



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 19th of October 2023 @ 7.30 pm.**

Draft subject to approval

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. A. Marsden (Chairman), Cllr. G. Bridgman, Cllr. M. Dennett, Cllr. H. Geary, Cllr. D. Kilshaw (arrived 20:00), Cllr. D. Morsley, Cllr. M. Shaw, Cllr. J. Wells.

Clerk:

Mrs. L. Hannawin.

Public/Press:

No members of the public and no members of the press were present.

Part I

23/012 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

23/013 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mr. C. Lewis.

Cllr. S. Hill did not attend, and no apologies were received.

23/014 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.

23/015 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Committee meeting of the 29th of June 2023.

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

23/016 Update from Previous Committee Meeting(s)

To review the Action Tracker and receive an update outlining actions taken from the meeting held on the 29th of June 2023.

The Action Tracker was reviewed and updated and the following noted:

- Skunk cabbage: the Clerk will inform West Berkshire Council (WBC) of the location of skunk cabbage that has been spotted in the parish.
- Gigaclear: WBC officers and Dist. Cllr Poole are following up on the reinstatement works on Highways land. A letter will be sent to Gigaclear, copied to WBC, regarding the reinstatement works on unadopted roads.
- Speed Indicator Device (SID) & Automatic Speed Watch Camera (ASWC):
 - Cllr. Marsden will write text seeking further volunteers.
 - Cllrs. Bridgman, Marsden, and Wells are attending WBC's CSW Seminar – Cllr. Dennett to provide data and photos.
 - Cllr. Dennet has applied for four further ASWC locations.
- Management of commons: Cllr. Shaw has written a review which he will share with Committee members, and which will be considered at the next meeting. The Clerk will write to the landowner of the woods opposite The Fairground on Hammonds Heath regarding the management of the woods.
- Swallowfield Community SpeedWatch: Cllr. Marsden reported Swallowfield have suspended their SpeedWatch campaign due to a lack of letters being issued and the content of letters not strong enough. The Clerk will write to TVP and request a copy of the letter and confirmation of the number and types of letters sent depending on repeat offences.
- War Memorial: Cllr. Bridgman confirmed the cleaning of War Memorial is taking place over the next two weekends.

Cllr. Kilshaw arrived at 20:00.

23/017 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 items 23/018 3. Parking on The Street at St Mary's School and 23/018 4. Budget 2024/25 be taken with the public excluded.

Seconded by Cllr. Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

23/018 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Windmill Common Tree Work

To receive an update on the work needed and note the amended specification as per the requirement of West Berkshire Council's tree officer.

The updated specification was received. Cllr. Shaw will advise on the replacement trees. The Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman, will seek quotes and place an order for the work to be done as agreed at the meeting on the 29/06/2023.

2. Overgrown Hedges

To confirm the process for monitoring, managing, and reporting overgrown hedges.

The wording of a card for advising residents of hedge issues was reviewed. Cllr. Marsden will rewrite the text and circulate for comment.

It was agreed for:

- Members of the Committee to report the location of overgrown hedges identified via a Hedges WhatsApp group.
- The Office to continue to maintain a record of overgrown hedges and action taken. To be kept on SharePoint.
- Cards and the "Don't let your hedge be a hazard" leaflets to be posted through letterboxes and letters sent to landowners, as appropriate.

3. Parking on The Street at St Mary's School

To note the letters received and agree any further actions needed.

Minuted at Part II.

4. Budget 2024/25

To consider the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Budget for 2024/25 and agree the amounts required for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.

Minuted at Part II.

5. Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) 2023-2033 Consultation

To receive the draft ROWIP and agree the method for responding to the consultation.

It was agreed for Cllrs. Bridgman, Marsden, Morsley and Shaw to review the draft ROWIP and formulate a response for submission to the consultation.

23/019 Items for information only

- Potholes: Cllr. Kilshaw raised the issue of potholes and will send locations for the office to follow up with WBC/District Councillors.
- New Government Guidance on Biodiversity: this will be considered by Cllrs. Marsden and Shaw. Cllr. Marsden will seek additional help from other Council members.
- SID Volunteers: further volunteers are needed. Cllr. Dennett can assist with SID volunteer training and management.

23/020 Communications

To identify items for communicating.

Request for volunteers for operating the SID and ASWC.

23/021 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

Management of the Commons.

23/022 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 23/017 on the Agenda due to the confidential nature of the information being discussed.

Proposed by Cllr. Bridgman.

Seconded by Cllr. Geary.

Resolved unanimously.

23/023 Items for Consideration and Resolution

3. Parking on The Street at St Mary's School

To note the letters received and agree any further actions needed.

Information provided by Cllr. Marsden was considered along with copies of the letters received from residents. It was agreed to 1) inform residents about the role SMPC can play and 2) request an onsite meeting with WBC to look at the issues and safety concerns.

4. Budget 2024/25

To consider the Roads, Footpaths and Commons Budget for 2024/25 and agree the amounts required for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.

The potential expenditure for 2023/24 and the budget requirements for 2024/25 were considered and agreed for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:15.

Next meeting – 01st of February 2023