



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday the 13th of April 2023 @ 7.30pm at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. M. Dennett (Chairman), Cllr. D. Butler, Cllr. N. Carter (arrived late), Cllr. H. Geary, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. C. Lewis, Cllr. M Shaw, Cllr. D. Morsley, Cllr. J. Wells.

Clerk:

Ms B. O'Reilly (for the Clerk).

Public/Press:

Dist. Cllr. G. Mayes was in attendance with no other members of the public. There were no members of the press present.

Part I

22/137 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

22/138 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. D. Kilshaw and Cllr. K. Fields. No apologies were received from Cllr. M. Lock, Cllr. A. Marsden and Cllr. A. Noonan.

22/139 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.

22/140 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council of the 9th of March 2023.

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

22/141 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 9th of March and other updates.

1. **Electricity Supply Review:** Electricity is currently supplied to the Fairground by Ovo (formerly SSE). A review of the tariff was undertaken in May 2022 by Utility Aid (an energy broker for the not-for-profit sector) and at that time the advice was to remain with SSE. Due to the changes in this market over the past year and that notification of a slight price rise has been received, Utility Aid are undertaking a further review. Once the review has been concluded, a decision will be taken regarding the Council's electricity supplier as per Financial Regulation 11.1 a. i.
2. **Willink Leisure Centre Contribution 2022/23:** An invoice for £12,294.82 from WBC is yet to be received. The payment will be treated as an accrual in the accounts to the 31st of March 2023.
3. **Brewery Common Tree Work:** West Berkshire Council (WBC) have been informed of the decision taken at March's meeting to contribute £15,454.00 towards the cost of the works. The funds shall be held in an earmarked reserve for that purpose.
4. **Community Grants/St Mary's Churchyard Grant:** The Grants agreed at March's meeting have been distributed. Thanks were received from all recipients.
5. **SMPC Charges:** The agreed charging structure for 2023/24 commenced on 01/04/2023.
6. **Local Council People and Development:** SMPC is now a member of this service provided by HALC.
7. **Community Award:** The Community Award Committee comprising Cllrs Dennett, Lewis, and Lock (the latter substituting for Cllr Morsley) met on 22nd March to consider the ten nominations received for five nominees. The committee agreed unanimously to make two awards for 2023. These were to Rebecca Barker and to Anne Haines. The committee also agreed that letters thanking them their contributions to the community be sent to two unsuccessful nominees: Rachel and Gavin Loubser and Doris Monger.

The report was received.

22/142 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 22/144 3. Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy, and 5. Windmill Common Boundary, be taken in Part II.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

22/143 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Planning Committee

Further to the Committee's objection to the application on MOR006 regarding a Variation of Condition on the open space, this has been called in by Dist. Cllr. Bridgman and it was noted the next meeting of the Eastern Area Planning Committee is on 26th April. If the case comes up on the agenda, the parish council will need to speak at the meeting. No further updates to report from the Station Car Park Working Party.

2. Communication Working Party

No further updates.

3. Strategy Working Party

No further updates.

4. The Street Footway Party

No further update.

22/144 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

To receive and endorse a written report from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

No written report was received. Cllr. Carter confirmed the consultants would support the planning application and a budget of £750.00 would be required to cover this cost which was slightly higher than previously discussed. It was also noted that the consultation has not yet begun.

2. Additional Meetings

To note that additional ordinary meetings shall be taking place as follows:

- a. Fairground and Cemetery on Thursday the 27th of April at 8.30pm**
- b. Finance and General Purposes on Thursday the 4th of May at 7.30pm.**

The additional ordinary meetings were noted.

3. Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy

To receive and approve:

- a. The Asset Register as at the 31st of March 2023**
- b. The Asset Valuation and Register Policy.**

Minuted in Part II.

4. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

To receive and note the guidance on the financial year end and AGAR process.

Received and noted.

5. Windmill Common Boundary

To receive the document *22-144 5.0 Settlement Agreement Longmoor Lane* and resolve to proceed with the Settlement Agreement with the Clerk as Proper Officer signing on behalf of the Council.

Minuted at Part II.

6. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

To receive an update and resolve to proceed with the planning application for the Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath at a maximum cost of £600.00.

Cllr. Morsley confirmed that all the reports required for a planning application had been received and a short planning outline was being drafted. The landowners were in agreement with the proposals and the estimated cost of the planning application calculated. Cllr. Butler raised the issue of a 'Dormouse Survey' and Cllr. Morsley advised the consultants had confirmed that this can be done post-application once planning permission given.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the maximum cost of £600.00 to submit the planning application.

Seconded by Cllr. Butler.

RESOLVED unanimously.

22/145 Finance

1. Accounts to the 28th of February 2023

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report to the 28th of February 2022 and the Balance Sheet as of that date.

Proposed for approval by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

APPROVED unanimously.

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

To receive and note summary of payments made in March 2023.

Item	Payee Details	Amount
1.	Salaries (Month 12 – March 2023)	£ 4,639.83
2.	HMRC – PAYE & NI for Month 12	£ 1,314.55
3.	Ridge & Partners – fee for Road Safety Audit – inc. VAT	£ 900.00
4.	A.B. Walker Funeral Directors – return of duplicate payment made in error for a memorial application	£ 159.00
5.	Hampshire ALC – 10x The Good Councillor Guide and 10x Good Councillors Guide to Finance 2018 Editions – inc. post and package	£ 118.06
6.	Hampshire ALC – LCPD Bronze membership fee (Full Council Decision 22/131.9)	£ 246.00

The payments were received and noted.

3. Accounts for Payment

To receive and approve items of expenditure:

Item	Payee Details	Amount	Reference
1.	Sunshine Commercial – Fairground grounds maintenance February 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 365.86	
2.	Cllr. M. Shaw – expenses – tree stakes for Incredible Edibles	£ 50.70	
3.	Tactical Facilities – Cemetery grass cut – March 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 78.78	
4.	Tactical Facilities – Dog bin collection March 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 235.20	
5.	Ridge & Partners – Cycle/footway ongoing coordination, design, and landowner consultations - inc. VAT	£ 3,600.00	
6.	L. Hannawin – Parish Clerk: Eye test and glasses for screen work	£ 62.00	
7.	Alebrije Consulting – 4.5 hours for NP administration services	£ 112.50	
8.	West Berkshire Council – April 2022/Jan 2023 grounds maintenance recharges – inc. VAT	£ 363.28	
9.	Dads Shop – sandpaper, extra strong bin bags and new handle for kiosk – inc. VAT	£ 8.22	
10.	Sapling Arboriculture – Tree survey of The Fairground – inc. VAT	£ 1,027.26	
11.	Amazon – Logitech M185 Mouse for SpeedWatch laptop [SMPC Card]	£ 14.77	DD
12.	Microsoft – Councillor licence renewal 2023 (15 licences) [SMPC Card]	£ 810.00	DD
13.	Google Cloud EMEA – March cloud storage [SMPC Card]	£ 0.27	DD
14.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – monthly fee [SMPC Card]	£ 3.00	DD

15.	Smart Pension – March 2023 (Month 12)	£ 306.85	DD
16.	Smart Pension - Monthly fee (March 2023) inc. VAT	£ 18.00	DD
17.	BT – landline, mobile & broadband – March-May 2023 - inc. VAT	£ 227.24	DD
18.	Unity Trust Bank – cheque charges Dec 2022-March 2023	£ 1.20	DD
19.	SSE – Plot 1 Fairground – electricity charges 21 Dec 2022 to 9 March 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 35.07	DD
20.	SSE – Plot 2 Fairground – electricity charges 21 Dec 2022 to 9 March 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 35.07	DD
21.	SSE/OVO – Car Park Fairground – monthly electricity charge March 2023	£ 77.00	DD
22.	SUEZ Recycling – Fairground Waste collection for March 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 93.86	DD
23.	Unity Trust Bank – Manual credit handling charge	£ 1.20	DD
24.	Unity Trust Bank – Service Charges 5.12.2022 to 4.03.2023	£ 32.40	DD
25.	SSE – Plot 1 Fairground – electricity charges 21 Dec 2022 to 9 March 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 35.07	DD

Cllr. Shaw declared a personal interest in agenda item 22/145 3. Accounts for Payment.
Proposed for payment by Cllr. Dennett.
Seconded Cllr. Morsley.
RESOLVED with one abstention.

22/146 Items for information only

1. To note the meetings that have taken place of the following committees and to receive the draft minutes:

a. Planning 23/02/2023

The meeting was noted, and the draft minutes received.

2. Correspondence:

Item	Details
1.	Member of the Public: Email expressing deep concern over the charge of a permit for erecting a memorial for a burial plot for a non-resident. Approved charge as of 01/04/2023 is £700.50.
2.	Member of the Public: Enquiring what can be done to improve the parking conditions in the Damson Drive area of Strawberry Fields and asking if a consultation can be undertaken with a view to introducing parking restrictions. Inconsiderate pavement parking by cars and random parking by large commercial vehicles in rented properties is causing issues such as blocked walk areas, poor visibility, and conflict situations. Further information has been sought from West Berkshire Council (WBC).
3.	WBC: Notification that the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (LPR) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
4.	Corn Exchange, Newbury: Details of their Ageing Creatively programme for the over 55s. <i>For information, Cllr. Morsley advised she had supplied the Corn Exchange with information on halls and relevant activities within Mortimer.</i>
5.	WBC: Details of a Doodle Poll regarding the next District Parish Conference. This is likely to be an evening event held in the first or second week of October and will be of a hybrid format.
6.	WBC: Information regarding proposed training sessions on Co-production.

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7. WBC: Invitation to the West Berkshire Heritage Forum Annual General Meeting on 26th April.
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3. Planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council.

23/00126/HOUSE: 5 Damson Drive, Mortimer, Reading, West Berkshire RG7 3WZ

Proposed roof space conversion with the installation of two roof lights to the front roof slope and two to the rear roof slope.

GRANTED – 10 March 2023

SMPC Comments: The SMPC Planning Committee considered this application at its meeting on 9th February 2023, under item 22/0187, and has reservations on this proposed development at Damson Drive as the loft conversion is likely to be used as additional bedrooms and, as Mortimer is within Zone 3 under WBC parking standards, there are inadequate parking facilities on the property (SMPC NDP Policy GD2 parking).

23/00390/PASSHE: 16 Windmill Road, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3RN

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Larger Home Extension; Construction of a single storey rear extension. Dimensions 6.5m from rear wall, 3m maximum height, 2.9m eaves height.

WITHDRAWN – 14 March 2023

SMPC Comments: SMPC Comments: Members of our Planning Committee noted the planning application 23/00400/PASSHE at its meeting on 9th March 2023, under item 22/0211, and had no comments regarding the determination if prior approval is required for a proposed extension at 16 Windmill Road.

23/00180/HOUSE: The Frith, Drury Lane, Mortimer Common, Reading, West Berkshire, RG7 2JL

Demolition of existing detached garage, proposed single storey side extension with attached garage and replacement of existing windows.

GRANTED – 29 March 2023

SMPC Comments: The SMPC Planning Committee considered this application at its meeting on 9th February 2023, under item 22/0187, and has no objections in principle, but the extension appearance is not in keeping with the original dwelling or neighbourhood street scape. SMPC would like to see a condition put in place that the proposed extension should not be turned into a separate dwelling. (SMPC NDP Policy GD5 building design and style).

23/00218/HOUSE: 30 The Crescent, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3RU

Front and side extension, garage conversion.

GRANTED – 29 March 2023

SMPC Comments: The SMPC Planning Committee considered this application at its meeting on 9th February 2023, under item 22/0187, and objects to this proposed development as the addition of a bedroom will not meet the parking standards on an already congested street (SMPC NDP Policy GD2 parking) within a Zone 3 area.

23/00263/HOUSE: 31 The Avenue, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3QU

Demolition of existing garage and construction of single storey side extension linked to side/rear external covered BBQ area.

GRANTED – 5 April 2023

SMPC Comments: No objections.

4. Neighbourhood Action Group report.

Nothing to report until next meeting.

5. Health and Safety.

Nothing to report.

6. Minor Matters.

1. Cllr. Hill reported that a member of the public had approached him about recent activity at Fairfield Park where access was being used again from Birch Lane contrary to the agreed conditions stipulated.
2. Cllr. Hill reported concerns regarding the dog bin waste collection service being provided on The Fairground. This would be followed up with the contractor.
3. The issue of a recent interview given to Sky News by Cllr. Bridgman, regarding the waste discharge into Foundry Brook, was raised and it was noted that, in future, communication to the media **on behalf of the Council**¹ should be by either the Chairman or the Parish Clerk. Cllr. Dennett advised that Thames Water were due to give an update shortly on the situation regarding the current series of waste discharges.
4. Cllr. Lewis thanked everyone as this is his last full Council meeting. Cllr. Lewis would be stepping down from the Council at the forthcoming elections in May but will volunteer for co-option to the Garth Hall Working Party in due course. Cllr. Hill expressed thanks to Cllr. Chris Lewis for his invaluable input to the Council over the years and this was unanimously supported by all councillors in attendance.

22/147 Communications

To identify items for communicating

None.

22/148 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

Cost of memorial permits in the parish council cemetery (Fairground & Cemetery Committee).

22/149 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 22/142 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr. Dennett.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

¹ Amended at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18/05/2023

Part II

22/144 Items for Consideration and Resolution

3. Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy

To receive and approve:

a. The Asset Register as at the 31st of March 2023

b. The Asset Valuation and Register Policy.

The Asset Register, Asset Valuation and Register Policy were received to comply with statutory requirements.

Cllr. Dennett proposed the resolution as above.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

RESOLVED unanimously.

5. Windmill Common

To receive the document 22-144 5.0 Settlement Agreement Longmoor Lane and resolve to proceed with the Settlement Agreement with the Clerk as Proper Officer signing on behalf of the Council.

Cllr. Lewis proposed the resolution as above.

Seconded by Cllr. Dennett.

RESOLVED unanimously.

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Close

The meeting closed at 20:40

Next meeting: May the 18th 2023.