



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee meeting held at the Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer, on Thursday the 20th of October 2022 @ 7.30 pm.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. A. Marsden (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. M. Dennett, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. C. Lewis, Cllr. D. Morsley, Cllr. M. Shaw, Cllr. J. Wells.

Clerk:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

Two members of the public were in attendance. No members of the press were present.

Part I

22/012 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

The members of the public addressed the meeting on the Windmill Common boundary dispute and some councillors made comments. Due to potentially being subject to litigation, it was stated that the conversation was without prejudice. As the subject was not part of the formal business of the meeting no resolutions were made but one member of the public was asked to respond in writing to the Council's recent letter and submit their proposals.

22/013 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. N. Carter.

Cllr. D. Kilshaw did not attend, and no apologies were received.

22/014 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.

22/015 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee meeting of the 30th of June 2022.

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

22/016 Update from Previous Committee Meeting(s)

To receive an update outlining actions taken from the meeting held on the 20th June and other updates.

- Management of Commons: Cllr. Marsden reported that the commons are too small to be of interest to Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) but volunteers could be enlisted to assist with the work. BBOWT will be providing educational material giving instruction for those wishing to work on the commons. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

22/017 Items to be taken into private session

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

Cllr. Marsden proposed agenda item 6. 2022/23 Spend and 2023/24 Budget be taken in Part II.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

22/018 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Automatic Speed Watch Camera (ASWC) and Mini SID (SID)

To receive an update and agree any further actions required for the deployment of the ASWC and Mini SID.

Further to a discussion with the Thames Valley Police Community SpeedWatch Co-ordinator, Cllr. Wells gave an update on the requirement for two volunteers to man the equipment and the consequences of being caught speeding by the ASWC. The purpose of Community SpeedWatch is to get drivers to slow down.

Cllr. Dennett reported that some photos are out of focus, and he has contacted Westcotec for further guidance. Further training for the operators will be taking place. A co-ordinated schedule will be required so that SID informs the deployment of the ASWC.

Further to a request to share experiences and information, Cllr. Marsden will liaise with Swallowfield Council's Transport Lead and coordinator for the Swallowfield Community Speedwatch Group.

2. War Memorial

To receive a report on cleaning the War Memorial and agree any actions to be taken.

A report was received, and the advice given by the War Memorial Trust was considered. As the deposits of lichen are minimal it does not appear that cleaning is required at this time, but the Trust recommended that the loss of mortar to the joints is repaired using appropriate lime mortar and for a wax layer to be applied to the bronze. A basic maintenance plan should be established to include regular monitoring to identify any problems early and oversee basic work.

It was agreed for the Custodian to be asked to repair the mortar and apply a wax layer to the bronze.

3. West End Road Car Park

To consider the management of the border in the car park and agree any actions to be taken.

The management of the west border was considered. It was agreed for Cllrs. Hill and Marsden and the Clerk to look at further options.

4. Victoria Road/Croft Road/Footpath

To consider the condition of the footpath and roots and agree any action to be taken.

The cracked and raised surface is being caused by tree roots. Some of the trees are in gardens but most of the trees form part of the footpath. It was agreed to ask for a meeting with West Berkshire Council to review the issues and look at possible remedial actions.

5. Windmill Common Tree Survey

To resolve:

a. The specification for the tree survey.

b. Quotes are sought and an order placed up to a value of £1,200 + VAT.

The specification and potential cost were considered. Quotes would be sort along with those for The Fairground tree survey.

Cllr. Marsden proposed the specification as presented and a budget of £1,500.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

6. Brewery Common and Summerlug

To receive an update on the management of Brewery Common and Summerlug and resolve to meet with the West Berkshire Council's tree officer to discuss the continued management of Brewery Common.

A report on the status of Brewery Common and Summerlug was received.

Cllr. Marsden proposed a meeting be arranged with WBC to review the continued management of both commons.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

7. 2022/23 Spend and 2023/24 Budget

a. To consider the Roads, Footpaths and Commons spend year to date and identify further work to be undertaken this financial year and associated costs within the 2022/23 budget.

Minuted at Part II.

b. To consider the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Budget for 2023/24 and agree the amounts required for proposed revenue and capital expenditure for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.

Minuted at Part II.

22/019 Items for information only

- Further to a review of the recent work undertaken on Windmill Common, Cllr. Hill reported that a further three trees need removing. Oakey have been asked to quote.
- Cllr Morsley reported that having received a note regarding their hedge, Ferndale have cut theirs back.
- Brambles are protruding from the West End Road car park hedge. The Custodian will be asked to remove them.
- Cllr. Shaw raised the issue of Japanese knotweed and the reporting process.

22/020 Communications

To identify items for communicating.

Automatic Speed Watch Camera.

22/021 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

West End Road car park height barrier.

Management of commons and use of volunteers.

22/022 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting at Part II, items identified at 22/006 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

RESOLVED unanimously.

Part II

22/018 Items for Consideration and Resolution

7. 2022/23 Spend and 2023/24 Budget

- c. To consider the Roads, Footpaths and Commons spend year to date and identify further work to be undertaken this financial year and associated costs within the 2022/23 budget.**

The Committee agreed some of the remaining budget will be used for any Windmill Common tree work resulting from the planned survey.

Cllr. Hill will investigate the cost of installing a height barrier for West End Road car park.

- d. To consider the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Budget for 2023/24 and agree the amounts required for proposed revenue and capital expenditure for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.**

The budget codes were considered. Further to a discussion it was agreed to recommend to Finance and General Purposes that a total budget of £15,000 be allocated to Roads, Footpaths and Commons. Any unspent money from 2022/23 will be kept in an Earmarked Reserve (EMR). The bulk of the £15,000 and EMR will be used for tree work and the management of Windmill Common.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:15.

Next meeting – 2nd February 2023