



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Agenda

**Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held at
Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on Thursday 2 January 2025 at 19:30**

Present:

Councillors:

Cllrs D Morsley (Chairman), G Bridgman, H Geary, N Carter, S Hill

Officers:

Ms D Davis

Public/Press:

Mrs L Hannawin and Cllr K Strong were in attendance as members of the public. There were no members of the press in attendance.

Part I

24/041 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

Cllr Strong expressed a wish to be appointed onto the Finance and General Purposes Committee and advised he will be sending apologies for 9 January 2025 Full council meeting.

24/042 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Richardson

24/043 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 Code of Conduct.

None.

24/044 Minutes of Last Meeting

To approve and sign the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 5 December 2024.

It was noted that the title needed amending from 'Agenda' to 'Minutes'.

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

Proposed by Cllr Morsley

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman

Abstention by Cllr Carter

24/045 Chairman's Remarks

Cllr Morsley noted that no applications had been received for the councillor vacancies by the deadline of 31 December 2024. She encouraged Councillors to continue raising public awareness of the vacancies and confirmed that there would be no further application deadline.

24/046 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting held on 5 December 2024 and other updates.

The Clerk's written report was received.

24/047 Items to be taken into private session

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

None.

24/048 Steering Group and Working Party Reports

1. Communication

The Spring newsletter was discussed later at item 24/049 3.

2. Emergency Planning

No report received.

3. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

Cllr Morsley reported that the current contractors had completed the details required by WBC Highways and were awaiting the revised Safety Audit before submitting to WBC ,It was now time to revisit looking for grants towards the build.

4. Policies

24/049 Items for Consideration and Resolution.

1. Policies

a. To consider any Policies within the ambit of the Committee requiring consideration, amendment, or proposal to full Council.

i. Expenses Policy

The policy was discussed and agreed to take to full council for approval.

b. To consider a draft note regarding the potential new committee structure and the proposed relevant documents as listed and agree further actions:

i. Scheme of Delegation

ii. Guidance and Glossary

iii. Draft timetable

The proposed documents were received. Following a discussion, it was agreed to separate the reorganisation of committees and the scheme of delegation into two distinct items. The proposed restructuring, as discussed during the away day, will be taken forward to Full Council next week. The discussion regarding the scheme of delegation will be considered at a later date but will be mentioned next week.

2. Budget 2025/26

To consider and approve the draft budget for circulation to Council members for comment.

The budget and precept were discussed, Cllr Bridgman proposed the budget and precept of **£161,729** be taken to Full Council on the 9 January 2025.

Seconded by Cllr Geary

Resolved by majority vote Cllr Carter asked for it to be minuted that he voted against.

3. Spring Newsletter

To consider the timetable and articles for the next newsletter and agree any actions to be taken.

Cllr Bridgman advised on items to be included in the Spring Newsletter; he will be emailing councillors week commencing the 6 January to request they prepare specific articles.

4. West Berkshire Council (WBC) Service Delivery

To receive and consider WBC's brochure "Service Delivery Offers for Town and Parish Councils" and agree any recommendations to be made to full Council.

The WBC service delivery offers were considered, alongside a follow-up email providing clarifications from the Countryside Manager at WBC. It was agreed that the committee would recommend to Full Council that further investigation be carried out into sign cleaning with WBC, as well as a comparison of the cost of previous tree surveys with the offer from WBC.

Additionally, the possibility of the council undertaking sign cleaning with the support of local volunteer groups was discussed.

24/050 Finance

1. Accounts to 30 November 2024

To receive and consider the Income and draft Expenditure Report to 30 November 2024 and the Balance Sheet as at that date.

The financial reports were received.

2. The Public Sector Deposit Funds

To note the return on investment as at 30 November 2024.

The return on investment was noted at 4.78%.

24/051 Items for information only

Minor Matters

Cllr Hill advised he wishes to re-discuss the memorial wall at the cemetery extension.

24/052 Communications

To identify items for communicating

None.

24/053 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

None

24/054 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 24/047 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:09

Date of next meeting: 6 March 2025.