



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held online on Tuesday 5th January 2021 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. N. Carter, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. D. Kilshaw (arrived 19.34), 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

20/066 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

20/067 To receive any apologies for absence

None.

20/068 To receive any declarations of interest

- 1. 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. G. Bridgman declared an interest in 20/073 3 3. Health and Well-Being Consultation, due to his sitting on the West Berkshire Council Health and Wellbeing Board.

- 2. To receive and consider granting requests for dispensation(s)**

Dispensations regarding the settling of the Precept, at any relevant meeting occurring in the period up to 30th April 2023, were considered for all Members present.

The dispensations were **GRANTED** unanimously.

20/069 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Council Meeting of the 1st December 2020

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

20/070 Clerk's Report

- 1. To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 1st December 2020 and other updates.**

Actions from Last Meeting

1. Newsletter: The newsletter was distributed before Christmas.
2. BT Phone Box: Confirmation has been received that BT are in receipt of the contract and are arranging for the removal of the telephony. A completion notice will then be issued.
3. Pillbox: The Notice for Tenant and Declaration has been signed and returned.
4. CIL Consultation Comment: The comments have been published on the website.

Other updates

1. The survey regarding councillor's IT issues remains in progress. The report was received.

20/071 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 20/073 7. Personnel, should be taken into Part II.

20/072 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Strategy Working Party

Cllr. Morsley gave a verbal report and it was noted that the planned site meeting with WBC Officer, Jon Winstanley, to review The Street pavement widening, will now be undertaken via Zoom.

2. Newsletter

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

- Thanks, was expressed to Ms. B. O'Reilly for editorial work and Mr. C. Morsley and MVP volunteers for distributing the newsletter.
- The proposed date for the distribution of the next newsletter is the end of March. Cllr. Dennett is devising a timetable to circulate. **ACTION: CLLR. DENNETT**

20/073 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Project Management Consultant

To consider and APPROVE the appointment of the Project Manager Consultant for recommendation to Full Council on the 14th January 2021.

Cllr. Morsley reported a rigorous selection process has been undertaken, which included an indepth scoring system. Further to this, an initial interview has been held with Ridge & Co Ltd and the recommendation is to appoint them as the Project Manager Consultant. If approved, Ridge and Co Ltd will undertake an initial assessment of the project which will include: a site visit; identifying required surveys and potential costs; liaising with WBC as

appropriate and providing a fee proposal for overseeing the design and delivery of the project. It is estimated that this first stage will cost £3,600.

APPROVED unanimously that Ridge and Co Ltd be recommended to Full Council for appointment to Project Manager Consultant. **ACTION: CLERK**

2. WBC CIL Grant

To consider and APPROVE the WBC CIL Grant application for submission to WBC.

Cllr. Morsley presented the application and minor changes were agreed. Thanks to Mr. P. Wingfield for his assistance with the application were noted.

APPROVED unanimously that the application, amended, be submitted to WBC. **ACTION: CLERK**

3. Health and Well-Being Consultation

To consider the Public Consultation for a new Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy for Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham and RESOLVE that the Chairman, the Clerk and other specified members of F&GP be delegated to produce a response on behalf of the Council.

Cllr. Dennett confirmed that the consultation has been allocated to the Finances and General Purposes Committee for consideration and to produce a response. As part of the process, the consultation has also been forwarded to all members of the Council, but no comments had been received to date.

RESOLVED with one abstention that the Clerk and Chairman, with the assistance of Cllrs. Hill and Carter, produce a response on the consultation as described. **ACTION: CLERK, CLLRS. DENNETT, HILL, CARTER**

4. Budget 2021/22

To receive and APPROVE the draft budget for presentation to Full Council on the 14th January 2021.

The RFO confirmed that the Draft Budget 2021/22 had been circulated to all members of the Council. The draft budget and precept were reviewed, and minor changes agreed. It was acknowledged that additional potential costs for the legal fees for the transfer of the library building could be funded from other budget sources if required.

APPROVED unanimously for presentation to Full Council. **ACTION: CLERK**

5. Parish Council Ownership of the Library Building

To Resolve that:-

- a. The Council continues to take over the ownership and day to day management of the library building.**
- b. The Clerk be given authority to enter into a lease, for the library building, and service level agreement with WBC.**
- c. An approach be made to interested members of the public to set up an appropriate trust.**
- d. That £3,500 be included in the 2021/22 budget to cover any set up costs.**

Cllr. Lewis proposed that the resolution be amended as follows: ***“To Resolve that *the following resolution is recommended to Full Council on the 14th January 2021 for approval:.....”****

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

Cllr. Lewis presented a report, and as it had been agreed that there were already sufficient funds in the 2021/22 budget, item d. was not required.

Cllr. Lewis proposed that item d. was removed from the resolution.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett.

RESOLVED unanimously.

Cllr. Lewis propose the resolution as amended.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett.

RESOLVED unanimously.

6. Personnel Sub Committee

To appoint a member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to the Personnel Sub Committee to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Cllr. Bull.

Cllr. Kilshaw proposed Cllr. Bridgman.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett.

RESOLVED with one abstention.

7. Personnel

To receive an update on matters considered by the Personnel Sub Committee on the 17th December 2020 and AGREE the recommendations.

Moved to Part II

20/074 Items for information only

Minor Matters

- Further to the resignation of Cllr. Bull, the Clerk confirmed that the Notice of Vacancy had been posted to the Council's noticeboards and at least 10 electors have requested that the vacancy be filled by election. Elections are currently due to be held in May 2021.
- Cllr. Hill reported that the recent Fairground tree work had been sub-contracted by the company employed to undertake the work. Concerns have been raised about the standard of the work and a review is underway.

20/075 Finance

1. Accounts to 30th November 2020

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

APPROVED unanimously.

20/076 Communications

To identify items for communicating

The following were identified for inclusion the newsletter:

- 2021/22 Budget, once approved by Full Council.
- Project Manager Consultant, once appointed by Full Council.

20/077 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

- Contractors' Terms and Conditions.

20/078 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 20/071 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

RESOLVED unanimously.

The Clerk left the meeting at 20.52

20/073 Items for Consideration and Resolution

7. Personnel

To receive an update on matters considered by the Personnel Sub Committee on the 17th December 2020 and AGREE the recommendations.

After discussion, the recommendations of the Personnel Sub Committee were all agreed subject to minor changes of detail. These minor changes will be noted as an appendix to the minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee.

Close

The meeting closed at 21.40.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 2nd March 2021.