



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on Tuesday 7th December 2021 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. N. Carter, Cllr. D. Kilshaw, Cllr. C. Lewis.

Officers:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

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

Part I

21/040 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

21/041 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. S. Hill and Cllr. D. Morsley.

21/042 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.

21/043 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of the 2nd of November 2021.

RESOLVED with 3 abstentions, that these minutes be approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the meeting.

21/044 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 2nd of November 2021 and other updates.

Actions from the meeting held on 02/09/21

1. IT advice has been sought regarding councillor issues with 1) managing personal emails and 2) saving emails in SharePoint.
2. A transfer of £216,000 has been made from the Unity Trust Bank Account to the Council's investment fund held with The Public Sector Deposit Fund (TPSDF), in line with the agreement that all funds over £85,000 should be maintained with TPSDF.

Other Updates

1. Official notification has been received that the Clerk's portfolio for the Certificate in Local Council Administration has passed. General Power of Competence will be considered at the Council's next meeting in January.
2. Further to the incident at the cemetery, the police have followed lines of enquiry. However, as they have not been able to find enough evidence to bring a potential suspect to justice, confirmation has been received that their investigation is now complete.

21/045 Items to be taken into private session

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

Cllr. Dennett proposed that agenda items 21/047 7. Budget and 21/047 9. Risk Management Scheme, be taken with the public excluded.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

21/046 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Communications Working Party.

Cllr. Carter reported:

- the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policy review is still underway.
- It is the aim for the next newsletter to go out in March. Production will start in the new year.

2. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath.

No report received although it was noted that that information regarding the possible reports required for planning had been received from Ridge & Partners.

3. Strategy Working Party.

No report received.

4. The Street Footway Widening.

Cllr. Bridgman confirmed that monies budgeted by West Berkshire Council (WBC) for capital projects are rolled over if necessary.

21/047 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Indirect Pecuniary Interest

To receive notice in writing of the indirect pecuniary interests of the Clerk.

A signed letter was received in respect of the Clerk's indirect pecuniary interest in agenda items 21/047 4. Neighbourhood Plan Website and 21/047 5. Website Development and Accessibility.

2. Complaints Policy and Persistent Complainants Procedure

To review and approve the Complaints Policy and Persistent Complainants Procedure for recommendation to Full Council on the 13th of January 2022

Minor changes were identified for both documents.

Cllr. Dennett proposed that, subject to the minor amendments, the Complaints and Persistent Complainants procedures are recommended to Full Council for approval.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

3. Tennis Court Hire

To consider and agree the fee for the commercial hire of the tennis courts for coaching purposes.

It was agreed the rate should be charged at £5.30 for both courts for an hour's session for a block booking of 10 sessions. The fee will be subject to review and the Council reserves the right to change the rate prior to the start of a new block booking.

4. Neighbourhood Plan Website.

To Resolve to contract with I-Next for £750 to deliver a Neighbourhood Plan web site and its hosting as per the recommendation of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

A report was received. The Clerk stated that although discussed at their last meeting, there was some discrepancy as to whether the Steering Group had formally approved moving forward with the website as per the agenda item.

Cllr. Dennett suggested the expenditure should be approved subject to receiving formal approval from the Steering Group.

Proposed by Cllr. Carter.

Seconded by Cllr. Kilshaw.

RESOLVED unanimously.

5. Website Development and Accessibility

To receive a report on developing the website and maintaining accessibility and resolve a quarterly development/maintenance budget of up to £250.00 + VAT.

The report was received.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

6. Exclusive Right of Burial

To receive a report and RESOLVE, that the criteria having been met, to proceed with the ICCM's recommendation to grant the application to install a memorial in the Parish Council Cemetery.

The report was received.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

7. Budget

To receive, consider and agree the draft budget for circulation to Council members.

Minuted at Part II.

8. Internal Audit

To receive the mid-term report.

The report was received.

9. Risk Management Scheme.

To review the Risk Management Scheme.

Minuted at Part II.

21/048 Finance

1. Accounts to the 31st October 2021

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

The reports were received. Cllr. Dennett reported that there is a potential discrepancy in the CIL received to date for MOR006 and this is being queried with WBC.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the accounts to be approved.

Seconded by Cllr. Kilshaw.

APPROVED unanimously.

21/049 Items for information only

Minor Matters

- Cllr. Kilshaw reported that the Community Fibre Broadband has had a take up of 50% in The Avenue and Orchard Road and the project will, therefore, be able to go ahead in the new year for these two roads. Take up is less in other parts of the village and to date, the required targets have not been reached. Further publicity is planned.
- Cllr. Lewis reported that the Council's IT advisor has been assisting with issues with emails and filing. A group training session would be possible if wanted.
- Cllr. Carter reported that St John's Hall are introducing an online booking system.

21/050 Communications

To identify items for communicating

None.

21/051 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

None.

21/052 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 21/045 on the agenda due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

21/047 Items for Consideration and Resolution

7. Budget.

To receive, consider and agree the draft budget for circulation to Council members.

The proposed budget and report were considered, and changes discussed. The Clerk will make the amendments and circulate to members of the Finances and General Purposes Committee for comment prior to circulating to all members of the Council.

9. Risk Management Scheme

To review the Risk Management Scheme.

The Risk Management Scheme had been circulated. The Clerk plans to review it and update it with Committee Chairs for further consideration by the Council.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:12.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 6th January 2021.