



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday the 12th of October 2023 @ 7.30pm at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

These Minutes are subject to approval.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. D. Morsley (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. N. Carter (arrived at 19:32), Cllr. M. Dennett, Cllr. H. Geary, Cllr. D. Kilshaw, Cllr. M. Lock, Cllr. A. Marsden, Cllr. A. Noonan, Cllr. A. Richardson, Cllr. J. Wells.

Clerk:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

There was one member of the public present and no members of the press.

Part I

23/069 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

No questions were asked.

23/070 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. D. Butler and Cllr. S. Hill.
Cllr. M. Shaw did not attend, and no apologies were received.

23/071 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.

23/072 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the 14th of September 2023.

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

23/073 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the Meeting of the Council held on the 14th of September 2023 and other updates.

1. Christmas Tree: This has been ordered and will be delivered by the 24th of November. Volunteers will be needed to assist with putting it up.
2. Community Automated External Defibrillators: The Department of Health and Social Care have a fund to supply 100 fully costed defibrillators and 1900 match funded defibrillators (recipients will have to pay £750). With the agreement of the Chair and Vice-Chair, an application has been submitted for a defibrillator for the station. If successful permission will be sought from the railway authority.
3. Mid-term Internal Audit: This is taking place on Thursday the 19th of October.

The report was received.

23/074 Items to be taken into private session

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

Not needed but it was acknowledged that although to be discussed in Part I, the underlying papers for 23-076 1. Councillor Vacancy and 23-076 8. Community Grant would remain as Part II due to the personal information they contain.

23/075 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Planning Committee

Cllr. Bridgman reported that representatives from T A Fisher had attended the earlier planning meeting to present the two proposed Section 73 application amendments for Phases 2b and 3, which will address the issues regarding the high wall. The amendments will be considered formally by the Planning Committee as part of the planning process once the application has been submitted to West Berkshire Council (WBC).

2. Fairground and Cemetery

Cllrs. Noonan and Morsley reported:

- Quotes are being sought for updating the three electrical boxes on the Fairground and grazing area.
- Documentation has been forwarded to TGMS Ltd as evidence for trying to reduce the 30m burial limit to 10m. The ditch between the current cemetery and cemetery extension is a field drain fed by a pond further up by Mortimer Hall and run-off from the neighbouring fields.
- The cemetery policies and regulations are being reviewed.

3. Climate and Environment Working Party

Cllr. Marsden reported:

- The Terms of Reference are being reviewed with the aim to prevent the duplication of climate initiatives and work being undertaken by other authorities and organisations in the village.

- Cllr. Dennett continues to monitor the discharges into Foudry Brook. He confirmed that Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP) have analysed the data and think there have been some illegal discharges.

4. Communications Working Party

Cllr. Bridgman confirmed the newsletter has gone to print and will be ready shortly for sorting and delivery.

5. Garth Hall Working Party

Cllr. Dennett confirmed the public statement was issued on the Council's social media and noticeboards. RBL have confirmed the Public Notice re s.121 has been submitted to the Reading and Newbury newspapers for publishing on the 19th of October. The Clerk has requested a final copy of the Notice from RBL for publishing on the Council's social media and notice boards.

6. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath Working Party

Cllr. Morsley reported the planning application is still waiting a decision. Councillors, as individuals, can submit letters of support for the application.

7. The Street Footway Working Party

Nothing to report.

8. SMPC Awayday

Cllr. Morsley thanked all of those who attended and summarised objectives identified: engaging more effectively with the public; working more efficiently through the use of SharePoint and WhatsApp and councillors recording their availability.

23/076 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Councillor Vacancy

To consider any applications for co-option to fill the Casual Vacancies on the Parish Council and vote to appoint a co-opted parish councillor.

Mr. H. Kilshaw's application was considered for the current vacancy. He gave a brief introductory talk and answered questions from the floor.

Cllr. Bridgman proposed Mr. Kilshaw be co-opted onto the Council.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

2. Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

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

A written report was received. Cllr. Bridgman confirmed policies are being considered for the new NP and the application from T A Fisher, as part of the existing NDP, is anticipated for Redwoods/Reserved Land.

3. Policies

a. To receive the personnel policies as agreed by Finance and General Purposes:

- i. Dignity at Work.
- ii. Disciplinary.
- iii. Equal Opportunities.
- iv. Expenses.
- v. Grievance.
- vi. Performance Management
- vii. Sickness and Absence.

b. To receive and approve:

- i. Expenses.
- ii. Health and safety.

Cllr. Morsley proposed an amendment to the resolution for iv. Expenses to be dropped from a. and for Performance Management to be moved to b.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

The policies under a. were received.

Cllr Morsley proposed that the policies at b. be approved.

Seconded by Cllr. Kilshaw.

Resolved unanimously.

4. Victoria Road Footway

To resolve to pay 50% of the cost of reinstating a pavement outside Mortimer Café/David Cliff Estate Agent to improve pedestrians' safety.

Cllr. Carter presented a report. A discussion followed around alternative remedial solutions; the lack of budget for this work to be undertaken by WBC and issues with the kerb of the access road leading to the rear of the buildings.

Cllr. Bridgman proposed an amendment to the resolution as follows: to resolve to apply for a Members' Bid of 50% of the cost of reinstating a pavement outside Mortimer Café/David Cliff Estate Agent to improve pedestrians' safety up to a maximum of £5,400; the design should be altered so the access road has non-dropped kerbs.

Seconded by Cllr. Lock.

Resolved by majority vote.

Should WBC not accept the request for non-dropped kerbs, SMPC wishes to be consulted on what other measures can be put in place to prevent people parking on the pavement.

Cllr. Bridgman proposed the amended resolution.

Seconded by Cllr. Lock.

Resolved by 7 votes for, 3 against and 1 abstention.

5. Finances and General Purposes Committee

To appoint a further member to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Cllrs. Carter and Richardson put themselves forward to be members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Cllr. Richardson was proposed by Cllr. Kilshaw and seconded by Cllr. Noonan.

Cllr. Carter was proposed by Cllr. Lock and seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

Cllr. Richardson was appointed by 9 votes to 2.

6. Remembrance Day Commemorations

To receive an update on the planned commemorations and agree further actions to be taken.

Cllr. Kilshaw will provide the PA.

Cllrs. Bridgman, Dennett, Geary, Lock, Marsden, Richardson, and Mr. H. Kilshaw will marshal the event.

7. Councillor Surgeries

To resolve the Council will hold surgeries and consider dates, times and venues accordingly.

The proposed format was discussed. An email will be sent to establish members' availability and dates, times, and venues.

8. Community Grant

To consider any applications received and consider whether to open another round of applications.

One application had been received.

Cllr. Bridgman proposed that £1,500 be granted to Mortimer Cricket Club

Seconded by Cllr. Lock.

Resolved unanimously.

Cllr. Bridgman proposed another round of grants be opened for applications with a closing date of the 30th of November with grants being awarded in January.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

23/077 Finance

1. Accounts to the 31st of August 2023

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report to the 31st of August 2023 and the Balance Sheet as of that date.

The financial reports were received.

Proposed by Cllr. Bridgman.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

Approved unanimously.

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

To receive and note summary of payments.

Item	Payee Details	Amount
1.	Salaries (Month 6 – September 2023)	£ 4,833.84
2.	HMRC – PAYE & NI for Month 6	£ 1,226.94
3.	1 st Mortimer Scouts – donation from Youth Club Funds (FC decision 23/063.6)	£ 3,477.27
4.	1 st Mortimer Scouts – hire of HQ on 16 September 2023	£ 90.00
5.	Mortimer Village Partnership – Entry in Scarecrow Trail 2023	£ 10.00

It was noted that the original schedule issued stated £4,477.27 had been paid at 3. to 1st Mortimer Scouts. This was incorrect and the correct amount of £3,477.27 had been paid. The payments were received and noted.

3. Accounts for Payment

To receive and approve items of expenditure:

Item	Payee Details	Amount	Payment Ref
1.	Sunshine Commercial Services – Fairground ground maintenance August 2023 – inc. VAT	£ 384.14	
2.	Tactical Facilities – Cemetery and Pillbox cuts 12 & 19.9.2023 – inc. VAT	£193.92	
3.	John Stacey & Sons – works to replace two damaged bollards – inc. VAT	£ 1,813.68	
4.	Alebrije Consulting – NP administration (11.5hours) Sept 2023	£ 287.50	
5.	Cllr. D. Morsley – Expenses - supplies for SMPC Awayday	£ 19.09	
6.	Cllr. G. Bridgman – Expenses – lunch for SMPC Awayday – inc. VAT	£ 63.47	
7.	D. Sturt – IT monitoring and support August 2023	£ 105.00	
8.	West Berkshire Council – Q4 2023 rent for SMPC office	£ 875.00	
9.	Dads Shop – sugar soap, refuse bags, dark green metal paint, thinner and brush cleaner, hexagon set screw and washer – inc. VAT	£ 61.73	
10.	Just Projectors – Epsom EB992F projector and case – inc. VAT [SMPC Card]	£912.00	DD
11.	Lloyds MultiPay Card – monthly fee [SMPC Card]	£ 3.00	DD
12.	Google Cloud EMEA – monthly cloud storage [SMPC Card]	£ 0.29	DD
13.	SSE – Grazing Area electricity – monthly DD	£49.00	DD
14.	Smart Pension – September 2023 (Month 6)	£ 288.80	DD
15.	Smart Pension - Monthly fee (September 2023) inc. VAT	£ 18.00	DD
16.	SUEZ Recycling – Fairground Waste collection September 2023 – inc. VAT	£117.83	DD
17.	OVO Energy – Fairground Car Park electricity 3.9.2023-2.10.2023 – inc. VAT (Account currently in credit)	£6.00	DD
18.	Unity Trust Bank – Service Charge	£ 33.00	DD
19.	Unity Trust Bank – Manual credit handling charge	£ 1.80	DD
20.	BT – landline, mobile & broadband bundle – Sept to Nov - inc. VAT	£ 240.18	DD

It was noted that the original schedule issued stated £108.30 had been paid at 14. to Smart Pension. The correct amount was £288.80.

The Clerk confirmed the remedial work for the bollards (3.) was agreed with Cllr. Hill under the Financial Regulations. As the bollards had been damaged, the Clerk will look to see if the work can be covered by insurance.

Proposed for payment by Cllr. Morsley.

Seconded Cllr. Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

23/078 Items for information only

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

- a. **Fairground and Cemetery 21/09/2023**

The meeting was noted.

2. **District Councillor Reports**

A written report was received from Dist. Cllr. Carter.

3. **Correspondence:**

- a. **BALC AGM**

Information has been circulated. The AGM is taking place on the evening of the 9th of November.

- b. **Tadley AGM**

The information will be circulated. The AGM is taking place on the 9th of November 12-3pm.

- c. **Member of the Public**

A complaint had been received regarding a caravan parked on the footway in Groves Lea. This has been reported to WBC.

- d. **Member of the Public**

Further information was being sought regarding the set up and units proposed for the Four Houses Corner site.

4. **Planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council.**

23/01332/HOUSE: 16 Windmill Road, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3RN

Demolish existing garage and construct new detached garage building.

REFUSED – 4 October 2023

SMPC Comments: No objections.

23/01866/TPW: Windmill Common – SMPC Treeworks

T1873 - Scots Pine: Remove dead minor stem. T801 - Oak: Remove deadwood more than 25mm diameter. T802 - Beech: Vandalism causing bark loss on lower stem. Remove

T813 - Scots Pine: Canker on lower stem. Potential for decay and stem failure. Remove

T1879 - Scots Pine: Dead. Remove. T1880 - Scots Pine: Dead. Remove. Holly - Remove 1/10th of all Holly throughout the common.

GRANTED – 2 October 2023

23/01985/NONMA: 45A Windmill Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3RJ

Non material amendment to approved 22/02675/HOUSE - Single storey rear extension and full width rear dormer at loft level. Various changes to doors and windows.

Amendment - Existing concrete roof tiles on front and rear to be replaced by slate/slate-look concrete tiles (dark grey). Existing front and new rear loftlevel dormer to be covered in either the same slate/slate-look concrete tiles (dark grey) or in Cedral cladding (grey/black) Holly - Remove 1/10th of all Holly throughout the common.

GRANTED – 11 September 2023

Eastern Area Planning Committee Decisions (at meeting on 4th October 2023)**23/01552/REG3: Four Houses Corner Caravan Site, Reading Road, Ufton Nervet, Reading**

It is proposed to replace the existing permanent 18 pitch Gypsy caravan site with a new 17 permanent pitch Gypsy caravan site. Each pitch is to consist of a hard standing area large enough for two twin axle caravans, car parking for two vehicles and a 30sq m amenity building consisting of a kitchen/dayroom, bathroom, separate WC and utility area. In addition to the amenity buildings a recycle storage facility, children play area and sewerage treatment plant are to be located within the site.

DEFERRED – 4 October 2023

Cllr. Bridgman confirmed the application had been deferred on drainage issues. The lack of consultation, which had been promised and is a requirement of the Neighbourhood Development Plan was also raised. The Planning Committee will follow this up with WBC.

23/00879/FUL: 6A Victoria Road, Mortimer Common, Reading, RG7 3SE

Relocation of the approved commercial kitchen extractor vent.

APPROVED – 4 October 2023

5. Neighbourhood Action Group Report.

The draft minutes from the recent meeting will be circulated shortly. The meeting was attended by some members of the public and principally looked at the anti-social behaviour in Mortimer and Burghfield.

6. Health and Safety.

The Clerk reported that there are some changes to Fire Safety Legislation which may affect the newly adopted Health and Safety Policy.

7. Minor Matters.

- Christmas Meal: availability and menu choices should be submitted to Cllr. Bridgman as soon as possible.
- Government Guidance on Biodiversity: The Clerk and Cllr. Morsley reported that the duty to have regard to consider biodiversity when taking decisions and/or adopting policies has been reinforced under the Environment Act 2021. Updated Government Guidance is asking councils to complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by January 1st, 2024, prior to agreeing objectives and policies. It was agreed for members of the Fairground and Cemetery Committee, Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee and Climate and Environment to take an initial look at this.
- Friends of Mortimer Library (FoML)/Clarks Charity: Cllr. Lock reported that a meeting of the FoML Executive Committee had taken place, and the Board Games Group will be recommencing shortly. Thirty applicants have approached the Clarks Charity for grants for university.
- Windmill Common: Cllr. Geary reported vehicles had been observed parking on the track on the common.
- Gigaclear Complaints: Cllr. Carter reported WBC Officers have visited and reviewed the sites that have not been properly reinstated.

- Policies and Administration of the Council: Since returning to the Council, Cllr. Richardson has been impressed with the improved quality of the documents and administration of the Council.
- Old Projector: suggestions as to how the old projector should be used should be submitted to the Clerk.

23/079 Communications

To identify items for communicating

- New parish councillor.
- Community Grant award and new round.

23/080 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

- Local Council Award Scheme - Cllr. Richardson (and link to online information to be forwarded to all councillors)

23/081 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 23/074 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:30

Next meeting: November the 9th 2023.