

# **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council**

**Full Council Meeting 10/03/2022**

## **Agenda item 21/130 6: Strategy Working Party Report**

### **Introduction**

Originally formed to support the annual planning process, the group has for some time become a review forum for projects not covered by other committees/working parties. At its last meeting however, an agenda item was included to consider candidates for future use of growing Community Infrastructure Levy fund.

### **Current Projects**

#### **Exercise equipment**

Approval was granted at the 10 Feb full council meeting to order the equipment from the one supplier that could provide a turnkey solution to the requirements. The equipment is ordered but the install date is to be confirmed.

#### **Stephens Firs Tumulus**

Pamber forest are expected to supply the heather that will be used to protect the monument by October. The council can then arrange the purchase of a seat and sign for installation once the heather is established. The WBC contact is Caroline Booth. Cllr Morsley seeks another councillor to take over the project from her but may elect to continue if none comes forward.

### **Strategic planning - future projects**

#### **Available funds estimate**

The current and predicted future CIL was estimated, to assist considering possible future infrastructure projects.

Over the next two or three years the CIL income should total about £400-450K, comprising these elements:

- Current unspent CIL funds are circa £63K (Pre 21/22 income)
- In year (2021/22) income is circa £156K
- Phase 2A/B of the 110-home development is expected to generate about £30K.
- £150-200K is expected for the balance of the 110-home development towards the end of the build, estimated within three years.

## Existing commitments (foot/cycle way)

The estimated spend required to complete and run the foot/cycle way between Mortimer and Burghfield is circa £50K (planning phase) plus £400K (construction cost), with a £30k per 2-3 years maintenance cost.

The working assumption is that match funding and other contributions will keep the cost to the council funds of planning/construction close to the original published estimated of £150K. It's not confirmed how the ongoing maintenance cost would be met.

## Additional candidates

1. A multi-purpose sports facility on Alfred Palmer
  - This was put forward (the origin of the idea was with steering group) in the 2016 NDP survey and, not surprisingly, received public support. This has not never been costed or progressed to date.
2. A new community hall on the land reserved behind Tower Gardens
  - This was suggested by two members of F&GP in early 2022. The context of this possible use, was the "reserved" land behind Tower Gardens. The need for this land, originally earmarked for a new school and doctors' is under review, as required by the NDP. The current indication is that the latest school and medical requirements can be met *and* leave space for a small (circa 300m<sup>2</sup> floor area) community facility with parking. The steering group has established that the land would be free of cost for this purpose – an attractive and unusual situation. If the community does not show a need for the entire 1 hectare, the "not needed" parts will ultimately go for housing. The neighbourhood plan steering group is planning to include space for a small hall in the consultation, for the reasons given.
3. A relocated like-for-like Garth Hall being built on that reserved land, using the proceeds of sale of the existing hall towards the costs. This scenario would be an alternative (not addition to) idea 2. It would require less funding, than option 2, but would only arise if the Garth Hall was not repaired/rebuilt where it is. A consideration of this option is that the need for a Garth Hall is dictated by the requirements of its trust, the availability of funding and the availability of trustees (parish council or other), not on whether there is a demand for such a hall. A usage justification, would be helpful of course. If Garth Hall is repaired/restored where it is, the reserved land would not be needed for this purpose and the "use it or lose it" consideration would then still apply.
4. Re instating a bus service to the station, raised at F&GP, was tabled as a possible use of CIL, given the several requests for it is the 2020 public consultation. It would seem to need a champion to progress this further, noting that the previous service only ran at peak times, not during the day.