration of existing and other possible policies.
- c. enter into a Service Level Agreement with West Berkshire Council for the purpose of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- d. provide a budget of £5,000 for the development of the NDP in the current financial year.

Cllrs. Dennett and Morsley to initiate steps to reach potential Councillors and members of the public for membership of the Steering Group and commence draft of its Terms of Reference.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously to proceed. **ACTION: MD/DM/THE CLERK**

8. Library

To **RESOLVE** that SMPC pauses the negotiation to take over ownership and day to day management of the library building and informs West Berkshire Council and other interested third parties.

Proposed by Cllr. Lewis.

Seconded by Cllr. Lock.

RESOLVED by majority. **ACTION: CL/THE CLERK**

8. The Street Footway Widening

To **RESOLVE** to:

- a. proceed with Phase 1 as recommended by West Berkshire Council.
- b. set up The Street Footway Working Party of Cllr. Dennett and Morsley and Mr. P. Wingfield to oversee the project moving forward.

Cllr Bridgman proposed that part a of the resolution be changed to:

- a. proceed with Phase 1 as recommended by West Berkshire Council with a budget of £50,000.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley

The amendment was **RESOLVED** unanimously.

The amended motion was proposed by Cllr Morsley, seconded by Cllr Dennett and **RESOLVED** unanimously.

It was advised that Cllr. Dennett and Morsley would be meeting with the landowner at Abbey Croft next week.

9. Internal Auditor 2021/22

To RESOLVE the engagement of Claire Connell as the Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2021/22.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously to engage Claire Connell as the Internal Auditor for the Financial Year 2021/2022. **ACTION: THE CLERK**

10. Delegated Powers

To RESOLVE that the Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council, only where such a decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline or to ensure the continuing function of the Council.

As necessary, decisions shall be taken in consultation with the Chairman and/or Vice- Chairman and/or Members and/or Online Advisory Working Groups of the Committees/Full Council. Online Advisory Working Groups, at which members of the public and press may attend where appropriate and may speak at the discretion of the Chairman, will take place as required and wherever possible, as per the agreed schedule of meetings.

Decisions will be taken in accordance with legislation, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing, reported to the next Full Council meeting and published in accordance with any relevant regulations.

This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the Full Council after the Council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.

Amendment proposed by Cllr. Bridgman, seconded by Cllr. Morsley, to delete the word 'Working' from Online Advisory Working Groups in lines 2 and 3 of second paragraph to avoid confusion with other working groups, and **RESOLVED** unanimously.

Proposed by Cllr Dennett, seconded by Cllr Bridgman the amended resolution was **RESOLVED** unanimously.

12. July Meetings

To RESOLVE the revised schedule of proposed meetings for July noting that the next meeting of the Full Council will be on Thursday 29th July 2021 at 7.30pm.

Thursday, 8 th July 2021	Planning (Advisory online)	6.30pm
Thursday, 8 th July 2021	Full Council (Advisory online) if required	7.30pm
Thursday, 22 nd July 2021	Fairground & Cemetery (Advisory online)	7:30pm
Tuesday, 27 th July 2021	Planning (Advisory online)	6:30pm
Thursday, 29 th July 2021	Full Council	7.30pm

Proposed by Cllr. Hill.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously. **ACTION: THE CLERK**

21/042 Finance

1. Accounts to the 31st May 2021

To receive and APPROVE the Income and Expenditure Report to the 31st May 2021 and the Balance Sheet as of that date.

The Chairman presented the Report and Balance Sheet as of 31st May 2021.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Field

RESOLVED to approve the financial reports to the 31st of May 2021.

2. Annual Subscriptions and Continuous Payments

To review and APPROVE the annual subscriptions and continuous payments.

The Chairman presented the list of annual subscriptions and continuous payments:

Approved Under Delegated Powers

- Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management - £95.00 per annum
- Berkshire Association of Local Councils – £666.86 per annum
- National Association of Local Councils - £226.98 per annum
- Society of Local Council Clerks membership – L. Hannawin - £234.00 per annum
- BHIB – £739.58 per annum
- Rialtas Support & Maintenance Licence –£124.00 per annum
- Microsoft Office 365 – approximately £909.00 per annum

For Consideration

Annual Subscriptions/Payments

- Information Commissioner’s Office – approximately £40.00 per annum
- Parish Online Mapping Service – approximately £74.00 per annum – for 2021/22 this should be paid for by BHIB as part of the insurance package.
- Data Protection Officer - approximately £60 per annum
- Society of Local Council Clerks membership – B. O’Reilly - £227.00 per annum

Contract Payments

- Suez Recycling – approximately £130.00 per month
- Currys PC World - £9.94 per month – once the current issue on the Clerk’s old laptop has been fixed, this will be cancelled.
- EE Mobile Phone Plan - £24.00 per month
- Lloyds Multipay card fee - £3 per month
- SSE – approximately £115.00 per quarter
- WBC Library Rent - £812.50 per quarter
- Cemetery Rent - £62.50 per quarter
- BT (landline and broadband) - approximately £269.00 per quarter
- Fairground Rent - £2,701.00 per annum. Rent review next due in August 2027 when the lease expires.

Monthly Payroll

- Salary (net) & Pension – approximately £4,087 per month
- PAYE & NIC – approximately £1099.00 per month

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.
 Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.
APPROVED unanimously.

3. Payments made with authorisation of Chairman/Vice-Chairman

To receive and note summary of payments: Appendix 21/042 – circulated.

Item	Payee Details	Amount
1.	Salaries – Month 1 (April 2021)	£ 4,022.21
2.	HMRC – Month 1 (April 2021)	£ 1,058.55
3.	Salaries – Month 2 (May 2021)	£ 4,086.17
4.	HMRC – Month 2 (May 2021)	£ 1098.77
5.	CIA Fire & Security Ltd – repair to tennis gate – inc. VAT	£ 444.00
6.	C&D Grounds Maintenance – Fairground & Cemetery grounds maintenance for April 2021 – inc. VAT	£817.16
7.	Dads Shop – Spanner and screwdriver set, bin liners	£ 49.77
8.	BHIB Councils Insurance – insurance policy 2021-2022	£ 739.58
9.	Berkshire Association of Local Councils – subscription fee 2021	£ 666.86
10.	Berkshire Association of Local Councils – NALC subscription 2021	£ 226.98
11.	D. C. Sturt – IT monitoring and support in April	£ 90.00
12.	i-next Limited – Website development – inc. VAT	£ 3,600.00
13.	Rialtas Business Solutions – annual software support and licence – inc. VAT	£ 148.80
14.	Englefield Estate – Cemetery quarterly rent to end Sept. 2021	£ 62.50
15.	Claire Connell – completion of internal audit work and report for year end 31 March 2021	£ 250.00
16.	ETC Sport Surfaces – annual cleaning of tennis court surface – inc. VAT	£ 1,080.00
17.	ETC Sports Surface – Clean and painting court lines at MUGA – inc. VAT	£ 1,116.00
18.	ETC Sports Surface – Full colourspray of tennis court surface – inc. VAT	£ 2,784.00
19.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – Post Office – postage stamp supply (1 st & 2 nd Class)	£ 152.99
20.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – HM Land Registry enquiry	£ 6.00
21.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – Amazon – Office stationery A4, A5 and DL envelopes	£ 28.71
22.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – HP Inc – new laptop and docking station for Clerk inc. VAT	£ 984.00
23.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – Amazon – Office stationery filing dividers, document pockets, filing tabs	£ 28.85

24.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – DLVR software plugin for website for auto links to SMPC Facebook page	£70.57
25.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – Printer cartridges	£160.05
26.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – monthly card fee	£3.00
27.	SUEZ Recycle – April collections from Fairground (twice a week) inc. VAT [DD]	£ 216.89

Payments received.

4. Accounts for Payment

To receive and APPROVE items of expenditure: Appendix 21/042 3 – circulated.

Item	Payee Details	Amount
1.	Dads Shop – wire brush, sandpaper, stripping and patio knives – inc. VAT	£ 19.39
2.	D. C. Sturt – IT monitoring and support May 2021 (inc. 8 hours support work for new Councillor accounts and Clerk’s new laptop)	£ 210.00
3.	C&D Grounds Maintenance – Fairground & Cemetery grounds maintenance for May 2021 – inc. VAT	£ 817.16
4.	ACLA Ltd – Cemetery landscape consultancy services (4.75hrs)	£ 209.00
5.	Grabloader – A grade soil to cemetery – inc. VAT	£ 72.00
6.	BHIB – additional insurance premium on Pill Box 2021-2022	£ 57.43
7.	Castle Water – Fairground water charges for April – Sept 2021 – inc. VAT [Direct Debit]	£ 319.64
8.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – HM Land Registry enquiry [Direct Debit]	£ 3.00
9.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – Nolia battery for Custodian’s mobile [Direct Debit]	£ 6.99
10.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – monthly fee May [Direct Debit]	£ 3.00
11.	EE – mobile phone plan charges – inc. VAT [Direct Debit]	£28.80
12.	Currys PC World – Care Plan for Clerk’s computer [Direct Debit]	£9.49

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED by majority that the accounts are approved for payment with exception of item 7 on the list to be investigated. **ACTION: THE CLERK**

21/043 Items for information only

1. To note the meetings that have taken place of the following committees:
 - a. Finance and General Purposes Advisory – 03/06/2021
 - b. Planning Advisory - 22/06/2021

The meetings were noted.

2. District Councillor Reports

Cllr. Bridgman's report was received with the additional information that a Member's Bid had been made with the balance of allocated funds towards the outdoor fitness equipment for the Fairground. West Berkshire Council's Health and Wellbeing strategy was released on 23rd June 2021 and Cllrs. Field, Hill, Lock, Morsely, and Marsden would look at a response for the Parish Council.

3. Correspondence: Appendix 21/043 3.0 circulated

Item	Details
1.	Resident: Concerned regarding the growth of the bushes and stinging nettles, in particular between the pedestrian traffic lights and Strawberry Fields, as a result of the weather and requesting the vegetation to be cut back whilst waiting for the widening project to commence.
2.	Resident: Expressing concern about the footpath as above due to the fact they will be walking to St Mary's in September.
3.	Basingstoke and Deane District Council: Local Plan Update - Newsletter Issue 3

Cllr. Morsley asked to receive copies of letters about footpath. **ACTION: THE CLERK**

4. Planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council: Appendix 21/043 4 circulated

21/00316/HOUSE: Westhill, West End Road, Mortimer Common, Reading RG7 3TP

Single storey rear extension with lantern over

WBC Decision: GRANTED – 8th April 2021

SMPC Comments:

No objections.

21/00390/HOUSE: Topaz, 97 The Avenue, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3RB

Double storey side extension and single storey front extension to existing link-detached house.

WBC Decision: GRANTED – 14th April 2021

SMPC Comments:

No objections.

The planning decisions were received.

5. Neighbourhood Action Group report.

Cllr. Wells reported from recent NAG meeting that that crime figures are currently low.

6. Health and Safety.

An accident occurred in the older children's play area, when a 7-year-old child, on falling from the Runway Rigid Skate Roller, grabbed the rail and sustained a finger injury which needed stitching. The annual RoSPA inspection of all play equipment was carried out in April and the Custodian has been undertaking the usual weekly checks. BHIB Insurance Brokers confirmed that the liability of the equipment is covered if the annual and weekly inspections are carried out as described.

7. Minor Matters.

Cllr. Johnson (through the Chairman) queried West Berkshire Council's SID machine over-estimating speeds on recent deployment and may need recalibrating.

Cllr. Hill advised that routine maintenance of benches will take place with the repainting of the metal benches and repair to broken slats on several Glasdon benches on the Fairground.

21/044 Communications

To identify items for communicating

- New Neighbourhood Development Plan for Stratfield Mortimer.
- Online advisory meetings open to the public.
- Overgrown footpaths should be cut back by landowners.

21/045 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

- Health and Wellness Survey response.
- Cutting back of overgrown vegetation along roadways and footpaths.
- Blossom into Spring initiative.

21/046 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 20/026 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Not required.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:05.

Next meeting – 29th July 2021.