



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 29th of June 2023 @ 7.30 pm.**

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. A. Marsden (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. M. Dennett, Cllr. H. Geary, Cllr. S. Hill, Cllr. D. Morsley, Cllr. M. Shaw, Cllr. J. Wells, Mr. C Lewis (Co-opted).

Clerk:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

One member of the public was in attendance. No members of the press were present.

Part I

23/001 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

A member of the public attended the meeting regarding agenda item 23/007 5. Automatic Speed Watch Camera (ASWC) and Speed Indicator Device (SID).

23/002 To receive any apologies for absence

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

23/003 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.

23/004 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee meeting of the 2nd of February 2023.

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

23/005 Update from Previous Committee Meeting(s)

To receive an update outlining actions taken from the meeting held on the 2nd of February 2023.

- West End Road car park: The Clerk confirmed to date the fence has not been painted as the neighbour was waiting for the vegetation to be removed to provide better access.
- Speeding equipment volunteers:
 - Cllr. Bridgman will be approaching the walking group to see if members are interested in volunteering.
 - Cllr. Marsden will be writing the text to publicise the need for volunteers.
- Victoria Road/West End Road footpath: The Clerk reported that West Berkshire's Rights of Way Officer had inspected the veteran trees along the footpath. Although the trees are causing both lifting of the tarmac and an obstruction they will remain in situ. The officer thinks there is a case for improving the surface using a permeable material called Flexipave. However, due to current commitments in the work program, this will not be undertaken until a later date. The Clerk will check back in nine months' time.
- Management of commons: Cllr. Shaw has started the review of local commons and land. This was further discussed under 23/007 1.
- War Memorial: Cllr. Hill reported the brass had been cleaned and the lime mortar work will be undertaken shortly prior to the cleaning of the stonework. He is working with the Clerk on the Risk Assessment and is looking to borrow a mobile elevated platform to assist with the cleaning.
- Swallowfield Community SpeedWatch: Cllr. Marsden reported there has been no further communication with Swallowfield, but she will make further contact.

23/006 Items to be taken into private session

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

None.

23/007 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Roads, Footpaths and Commons Ideas and Planning

To review the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee Terms of Reference and identify and explore ideas and actions relating to the Committee's portfolio.

Further to a lengthy discussion regarding the Committees objectives in managing and enhancing the biodiversity of the commons and land, it was agreed:

- For Cllr. Shaw to continue with the review of the status of the relevant land and, where possible, to involve other local expertise in undertaking a survey.
- For Cllr. Hill to meet with Englefield's forestry manager to review the management of Windmill Common.
- To review the Committee Terms of Reference particularly with regards to the delegated powers of the Committee.

With regards to maintaining local footpaths, it was agreed those using the footpaths should be encouraged to report any issues.

2. Tree Survey

To receive the tree survey and resolve:

- a. The work to be undertaken and associated budget.**
- b. The Clerk, in association with the Chairman, seeks quotes and places an order for the work to be done.**

The Tree Survey was received. It was noted that trees 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877 and 1878 are on Englefield land and therefore, the council has no duty of care to discharge. The Clerk confirmed the report had been forwarded to Englefield Estates regarding the five trees. It was also noted that Windmill Common is covered by an Area Tree Preservation Order and permission from West Berkshire Council (WBC) would need to be sought prior to any works being undertaken.

Cllr. Hill proposed that itemised quotes be sought for all the work on the Council's land identified in the survey.

Seconded by Cllr. Geary.

Resolved unanimously.

3. Budget Tracker

To note the Budget Tracker and review the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Earmarked Reserve.

The Budget Tracker was received. It was noted that the Earmarked Reserve of £7,727 is required as part payment towards the Brewery Common tree works being undertaken by WBC.

4. West Berkshire Council's Winter Service Plan Consultation

To consider the Winter Service Plan and agree any comments.

The reports were received. The Committee had no comments.

5. Speed Indicator Device (SID) and Automatic Speed Watch Camera (ASWC)

To consider and agree:

- a. The management of the deployment of the SID.**
- b. The management of the deployment of the ASWC.**
- c. The recruitment of volunteers and related training and management**

Further to a discussion, it was agreed:

- To run a campaign over a month with a view to publishing the results and then appealing for volunteers.
- For Cllr. Dennett to co-ordinate the management and deployment of both machines.
- The Speed Camera Subgroup to meet to look at publicity and a recruitment drive to get more volunteers.

The Clerk reported on two items of correspondence received, one with regards to speeding and the other to dangerous driving in the village. The details will be forwarded to the Neighbourhood Action Group representatives.

23/008 Items for information only

- Cllr Hill raised the poor state of repair of the footways and roads following the recent Gigaclear works. It was agreed he would take some photos and for the issue to be raised with Gigaclear, copying in WBC and the District Councillors.

- Mr. Lewis reminded the committee of the deadline of the 2nd of August for the Longmoor Lane remedial works. Some vehicles are continuing to be parked on the common. Logs from the proposed tree works could be used for demarcation purposes.
- Cllr. Hill thanked WBC for the resurfacing of West End Road and footway.
- Cllr. Shaw confirmed he had not seen any further Japanese knotweed on the open space in Strawberry Fields but had seen some Skunk Cabbage in another part of the parish. The management of this needs to be established.

23/009 Communications

To identify items for communicating.

Encouraging users to notify issues with footpaths.

23/010 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

None.

23/011 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 23/006 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:05.

Next meeting – 19th October 2023