



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Fairground and Cemetery Committee held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on Thursday the 21st of September 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. S. Hill (Chairman), Cllr. M. Lock (arrived 19:39), Cllr. A. Marsden, Cllr. A. Noonan, Cllr. M. Shaw.

Officers:

Mrs. L Hannawin, Clerk.

Public/Press:

There were no members of the public and no members of the press in attendance.

Part I

23/012 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

23/013 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr. D. Morsley.

Cllr. G. Bridgman and Cllr. H. Geary did not attend, and no apologies were received.

23/014 To receive any declarations of interest

None.

23/015 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to APPROVE the Minutes of the Minutes of the Fairground and Cemetery Meeting of the 20th of July 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 receive an update outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 20th of July 2023, and other updates.

- Utility Square and Fairground Footpath: no further progress has been made. Cllr. Hill is looking at the specification and tender so that quotes can be obtained. Advice remains to be sought from West Berkshire Council (WBC) regarding the small strip that crosses Highway's land.
- Lime and Cherry Trees: Cllr. Shaw is investigating potential replacements and will circulate ideas with a view to planting new trees at the end of November.

Cllr. Lock arrived.

- Play Area Resurfacing: Cllr. Hill and the Clerk will review the work to be undertaken. The surfaces under the Titan and Supernova will be considered first.

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. Hill proposed that agenda items 23/018 3. Budget 2024/25 and 23/018 4. Cemetery, be taken with the public excluded.

Seconded by Cllr. Marsden.

RESOLVED unanimously.

23/018 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Fairground Fence

To review the condition of the Fairground Fence and agree a management plan and any associated budget.

Further to a discussion, it was agreed for the Custodian to continue repairing the current fence whilst estimates are obtained for replacing it with a similar style of fence but made of metal. This will be considered at a future meeting once potential costs are known.

2. Fairground and Grazing Area Electricity Meters

To receive a report and resolve actions to be taken and any associated budget.

The need and process for dropping the electricity supply, which also includes installing new cabinets, was discussed. It was agreed for Cllr. Hill to write a specification for supplying and installing three cabinets and for an itemised quote to be obtained. The expenditure would be considered as part of the 2024/25 budget discussions.

3. Budget 2024/25

To consider the Fairground Budget for 2024/25 and agree the amounts required for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.

Minuted at part II.

4. Cemetery

To consider the current issues with some plots not being maintained as per the Cemetery Regulations and agree a management plan.

Minuted at Part II.

5. Cemetery Extension

To receive an update and agree any further actions needed.

Cllr. Noonan reported that TGMS Ltd is liaising with the Environment Agency (EA) to establish, with a view to increasing the number of burial plots, if the 30m exclusion zone can be reduced to 10m. The EA have said that detailed site investigation of the underlying soil, geology and hydrogeology i.e. a Tier 2 assessment may be needed. A Tier 1 assessment was undertaken as part of the cemetery extension planning application process. This is being followed up with TGMS Ltd. Once the exclusion zone has been determined the design can be finalised and specifications considered for the work needed.

It was noted that the farmer has trimmed to extension hedge to 6 feet and has cut the grass. Cllr. Hill thanked the farmer.

6. Policies

a. To review the policies and agree any changes to be made:

- I. Cemetery Regulations**
- II. Memorials in Stratfield Mortimer Cemetery**

The policies are still being reviewed by Cllrs. Hill, Morsley and Noonan.

b. To receive an update on the proposed Fairground Policy.

No update received.

23/019 Items for information only

- Cemetery Extension: Cllr. Noonan has provided a report on the extension for the Autumn newsletter.
- Pillbox: The Clerk will organise another cut of the grass.
- Christmas Tree: quotes are being obtained. The Clerk was also asked to obtain a quote from Englefield Estate.
- Younger Children's Play Area: the Custodian had reported that the padlock on the gate to the area had forcibly been removed by the grounds maintenance team in order that they could gain entry so that the grass could be cut. This is being followed up by the Clerk. The Custodian has replaced the padlock.
- Annual Fairground Wildlife Area Cut: This will be undertaken shortly. This is a rough cut done with a lawn mower and all arisings removed.

23/020 Communications

To identify items for communicating.

None.

23/021 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

- Fairground fence.
- Electricity meters and boxes.
- Cemetery Policy.

- Fairground Policy.

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. Hill.

Seconded by Cllr. Marsden.

RESOLVED unanimously.

Part II

23/018 Items for Consideration and Resolution

3. Budget 2024/25

To consider the Fairground Budget for 2024/25 and agree the amounts required for recommendation to Finance and General Purposes.

The budget for each Fairground and Cemetery expense code was considered and the amounts required agreed.

4. Cemetery

To consider the current issues with some plots not being maintained as per the Cemetery Regulations and agree a management plan.

The issues at the cemetery with plot maintenance were discussed. It was agreed for Cllr. Hill and the Clerk to liaise with the Exclusive Right of Burial holder to try a further time to resolve the main issues. In addition, the Clerk will write re a further grave and request the plot is maintained as per the Cemetery Regulations. The Cemetery Regulations are currently being reviewed and the issues will be taken into consideration.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:12

Date of next meeting: Thursday January the 18th, 2024.