



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 9 January 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 19:34), Cllr M Dennett, Cllr D Kilshaw, Cllr H Kilshaw, Cllr H Geary, Cllr S Hill, Cllr M Lock, Cllr A Richardson, Cllr M Shaw, Cllr J Wells.

Clerk:

Miss D Davis.

Public/Press:

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

Part I

24/100 Public Questions

A representative from the Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's provided a summary of concerns regarding speeding near St. Mary's School and requested funding from the Parish Council for additional signage. The representative was advised to prepare a formal proposal detailing the specific request and present it at the next meeting of the Roads, Footpaths, and Commons Committee on 6 February 2025.

24/101 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Strong. Cllr Carter arrived at 19:34 and continued to leave and re-enter until 19:46.

24/102 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, and gifts and hospitality in line with the Code of Conduct.

None.

24/103 Minutes of Last Meeting

To resolve to approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the 14 November 2024.

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

Cllr Bridgman proposed.

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Cllr Carter was not present for this resolution.

24/104 Chairman's Remarks

Cllr Morsley remarked:

- The Chairman kindly welcomed the new Clerk to her first meeting of the Full council.
- A report on the Burghfield to Mortimer cycle path; the supplementary tree survey will be done on 17 January, with the results expected in about 10 days. Ridge have submitted all the detailed designs for the 2nd stage road safety audit; a response is expected the week beginning the 20 January. Ridge will then send the whole pack to WBC for technical review in the first week of February.
- The previous Clerk will be doing some hours to assist the new Clerk and was present at the meeting to assist in answering questions on the budget.

24/105 Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the Meeting of the Council held on 14 November and other updates.

The Report was received and the following noted:

4. Health and Safety

At November's meeting it was reported that concerns had been raised that part of the MUGA surface is slippery. Infinity Playgrounds Ltd will be undertaking an inspection.

An update on this is that on advice received, the Custodian is sweeping the surface twice a week and shall be cleaning the moss with "Wet and Forget". The surface has been inspected and whilst patch repairs are not recommended, as this will potentially lead to other issues, an overskim could be undertaken. £15,000 has been allowed in the Budget 2025/26 for this purpose.

5. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2AA

- a. The Accessibility Statement will need reviewing in light of WCAG2.2AA.

24/106 Items to be taken into private session

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

None determined.

24/107 Reports from Committees, Steering Groups, Working Parties and Outside Bodies.

1. Planning Committee

Cllr Richardson reported:

- The Perrins farm planning application was discussed during the planning meeting of 9 January 2025.
- Cllr Richardson recently attended a HALC training session named 'Introduction to planning' and found it very informative.

2. Climate and Environment Steering Group

Cllr Dennett reported:

- The steering group last met in November where they discussed a waste strategy, the next online West Berkshire Town Planning Forum will be on 15 January 2025.

3. Communications Steering Group

Cllr Bridgman reported:

- An email regarding the action items for the newsletter articles was sent out recently, Cllr Bridgman reminded Councillors that assigned articles need to be sent to him well before 31 Jan 2025.

4. Emergency Planning Working Party

Cllr Richardson reported:

- Two additional members have been co-opted into the working party and the resolution for the co-option can be found at 24/108-4.

5. Policies Working Party

Cllr Bridgman reported decisions discussed at 24-108.6

6. Outside Bodies

- Burghfield and Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group (BMNAG): Nothing to report.
- Willink Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee: Cllr Richardson will be preparing for the next meeting scheduled for 14 Jan 6-8pm.
- Clarks Educational Foundation: Cllr Lock reported that the foundation have recently approached Relief In Need Charity for additional funding due to high demand for grants this year.
- Fairground Trust- Cllr D Kilshaw reported: There has been lack of communication from the trustees; they have been advised that the annual return needs to be made to the Charity Commission within the next 14 days. Cllr Morsley has been removed from the Charity Commission website and Cllr D Kilshaw is now the contact.

24/108 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Policies

To approve the amended:

- a. Training and development policy v1.1.
- b. Investment strategy 2024-5 v2.1
- c. Expenses v.2.2
- d. Repayment Claim Form

Agenda items 24/108-1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d were taken on block.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the changes be approved.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

2. Neighbourhood Plan

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

Cllr Bridgman provided a verbal report: The Steering Group have received the Housing Needs Assessment Report from AECOM and will discuss this at their next meeting. He also reported that West Berkshire Council have been referring to policies from the current Neighbourhood Development Plan in planning decisions more frequently.

3. Budget

To receive and resolve the Budget and Precept of £161,729.00 as recommended by the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The budget and precept were discussed, it was noted that:

- Further clarification will be needed regarding expected CIL income from West Berkshire Council

Cllr Morsley proposed the Budget and Precept of £161,729.00 be adopted.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

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

Cllr Morsley moved agenda item 24/108- 11 Cemetery Extension Memorial Wall to be taken next.

11. Cemetery Extension Memorial Wall discussed after 24/108.3

To consider the decision made regarding the building of the memorial wall, and to resolve the recommendation that the decision is reconsidered at the meeting of the Full Council on 13 February 2025.

Cllr Hill proposed reconsidering the decision at the next meeting of the Full council on 13 February 2025.

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

4. Committee Members

To seek and resolve the appointment of more members for all committees and in particular, Finance and General Purposes.

The need for additional councillors on committees was discussed:

- Cllr Strong had expressed his interest to join Finance and General Purposes Committee prior to the meeting, Cllr H Kilshaw also expressed interest.

Cllr Hill proposed the appointment of Cllr Strong and Cllr H Kilshaw to Finance and General Purposes committee

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

- Cllr D Kilshaw expressed interest in joining the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Cllr H Kilshaw proposed the appointment of Cllr D Kilshaw to the Finance and General purposes committee.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

5. Spring Newsletter

To discuss the upcoming newsletter and agree any actions to be taken.

This item was discussed in agenda item 24/107-3 and actions recorded there.

6. Committee Re-casting

To discuss and resolve the proposed committee restructure and agree any actions to be taken.

The proposed committee restructure was received and discussed. It was agreed that the current appropriate committees would review the relevant proposed Terms of Reference document for each of the new committees. Cllr Morsley and Cllr D Kilshaw will review the Terms of Reference document for the new Community Committee.

Cllr Morsley proposed to proceed with the proposed structure from May 2025 with further details being developed by the above actions. The discussion regarding the scheme of delegation will be considered at a later date.

Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved by majority.

Cllr Bridgman proposed a time extension for the meeting to 10pm.

Cllr Morsley seconded

Resolved unanimously

7. Community Grant

To discuss and resolve whether a second round of community grants should be offered.

The decision to offer a second round of funding for the community grant was discussed. It was decided that the council amends the Terms of Reference for this fund so that we can consider any applications later in the year beyond deadline. Options were discussed for the use of the remainder of the funds.

Cllr Bridgman resolved not to have a second round of community grants this year.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley

Resolved unanimously.

8. Account signatories

To resolve the appointment of additional account signatories.

Cllr Bridgman proposed Cllr D Kilshaw and Cllr Richardson be appointed as account signatories.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

9. West Berkshire Council Service Delivery

To resolve recommendations made by the Finance and General Purposes Committee regarding the proposed service delivery offers and agree any actions to be taken.

The recommendations from the Finance and General Purposes Committee were discussed. It was agreed to investigate options for sign cleaning with West Berkshire Council, and to compare the cost of tree surveys provided by West Berkshire Council with those currently undertaken by SMPC.

Cllr Bridgman proposed.

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

10. Steering Group and Working Party Co-options

To resolve the co-option of:

- a) A Marsden to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**
- b) R Coles and D O'Connor to the Emergency Planning Committee.**

Cllr Hill proposed the co-options to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the Emergency Planning Committee .

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

24/109 Finance

1. Accounts to the 30 November 2024

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report to the 30 November 2024 and the Balance Sheet as of that date.

2. Accounts for Payment (update Schedule with correct dates)

To receive and approve items of expenditure - Schedule A i

Item	Date of Invoice	Payee Details	Amount £
1.	06/12/24	AES Ltd: utility square and fairground footpath inc VAT	20208.00
2.	29/11/24	Aspect ecology: Dormouse survey inc VAT	5040.00
3.	20/12/24	Ridge: Road safety Audit inc VAT	6000.00
4.	19/12/24	AES: Additional sections on footpath (fairground) inc VAT	1980.00
5.	19/12/24	Infinity playgrounds: Remedial works titan swing inc VAT	5226.73

3. 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 Bi

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank Payments			

Schedule Bii

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
Card Payments			
1.	20/11/24	Winson Woodcraft Ltd: Memorial bench inc. VAT	1116.00
2.	13/12/24	Crescent signs: children play area, tennis, no dogs, fitting signs inc. VAT	934.80
3.	13/12/24	West Berk Council: Contributions for library	3997.00
4.	13/12/24	Ridge: Update the design risk assessment inc. VAT	600.00
5.	13/12/24	Ridge: Review design queries from WBC highways inc. VAT	3600.00
6.	13/12/24	Shyres Rural: Additional Topographical survey work inc. VAT	1320.00

11. Schedule B iii – the Clerk

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
7.	29/11/24	J Sylla expenses: Petrol, taxi, train (chainsaw course)	81.87
8.	20/11/24	G Bridgman: ConnectPro power cable and lights inc. VAT	427.87
9.	15/11/24	SLCC: S Taylor ILCA to CiLCA training fee inc. VAT	144.00
10.	15/11/24	Tactical: Ad hoc waste collection – gas cannisters inc. VAT	54.00
11.	15/11/24	Tactical: Ad hoc waste collection - gas cannisters inc. VAT	54.00
12.	13/12/24	Tactical: West End Road arisings removal inc. VAT	33.60
13.	13/12/24	Vitaplay: play area inspection works July 2024 inc. VAT	117.60
14.	13/12/24	Vitaplay: play area inspection works October 2024 inc. VAT	117.60
15.	13/12/24	Tactical waste: vegetation clearance for cemetery extension inc.	168.00

		VAT	
16.	13/12/24	Tactical waste: Cemetery grounds maintenance (Hedge) inc. VAT	460.56
17.	13/12/24	SLCC: commenting on planning applications training inc. VAT	36.00
18.	13/12/24	S Taylor: NPSG admin support November	100.00
19.	13/12/24	Dads Shop: materials for west end road compost bin and Christmas lights installation inc. VAT	155.13
20.	13/12/24	The Methodist Church rental: November meetings	125.00
21.	13/12/24	BALC: Officers update fee inc. VAT	18.00
22.	13/12/24	SLCC: D Davis ILCA inc. VAT	144.00
23.	13/12/24	SLCC: D Davis FilCA inc. VAT	144.00
24.	13/12/24	Stanley Electrical Services: Grazing area Hammonds Heath electrical box inspection fee inc. VAT	156.00
Card Payments and Direct Debits			
25.	07/11/24	Smart Pension: admin fee inc VAT	26.40
26.	08/11/24	Amazon: ream of paper inc. VAT	24.79
27.	08/11/24	Amazon: toner cartridge inc. VAT	99.81
28.	14/11/24	2CO.COMBITDEFENDER 24	33.33
29.	14/11/24	Post office	4.65
30.	01/12/24	Google cloud	0.35
31.	02/12/24	Lloyds: monthly card fee	3.00
32.	03/12/24	Amazon: electric heater inc. VAT	97.13
33.	06/12/24	Smart Pension: Monthly admin fee inc VAT	26.40
34.	07/12/24	Co-op: Milk	0.85
35.	13/12/24	Microsoft: online services	12.30
36.	17/12/24	Amazon: electric box utility key inc Vat	5.89
37.	17/12/24	Amazon: clipboards inc Vat	11.26
38.	17/12/24	Amazon: spirit level	15.01
39.	23/12/24	Gigaclear monthly fee	72.00

4. Subscriptions and Continuous Payments

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

Item	Payment Date	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank and Card Payments			
1.	15/11/24	D. Sturt: IT support October 2024	130.00
2.	15/11/24	SCS Ltd: Fairground grounds maintenance Oct 2024 inc VAT	407.20
3.	15/11/24	Tactical Facilities: dog waste empties Oct inc VAT	294.00
4.	15/11/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery grounds maintenance 10/09 inc VAT	122.41
5.	15/11/24	SCS Ltd: Fairground grounds maintenance Sept 2024 inc VAT	407.20
6.	15/11/24	SCS Ltd: Fairground grounds maintenance August 2024 inc VAT	407.20
7.	15/11/24	D. Sturt: IT support September 2024	130.00
8.	30/11/24	Salaries: Month 8, November2024 inc pension contributions	6850.94
9.	30/11/24	HMRC: PAYE & NI for Month 8, November2024	2255.55
10.	13/12/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery grounds maintenance 22/11 inc VAT	79.57
11.	13/12/24	Tactical Facilities: dog waste empties Nov inc VAT	8.40
12.	13/12/24	Englefield estate LP: quarterly miscellaneous rent 25/12/2024-24/03/2025	62.50
13.	31/12/2024	Salaries: Month 9, December 2024 inc pension contributions	6298.65

14.	31/12/2024	HMRC: PAYE & NI for Month 9 , December2024	2009.62
15.			
Direct Debits			
16.	01/11/24	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	16.00
17.	01/11/24	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	33.00
18.	11/11/24	EE: mobile phone charges & WiFi hotspot	40.09
19.	25/11/24	OVO: Electricity inc. VAT	59.00
20.	29/11/24	Suez: Waste collection November inc VAT	99.58
21.	30/11/24	Unity Trust: service charge	11.40
22.	02/12/24	Ovo Energy monthly electricity direct debit inc VAT	24.00
23.	02/12/24	Ovo energy monthly electricity direct debit inc VAT	33.00
24.	10/12/24	EE: mobile phone charges & WiFi hotspot	40.09
25.	31/12/2024	Unity Trust: service charge	0.90
26.	16/10/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery grounds maintenance 10/09 inc VAT	79.57
27.	16/10/24	Tactical Facilities: dog waste empties Sept inc VAT	134.40
28.	16/10/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery grounds maintenance 24/09 inc VAT	79.57
29.	16/10/24	SCS Ltd: grazing area one off cut inc VAT	176.30
30.	16/10/24	West Berkshire Council: quarterly office rent	875.00
31.	16/10/24	CCB: annual membership fee inc VAT	42.00
32.	16/10/24	Salaries: Month 7, Oct 2024 inc pension contributions	4955.38
33.	16/10/24	HMRC: PAYE & NI for Month 7, Oct 2024	1272.66
Direct Debits			
34.	01/10/24	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	16.00
35.	01/10/24	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	33.00
36.	07/10/24	Smart Pension: admin fee inc VAT	26.40
37.	09/10/24	BT: quarterly charge inc VAT	289.54
38.	10/10/24	EE: mobile phone charges & WiFi hotspot	40.09
39.	23/10/24	OVO: Electricity inc. VAT	59.00
40.	31/10/24	Suez: Waste collection August inc VAT	99.58
41.	31/10/24	Unity Trust: service charge	9.30

Agenda items 24/095 1. 2. 3. and 4. were taken on block.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the accounts and payments be received and approved.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

24/110 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. **Finance and General Purposes 7/11/24**
- b. **Finance and General Purposes 05/12/2024**
- c. **Planning 12/12/2024**
- d. **Finance and General Purposes 02/01/2025**

The meetings were noted, and minutes received.

2. District Councillor Reports

The written report was received.

3. Correspondence

The written report was received.

4. Neighbourhood Action Group report

Minuted at 24/093 6.

5. Health and Safety

Nothing was reported.

6. Councillor Surgeries

Nothing was reported.

7. Minor Matters

- Cllr Hill expressed warm thanks to Cllr D Kilshaw for overseeing the contractor during the construction of the new footpath and the utility square on the Fairground.
- Cllr Bridgman informed the Council that there are now sufficient Christmas lights in stock and suggested making full use of them next year.
- Cllr Hill reported that a member of the public had favourably commented on the utility square and inquired about the possibility of planting a permanent Christmas tree.

24/111 Communications

No items were identified

24/112 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items:

- To discuss the potential need for further signage surrounding St Mary's school.

24/113 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 24/092 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:41

Next meeting: February 13, 2025.