



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 11 July 2024 at 19:30 at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr D Morsley (Chairman), Cllr G Bridgman, Cllr N Carter (arrived 19:31), Cllr M Dennett, Cllr H Geary, Cllr S Hill, Cllr H Kilshaw, Cllr M Lock, Cllr A Marsden, Cllr A Noonan, Cllr A Richardson, Cllr M Shaw, Cllr J Wells.

Clerk:

Mrs L Hannawin.

Public/Press:

There were 12 members of the public in attendance and no members of the press.

Part I

24/036 Public Questions

Most of the members of the public attended in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and the Reserved Land. After councillors had discussed the agenda item, minuted at 24/044 3b, the members of the public were given the opportunity to ask questions which were addressed accordingly.

24/037 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr D Kilshaw.

24/038 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, and gifts and hospitality in line with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

None.

24/039 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of 13 June 2024.

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

24/040 Chairman's Remarks

Cllr Morsley:

- Thanked Cllr Bridgman and Mr J Earl for organising/undertaking the updating of the community boards.
- Requested that councillors continue to look after their allocated noticeboard and to let her know if they are no longer able to continue with this role.
- Confirmed the Awayday will be on the 31 August. Any apologies and topics for discussion should be sent to her.
- Confirmed that during out of office hours the Custodian may be contacted on his SMPC phone for any urgent matter related to council-maintained land. The Clerk shall circulate the Custodian's phone number. **ACTION The Clerk.**
- Confirmed that any quad bike activity on Englefield land should be reported to the police via their non-emergency on-line system.
- Reported that it may be a further 2 years before TA Fisher decide, as to which style of houses will be built on phase 2b near the retaining wall. They can either build those as per the initial planning application, which was originally refused planning by West Berkshire Council but won on appeal, or those approved in the subsequent alternative planning application which reduced the height of the wall.
- Confirmed, depending on costs, an extraordinary meeting of either the Fairground and Cemetery Committee or full Council may be needed to progress the utility square and Fairground footpath project.

24/041 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the ~~Annual Meeting of the Council held on 14 March~~ 13 June 2024 and other updates.

The Clerk's written report was received. In addition, it was noted:

- That a meeting is being arranged regarding Willink Leisure Centre.
- £210 had now been donated for the memorial bench for the Frank Stansfield. This will be followed up after Frank's funeral on the 25 July.
- The annual office audit is planned for the week beginning the 19 August and not July.

24/042 Items to be taken into private session

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

None.

Cllr Morsley moved agenda items 24/044 3b and 24/044 4 to be taken next.

24/043 Items for Consideration and Resolution

3. Neighbourhood Plan

a. To receive and endorse a written report from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG).

Cllr Bridgman reported that work is progressing including with the policies. A brief has been put together in order that a consultant may be contracted to assist with the new plan and the design codes.

b. To resolve the Resolution passed on 14 September 2023 relating to the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Review and use of the Reserved Land, is amended to: (1) remove b iii; (2) edit b iv to become b iii; and (3) add the words “at least” in front of the words in the (new) b iii.

Cllr Bridgman gave a history of the Reserved Land. The 2017 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) stipulated that if the Reserved Land had not been used for a new school and medical facility as proposed, then within 5 years of the NDP a formal review had to be undertaken of the Reserved Land. It was confirmed there is not the need for a new school and no appetite for a new doctor's surgery. With the Redwoods site now available in addition to the 1 hectare of Reserved Land, the proposed resolution would drop the requirement for a doctor's surgery; increase the number of houses for the 55s plus to at least 24 (it is thought it is unlikely to be more than this); provide for a new dental surgery and give Mortimer St John's Infant School additional land as desired.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the resolution.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved by majority vote.

Cllr Bridgman thanked the members of the public for attending.

4. Bus Shelters

To consider the information received and agree the response to West Berkshire Council (WBC) regarding the potential offer for shelters for the proposed sites and/or alternative sites.

WBC's offer to provide three bus shelters to the Council was considered and discussed.

Cllr Morsley proposed the Clerks responds to WBC asking for them to confirm maintenance costs and say SMPC are potentially interested in 3 cantilevered non-black shelters. The Stephens Firs shelter should be re-sited to Glenapp Grange.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved by majority vote.

ACTION The Clerk.

24/044 Reports from Committees, Steering Groups, Working Parties and Outside Bodies.

1. Roads, Footpaths and Commons

Cllr Marden gave an update on:

- the proposed remedial actions to assist with parking on The Street near StMary's school.
- The review of the commons and related community projects.
- The recruitment drive for more volunteers to man the Speed Indicator Device (SID).
- WBC's management of public footpaths.

2. Climate and Environment Steering Group

Cllr Marden confirmed the Steering Group:

- Continues to monitor Foudry Brook.

- Is reviewing WBC Climate Goals Strategy.
- Is reviewing SMPC Biodiversity Policy.

3. Communications Steering Group

Cllr Bridgman suggested that the role and aims of the Steering Group needs to be reviewed and that this could be done at the Awayday.

4. Emergency Planning Working Party

Cllr Richardson confirmed that the Working Party has met and will be looking to use the autumn newsletter to give an update and seek further volunteers.

5. Garth Hall Working Party

Cllr Dennett confirmed the Trustees of the Royal British Legion (RBL) have considered the proposals of the two interested parties. Members of the Working Party are meeting with RBL representatives tomorrow to receive an update.

6. Outside Bodies

- Cllr Morsley confirmed the Fairground Trust is not meeting because it is without a Secretary. There are also issues with accessing the bank account.
- Cllr Noonan reported that the Volunteer Bureau needs drivers. This will feature in the next newsletter to raise awareness of the problem. **ACTION** Cllr Noonan.
- Cllr Lock reported that current and new university students can apply for a grant from the Clarke's Educational Foundation.
- Cllr Bridgman confirmed that Cllr Kilshaw is now the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Action Group.

24/045 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Councillor Vacancy

To consider any applications for co-option to fill the Casual Vacancies on the Parish Council and vote to appoint a co-opted parish councillor.

Mr K Stone's application was considered for the current vacancy. He gave a brief introductory talk and answered questions from the floor.

Cllr Morsley proposed Mr Stone be co-opted onto the Council.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

2. Policies

To consider any policies requiring consideration, amendment or approval.

Not needed.

3. Neighbourhood Plan

- To receive and endorse a written report from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG).**
- To resolve the Resolution passed on 14 September 2023 relating to the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Review and use of the Reserved**

Land, is amended to: (1) remove b iii; (2) edit b iv to become b iii; and (3) add the words “at least” in front of the words in the (new) b iii.

Minuted above.

4. Bus Shelters

To consider the information received and agree the response to West Berkshire Council (WBC) regarding the potential offer for shelters for the proposed sites and/or alternative sites.

Minuted above.

5. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

To resolve the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman of Council, having taking soundings from the Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath Steering Group, can authorise expenditure up to £22,750.00 in order to progress the project with Ridge & Partners LLP.

Cllr Morsley gave an update. She confirmed that much of the outstanding work still required on the detailed design and needed to enable tenders to be sought must be done under a s278 agreement. A proposal has been received from Ridge & Partners LLP for the next stage of work. This was considered with regards to last purchase order raised; the work that has been undertaken and paid to date; the most recent invoice received; and the outstanding items and amount still left to be charged against this purchase order. It was agreed that a greater understanding of the deliverables received to date was needed before any further payments were made and that Cllrs Noonan and Hill shall undertake a review. In order that the project may proceed, the Steering Group shall continue to look at the requirements for the project and make recommendations where appropriate.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the resolution.

Seconded by Cllr Geary.

Resolved by majority vote and with two abstentions.

24/046 Finance

1. Accounts for Payment

To receive and approve items of expenditure - Schedule A i.

Item	Date of Invoice	Payee Details	Amount £
1.	23/06/24	G Bridgman: Sign writing thank you.	29.00
2.	25/06/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: Litter bin emptying 01/06 – 18/06 inc VAT	125.92
3.	28/06/24	Ridge: tender design, liaising with WBC & potential bridge suppliers, undertaking cost review inc VAT	3600.00
4.	30/06/24	Dads Shop: Strimmer line, duplicate keys inc VAT	23.14
5.	04/07/24	Alebrije Consulting Ltd: NP admin support	200.00

Cllr Morsley proposed that apart from Item 3, invoice for Ridge & Partners LLP for £3,600.00, the invoices should be paid.

Seconded by Cllr Hill.

Resolved by majority vote with 5 abstentions

2. Payments made with the authorisation of Chairman/Vice-Chairman and the Clerk.

To receive and note a summary of payments made - Schedules B i and B ii.

Schedule B i

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank Payments			
1.	04/06/24	Tactical: bin and dog waste emptying inc VAT	274.50
2.	11/06/24	B O'Reilly: training for the Assistant to the Clerk	108.36
3.	12/06/24	G Bridgman: travel – Local Plan Examination, D-Day, & propane	84.94

Schedule B ii

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount
Card Payments			
1.	04/06/24	Amazon: wireless keyboard inc VAT	18.98
2.	06/06/24	Co-op: refreshments for RBL meeting	2.69
3.	10/06/24	WBC: room hire (library) for Climate & Environment meeting	16.50
4.	10/06/24	WBC: room hire (library) for RBL meeting	33.00
5.	14/06/24	WBC: room hire (library) for Community SpeedWatch meeting	22.00
6.	20/06/24	Co-op: batteries	6.75
7.	25/06/24	Amazon: 5 x reams of paper inc VAT	24.98
8.	26/06/24	Amazon: plastic key fobs inc VAT	6.59
9.	26/06/24	Amazon: toner cartridge inc VAT	95.23
10.	25/06/24	New Bollards Direct: duplicate bollard keys inc VAT	64.80
11.	30/06/24	Wel Medical: 3 x replacement pads for defibs inc VAT	215.82
12.	01/07/24	Google: DNS network services	.42
13.	03/07/24	Lloyds: monthly card fee	3.00

The payments were received and noted.

3. Subscriptions and Continuous Payments

To receive and note a summary of payments made – Schedule C.

Item	Invoice Date	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank and Card Payments			
1.	13/05/24	David Sturt: IT monitoring & support – April	130.00
2.	27/05/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery grounds maintenance 17/05 inc VAT	79.57
3.	04/06/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery (inc weed treatment) 03/06 & pillbox grounds maintenance 04/06 inc VAT	164.83
4.	10/06/24	David Sturt: IT monitoring & support – May	130.00
5.	24/06/24	Englefield: cemetery rent 24/06 – 28/09	62.50
6.	30/06/24	Salaries: Month 3 June 2024 inc pension contributions	4650.17
7.	30/06/24	HMRC: PAYE & NI for Month 3	1204.54
Direct Debits			
8.	03/06/24	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	16.00
9.	03/06/24	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	33.00
10.	07/06/24	Smart Pension: admin fee inc VAT	26.40

11.	10/06/24	EE: mobile phone charges & WiFi hotspot	33.64
12.	24/06/24	OVO: Electricity inc. VAT	6.00
13.	28/06/24	Suez: Waste collection May	99.58
14.	30/06/24	Unity Trust: service charge	33.90

The payments were received and noted.

24/047 Items for information only

1. To note the meetings that have taken place of the following committees and to receive the draft minutes, where available

a. Roads, Footpaths and Commons

The meetings were noted, and minutes received

2. District Councillor Reports

The report was received. Dist Cllr Carter confirmed that WBC continues to seek sites for mini recycling bins that would allow residents to drop off items not currently collected via doorstep recycling. The issue of fly tipping has been raised but this is not considered to be a problem at other mini sites.

3. Correspondence

1. VE DAY 80 May 8, 2025

Information regarding participating in the celebration of the 80th Anniversary of VE Day which marked the end of the war in Europe 80 years ago.

2. Winter Service Plan 2024/25 Consultation

Notification from West Berkshire Council (WBC) that this consultation is now open, and any comments need to be returned by 5 August. The Highway Winter Service Plan (2023/24) is being used as the basis for the consultation process. Subject to the consultation process, WBC are not proposing any changes to the carriageway and footway treatment, although minor operational changes may be made to the plan.

3. Thatcham Parish: Designation of New Neighbourhood Plan Area

Confirmation from WBC that Thatcham has been designated as a neighbourhood area. The designation follows the Thatcham Parish boundary, and this now allows Thatcham Town Council to commence work on a neighbourhood plan.

In addition, the Clerk reported that information had been received from WBC regarding a Notice of Proposal regarding off street parking. Mortimer is unaffected.

4. Planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council.

24/00395/HOUSE: 5 Briar Lea Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3SA

Side Extension revised from previous approval with Gable roof and Dining area extended by 500mm.

APPROVED – 1 July 2024

SMPC Comments: Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council considered this application at its Planning Committee meeting on 25 April 2024, under item 23/0190 The room labelled study on the plan now has a full bathroom off it and therefore looks more like a bedroom than a study. If this room could now be a bedroom, is there adequate parking? Could Highways comment on this.

24/00405/HOUSE: 14A Stephens Close Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3TX

Two storey rear extension.

APPROVED – 1 July 2024

SMPC Comments: The planning Committee have no observations to make on this Planning application, however the committee note that a garden room is being built in the garden of the property and the planning officer may want to check this to ensure this comes under permitted development as the committee has not seen an application for this and also whether with the garden room there is sufficient amenity area for the house.

24/01006/NOMAT: 84 The Avenue Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3QX

Non material amendment to approved 23/02218/HOUSE - First floor side and rear extension, together with new ground floor green roof. Amendment to approved plan.

REFUSED – 6 June 2024

24/00757/COND: Four Houses Corner Caravan Site Reading Road Ufton Nervet Reading

Application for approval of details reserved by Condition 20 (Japanese Knotweed Eradication Strategy) of planning permission 23/01552/REG3 - It is proposed to replace the existing permanent 18 pitch Gypsy caravan site with a new 17 permanent pitch Gypsy caravan site. Each pitch is to consist of a hard standing area large enough for two twin axle caravans, car parking for two vehicles and a 30 sq m amenity building consisting of a kitchen/dayroom, bathroom, separate WC and utility area. In addition to the amenity buildings a recycle storage facility, children play area are to be located within the site.

APPROVED – 20 June 2024

24/00868/COND: Four Houses Corner Caravan Site Reading Road Ufton Nervet Reading

Application for approval of details reserved by Condition 23 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) of planning permission 23/01552/REG3 - It is proposed to replace the existing permanent 18 pitch Gypsy caravan site with a new 17 permanent pitch Gypsy caravan site. Each pitch is to consist of a hard standing area large enough for two twin axle caravans, car parking for two vehicles and a 30sqm amenity building consisting of a kitchen/dayroom, bathroom, separate WC and utility area. In addition to the amenity buildings a recycle storage facility, children play area are to be located within the site.

APPROVED – 20 June 2024

5. Neighbourhood Action Group report.

Cllr Wells confirmed that the police have visited the owner of the car who has been a cause for concern whilst driving around the village.

6. Health and Safety

The Clerk is looking into a date for the RoSPA training.

7. Councillor Surgeries

The Saturday surgery was cancelled due to lack of anyone to run it. One resident attended the Tuesday surgery to talk about Birch Lane and they were referred to the District Councillors.

8. Minor Matters

- Cllr Geary reported that the vegetation along the footway down to the station is overgrown. **ACTION** Cllr Marsden to contact the responsible person.

- Cllr Lock reported the vegetation by Heathfield is overgrown. The Clerk confirmed that this has been reported to WBC.
- Cllr Hill reported:
 - He has a contact for making bespoke benches.
 - B Richer has been watering the Hornbeams.
 - The new trees in the conservation area are looking overgrown. Cllr Shaw confirmed that this was not an issue.
- Cllr Carter reported:
 - Any queries regarding Birch Lane should be directed to him.
 - If possible, any issues with overgrown vegetation should be reported directly to the landowner/responsible person if known.
 - If needed, he has the metal struts from the old St John's Hall bench

24/048 Communications

To identify items for communicating.

Co-option of Cllr Kevin Stone. **ACTION** The Clerk.

24/049 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

None.

24/050 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 24/042 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:50

Next meeting: September 12, 2024.