



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on Thursday 7 March 2024 at 19:30.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr G Bridgman (Chairman), Cllr D Butler (left 19:43), Cllr H Geary, Cllr S Hill, Cllr A Noonan, Cllr A Marsden, Cllr A Richardson

Officers:

Mrs L Hannawin
Ms S Taylor

Public/Press:

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

Part I

23/087 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

23/088 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr D Morsley.

23/089 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.

23/090 Minutes of Last Meeting

To approve and sign the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of the 2nd January 2024.

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

Cllr Bridgman moved agenda item 23/093 3. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath to be taken next.

23/093 Personnel Committee and Working Party Reports

1. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

Cllr Butler confirmed a meeting was held with Ridge and Partners LLP to discuss the proposal for the next stage of work that is needed in order for the Council to go out to tender for the cycleway construction. The cost of the proposal was higher than budgeted and will, therefore, be given further consideration by full Council. A list of deliverables and a written specification of the works has been requested from Ridge.

Cllr Butler left at 19:43.

23/091 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 2nd of January and other updates.

Nothing to report.

23/092 Items to be taken into private session

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

Cllr Bridgman proposed that agenda items: 23/094 2. Risk Register; 3. Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy; 4. Council Insurance and 23/096 1. Minor Matter relating to a personnel item to be taken in Part II.

Seconded by Cllr Marsden.

Resolved unanimously.

23/093 Personnel Committee and Working Party Reports

1. Communications

Cllr Bridgman confirmed the Working Party will be meeting on Monday 11th March to discuss:

- The Communications Working Party Terms of Reference, Communications Policy, and Facebook Policy
- Garth Hall – a meeting has been held with the Royal British Legion who are currently approving a statement for publishing via social media.
- The Annual Parish Meeting agenda. Proposed items are presentations on the redevelopment of the Royal Berkshire hospital and the Automatic Speed Watch Camera and Community Speedwatch. Suggestions for other agenda items should be forwarded to Cllr Bridgman.
- The Summer Newsletter – the deadline for printing is the 3rd of June.
- D-Day 6th June - The Working Party has held an initial meeting.

2. Emergency Plan

Cllr Richardson reported that the Working Party has met, and tasks have been assigned to start creating the Emergency Plan. West Berkshire Council's (WBC) Emergency Planning Office has provided some guidance and has offered to review the Emergency Plan when ready. Consideration shall be given to involving key people in the community and contacting and working with other parish councils where appropriate.

3. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

Minuted above.

23/094 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Victoria Road Footway Works

To review the pavement reinstatement works and resolve any recommendations for consideration by full Council on the 14th of March.

A discussion took place about the footway works recently undertaken by WBC, which includes dropped kerbs, and the lack of consideration given to SMPC's wish to be consulted on what other measures can be put in place to prevent people parking on the pavement should WBC not accept the request for non-dropped kerbs. It was agreed to further discuss this at the Council meeting on the 14 March.

2. Risk Register

To review and agree any changes and approve the Risk Register for reporting to full Council on the 14th March.

Minuted at Part II.

3. Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy

- a. To review and approve the Asset Valuation and Register Policy**
- b. To receive the Asset Register to date and consider and approve the estimated asset replacement costs.**

Minuted at Part II.

4. Council Insurance.

To consider the level of insurance required in order that renewal quotes may be sought.

Minuted at Part II.

5. Annual Subscriptions and Continuous Payments 2024/2025

To review the annual subscriptions and continuous payments and approve for recommendation to full Council on the 14th of March.

The annual subscriptions and continuous payments were reviewed and approved for recommendation to Full Council.

6. Fees and Charges 2024/2025

To review and agree the service charges for 2024/25 and approve for recommendation to full Council on the 14th of March.

The proposed fees and charges were reviewed, and minor changes made and approved for recommendation to Full Council.

23/095 Finance

1. Accounts to the 31st January 2024

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

The reports were received and approved unanimously.

2. The Public Sector Deposit Fund (TPSDF)

To note the return on investment as at 31st January 2024.

The return of investment was noted as being 5.27% as at 31 January 2024. As at the 30 November 2023 it was 5.30%.

3. Bank Reconciliation

To receive and note the reconciliation has been undertaken for the period 1st of October 2023 – 31st of December 2023.

Cllr Noonan reported that the bank reconciliation had been thoroughly checked and there were no errors to report. The reconciliation had been signed off.

4. Internal Financial Control (IFC)

To receive and note the IFC Confirmation for the period 1st of October 2023 – 31st of December 2023.

Cllr Bridgman reported that the IFC had been undertaken and signed off.

23/096 Items for information only

Minor Matters

Nothing to report.

23/097 Communications

To identify items for communicating

Nothing to communicate.

23/098 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

Policies review including the Code of Conduct.

23/099 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 23/092 on the agenda due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr Bridgman

Seconded by Cllr Marsden.

Resolved unanimously.

Part II

23/096 Minor Matters

Cllr Bridgman reported that it is proposed to reduce the length of the Assistant to the Clerk's probationary period with a view to her permanent contract commencing as of 1 April 2024. An informal vote of the Committee was taken indicating unanimous approval and this will be taken to full Council for consideration on 14 March 2024.

23/094 Items for Consideration and Resolution

2. Risk Register

To review and agree any changes and approve the Risk register for reporting to Full Council on 14 March

The Risk Register was reviewed, and changes agreed. It will be reported to Full Council in April.

3. Asset Register and Asset Valuation and Register Policy

a. To review and approve the Asset Valuation and Register Policy

The Asset Valuation and Register Policy was reviewed. It was agreed to add a line regarding the use of sinking funds for providing for asset replacement.

b. To receive the Asset Register to date and consider and approve the estimated asset replacement costs.

The Asset Register was received, and the estimated asset replacement costs approved.

4. Council Insurance

To consider the level of insurance required in order that renewal quotes may be sought.

The Clerk reported that the Council Insurance is up for renewal and new quotes will be sought. It was agreed to 1) further investigate additional insurance that the Council may benefit from and 2) establish who owns the War Memorial.

The meeting closed at 21:17

Date of next meeting: 2 May 2024.