



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 19:30.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr D Morsley (Chairman), Cllr G Bridgman, Cllr H Geary, Cllr S Hill, Cllr A Noonan, Cllr A Marsden.

Officers:

Mrs L Hannawin
Ms S Taylor

Public/Press:

There was one representative from Mortimer Tennis Club and no members of the press in attendance.

Part I

23/100 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

The representative from Mortimer Tennis Club asked for a reduction in price for their members when booking courts. More under agenda item 23/108 4.

23/101 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr D Butler and Cllr A Richardson.

23/102 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.

23/103 Minutes of Last Meeting

To approve and sign the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting of the 7 March 2024.

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

23/104 Chairman's remarks

Cllr Morsley reminded all that the Annual Parish meeting will take place on Monday 29th April 2024.

23/105 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on the 7th March and other updates.

1. The return on investment for the public sector deposit fund was 5.26% as of 31st March 2024. As of the 31st January 2024 it was 5.27%.
2. The application for the local council award scheme has been submitted.
3. Year 6 from St. Mary's School visited the Pillbox and very positive feedback was received.
4. Performance data has been received from West Berkshire Libraries, which will be included in the papers for the next Full Council meeting.
5. Bank Reconciliation and Internal Financial Control 01/01/2024 – 31/03/2024. These were undertaken by Cllrs. Noonan and Bridgman and no issues raised.

23/106 Items to be taken into private session

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

Cllr Morsley proposed that agenda items: 23/108 2. Village Custodian; 3. Council Insurance be taken in Part II.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

#Cllr Morsley moved agenda item 23/108 4. Mortimer Tennis Club to be taken next.

23/108 Items for Consideration and Resolution

4. Mortimer Tennis Club

To consider a request for a discounted hire rate for the tennis courts for Mortimer Tennis Club members and resolve the fee to be charged.

The representative from Mortimer Tennis Club reported that they have very low membership and want an incentive for new members to join by offering a discounted rate for tennis court bookings outside the normal Club times. After discussion and some questions to the representative Cllr Morsley proposed that we offer Members of Mortimer Tennis club a rate of £2.50/hr to book a court.

Seconded by Cllr Marsden.

Resolved unanimously.

23/107 Personnel Committee and Working Party Reports

1. Communications

Cllr Bridgman reported that a note will go out shortly to confirm who is writing what for the next newsletter.

2. Emergency Plan

No update.

3. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

Cllr Morsley reported that a meeting was held with WBC Highways and Ridge and Partners LLP to ascertain how the marrying up of the detailed design between highways work and our work will be happen and to look at time scales.

23/108 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Policies

To consider any Policies within the ambit of the Committee requiring consideration, amendment, or proposal to Full Council:

a. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct policy was reviewed, and changes agreed. It will be reported to Full Council in May.

b. Standing Orders

The Standing Orders policy was reviewed, and changes agreed. It will be reported to Full Council in May.

2. Village Custodian

a. To receive an update from the Personnel Sub-Committee and resolve the actions to be taken as part of the recruitment process.

b. To receive an update on the management of the Custodian Responsibilities

Minuted at Part II.

3. Council Insurance.

To review the quotes received and resolve the insurance cover for 2024/2025.

Minuted at Part II.

4. Mortimer Tennis Club

To consider a request for a discounted hire rate for the tennis courts for Mortimer Tennis Club members and resolve the fee to be charged.

Minuted above.

23/109 Finance

1. Draft Accounts to the 31st March 2024

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

The reports were still in draft as one more invoice to come in, but completed report will be available for the Full Council Meeting in May.

2. Reserve Transfers

To review the proposed reserve transfers for the Financial Year 2023/2024 and consider and agree any amendments.

The reserve transfers were considered, and one amendment was agreed. Cllr Bridgman proposed to abolish the Garth Hall EMR and transfer it into the general reserves.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley

Resolved unanimously.

3. Bank Reconciliation

To receive and note the reconciliation has been undertaken for the period 1st of January 2024 - 31st March 2024.

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 January 2024 – 31st of March 2024.

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

5. Statement of Internal Control

To review the effectiveness of the system of internal control and complete the statement in accordance with Financial Regulations.

Cllr Morsley completed the statement of Internal Control and signed it off.

23/110 Items for information only

Minor Matters

Nothing to report.

23/111 Communications

To identify items for communicating

Nothing to communicate.

23/104112 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

None.

23/113 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 23/106 on the agenda due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr Morsley

Seconded by Cllr Marsden.

Resolved unanimously.

Part II

23/108 Items for Consideration and Resolution

2. Village Custodian

- a. To receive an update from the Personnel Sub-Committee and resolve the actions to be taken as part of the recruitment process.**

The Personnel Sub-Committee met, and it was agreed to wait for a month to advertise the role. Personnel will call another meeting in the first week in May to draw up a suitable job description for an ad and commence the recruitment process.

- b. To receive an update on the management of the Custodian Responsibilities**

Cllr Morsley thanked the councillors for their help with the rota.

Tactical are currently emptying the bins for 2 months and councillors are volunteering with litter picking. The council may look to offer a new custodian more flexible part-time working hours and will also seek quotes from contractors for the whole job.

3. Council Insurance

To review the quotes received and resolve the insurance cover for 2024/2025.

Cllr G Bridgman proposed the council stays with the existing provider Clear Council as they offered the most competitive quote.

Resolved unanimously.

The meeting closed at 20:50

Date of next meeting: 4 June 2024.