



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

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr D Morsley (Chairman), Cllr G Bridgman, Cllr D Butler, Cllr N Carter, M Dennett, Cllr H Geary, Cllr D Kilshaw, Cllr H Kilshaw, Cllr M Lock, Cllr A Marsden, Cllr A Richardson, Cllr M Shaw, Cllr J Wells.

Clerk:

Mrs L Hannawin.

Public/Press:

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

Part I

23/144 Public Questions (for agenda items only)

None.

23/145 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr S Hill and Cllr A Noonan.

23/146 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.

23/147 Minutes of Last Meeting

1. To resolve the Minutes of the meeting of the Council of the 14th of March 2024.

The minute for agenda item 23/138 3. Victoria Road Footway was discussed.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the first paragraph should be retained but the second paragraph should revert to the original version, DV.01, and hence be amended as follows:

It was noted that the works have been a success but ~~that the wish for consultation, should WBC not accept SMPC's request regarding the design for non-dropped kerbs for the access road, had not taken place. The alteration of the design so the access road had non-dropped~~

~~kerbs was part of the decision taken to proceed with the Members Bid.~~ as the design and resulting works maintained the non-dropped kerbs, SMPC should have been consulted on what other measures could be put in place to prevent people parking on the pavement. This was a condition of the decision and did not happen.

Seconded by Cllr Marsden.

Resolved with one vote against and four abstentions that the minutes be amended as above.

Cllr. Morsley proposed the amended minutes be approved for signature.

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman.

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

Cllr Carter wished it to be recorded that he did not believe that either 1) the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 12 October 2023 in respect of Victoria Road Footway and 2) what Cllr Bridgman said in respect of the minutes of the 14 March 2024 for Victoria Road Footway were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the Meeting and the minutes of the 14 March 2024 are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

23/148 Chairman's Remarks

A minute's silence was held in respect of the Village Custodian, Mr F Stansfield.

The Chairman:

- Thanked everyone for their assistance with the maintenance of The Fairground and confirmed that the rota may need to be extended. Play and fitness equipment must be inspected annually, and the annual inspection is due to be undertaken in April. To assist with routine maintenance, where possible, all Councillors should monitor the equipment on The Fairground and report any issues to the Clerk.
- Confirmed the Personnel Committee shall be meeting on Monday.
- Thanked Cllr Bridgman for standing in her absence.
- Asked Councillors to consider what roles they would like to take on at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May and to seek further information about the positions if necessary.
- Suggested the Council holds another away day, potentially in August.

23/149 Clerk's Report

2. To receive a report from the Parish Clerk outlining actions taken following the Meeting of the Council held on the 8th February 2024 and other updates.

1. SMPC Charges

The agreed charging structure for 2024/25 commenced on 01/04/2024.

2. Community Award

The Community Award Panel comprising Cllrs Bridgman (substituting for Cllr Morsley), Dennett and Wells met on 22 March to consider the four nominations received. The Panel agreed unanimously to make the award to Mr D Overett with an honourable mention going to Mr C Morsley.

3. Mini District Parish Conference

This shall be taking place on Tuesday 21 May 2024 at 4pm in the Calcot Centre, 3 Highview, Calcot, RG31 4XD.

4. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Government on 19 December 2023. The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The new version may be found at [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework)

5. CCTV

This is now up and running and basic training has been received. Work is being undertaken to set up the position of the 2 fixed cameras and the sequencing of the 2 pan, tilt and zoom cameras.

The report was received.

23/150 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 23/152 3. Governance and Management Risk Register and 23/152 4. Asset Register be taken with the public excluded.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

23/151 Committee and Working Party/Group Reports

1. Fairground and Cemetery Committee

Cllr Morsley confirmed the cemetery extension design was approved at the Extraordinary meeting held on the 28 March. TGMS Ltd are preparing the package for going out to tender.

2. Planning Committee

Cllr Bridgman reported that in addition to the planning applications the Committee had considered the Accelerated Planning System consultation. West Berkshire Council (WBC) have now responded to TA Fisher's pre-planning application for the preferred option for the Reserved Land and it is expected that TA Fisher shall shortly be progressing with the full planning application.

3. Communications Working Party

Cllr Bridgman will be circulating information regarding articles for the next newsletter. Cllr H Kilshaw is looking at other avenues of social media aimed at communicating with younger members of the community.

4. D-Day Working Party

Cllr D Kilshaw confirmed that beacon lighting will take place on The Fairground followed by, depending on cost, a music event at the Horse and Groom pub. Proposed plans also include a fish and chip supper provided by the pub.

5. Emergency Planning Working Party

Nothing to report.

6. Garth Hall

Cllr. Dennett reported an email was sent to the Royal British Legion who confirmed that 1) access to the building would be granted to interested parties as soon as possible by way of a licence and 2) the meetings with interested parties shall be held by mid-May at the latest.

23/152 Items for Consideration and Resolution

1. Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

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

Cllr. Bridgman confirmed the situation with the Reserved Land as reported at 23/137 2. The Steering Group are next meeting on the 16 April and shall be looking to finalising the policies.

2. Policies

To receive and approve:-

- a. Amendment to Financial Regulations**
- b. Asset Valuation and Register Policy**
- c. Fairground Use Policy**
- d. Training and Development Policy**

It was agreed that any spelling and grammatical errors that do not change the meaning of a policy may be altered by the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman.

Proposed by Cllr Morsley

Seconded by Cllr. Bridgman

Resolved unanimously.

3. Governance and Management Risk Register

To receive the Risk Register as recommended by Finance and General Purposes

Minuted at part II.

4. Asset Register

To receive the Asset Register as at 31 March 2024

Minuted at part II.

5. Action Plan

To review and approve the Action Plan.

Cllr Richardson presented the Action Plan. It was approved with the following amendments:

- Remove current costs.
- Include further information under "Update" to give an indication of the stage of development.

The Action Plan was approved.

6. Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS)

To receive an update and resolve to proceed with the submission for the Foundation Stage.

Cllr Richardson gave an update and confirmed that the documents and information for submitting is now in place. The initial submission needs to be made by the 4 May, but the award scheme body will provide feedback and assistance if needed.

Cllr Morsley proposed to proceed with the submission.

Seconded by Cllr Richardson.

Resolved with one abstention.

7. St Mary's Churchyard Grounds Maintenance

To consider the request for financial assistance and resolve to make a grant of £2,544.

It was agreed to consider the request at a future meeting once copies of the accounts had been received.

8. Community Grand Fund

To consider the request from Life Education Wessex & Thames Valley and resolve to make a grant of £740.00.

Proposed by Cllr Lock.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

To receive and note the guidance on the financial year end and AGAR process.

The guidance was received.

10. Transfer of Council Funds

To resolve the redemption of shares to the value of £20,000 from the Public Sector Deposit Fund to the Unity Trust Bank Account.

Proposed by Cllr Morsley.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

11. Climate and Environment Working Party

To receive an update and resolve for the Parish Council to have a presence, regarding Foudry Brook, at the Greening Mortimer event on the 27 April 2024.

Proposed by Cllr Marsden.

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

12. Councillor Surgeries

To discuss and agree the arrangements for the surgeries.

It was agreed:

- To hold monthly surgeries at Mortimer Bistro and the Horse and Groom on the Saturday morning and Tuesday evening, respectively, in the week leading up to the full Council meeting. Cllr Geary shall seek permission from Mortimer Bistro and Horse & Groom.
- Six months' worth of meeting dates are to be publicised via the noticeboards and social media.

13. Annual Parish Meeting

To receive an update and agree the arrangements.

Cllr Morsley confirmed:

- Set up from 18:30 and doors open at 19:00.
- Six local groups will be attending.

- Agenda items include Chairman's Report; Building Berkshire Together – new hospital programme; updates on speeding and Foudry Brook; the art competition and annual award presentation.
- Cllrs Geary and H Kilshaw to supply a design for a Corex board for fixing to the fence.

Cllr D Kilshaw proposed a budget of £200.00 for beer, wine and nibbles and will purchase these.
Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

14. Meeting Change of Date

To resolve the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes on the 2 May 2024 moves to the 25 April 2024.

Proposed by Cllr Bridgman.

Seconded by Cllr Geary.

Resolved unanimously.

15. Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway and Footpath

To ratify the contractor to undertake the work.

Cllr Morsley proposed Ridge and Partners LLP.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

23/153 Finance

1. Accounts to the 29 February 2024

To receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report to the 29 February and the Balance Sheet as of that date.

Proposed by Cllr Morsley.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Approved unanimously.

2. Accounts for Payment

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

Item	Date of Invoice	Payee Details	Amount
1.	12/03/24	WBC: Willink contribution 2023/24	£13,848.61
2.	13/03/24	Vitaplay: quarterly maintenance inspection inc. VAT	£117.60
3.	18/03/24	WBC: May 2024 election recharge	£80.00
4.	21/03/24	WBC: Victoria Road Footway improvements	£3889.45
5.	28/03/24	Alebrije Consulting: NP admin support	£100.00
6.	29/03/24	Tactical Facilities: dog bin empties inc. VAT	£235.20
7.	31/03/24	Dads Shop: Refuse sacks inc. VAT	£3.66
8.	31/03/24	John Stacey & Sons: HH bollard replacement	£1,117.67
9.	02/04/24	Andrew Hazelden: Community Award plate	£280.00

As The Willink Joint Advisory Committee has still not been reestablished, it was agreed to review the contract in place - Cllr Dennett to forward the relevant paperwork. It was agreed to pay the contribution for 2023/24 as above.

Proposed for payment by Cllr Morsley.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

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

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

Schedule B i

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount
Electronic Bank Payments			
a.	19/03/24	B O'Reilly: handover and training for new assistant	£215.08

Schedule B ii

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount
Card Payments			
1.	19/03/24	Amazon: HDMI cable & wireless mouse inc. VAT	£18.92
2.	13/02/24	Amazon: Pukka notebooks inc. VAT	£14.39
3.	20/02/24	WEL Medical: 2 x defibrillator replacement prep pack inc. VAT	£19.20

The payments were received and noted.

4. Subscriptions and Continuous Payments

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

Item	Payment Date	Payee Details	Amount
Electronic Bank and Card Payments			
1.	19/03/24	Sunshine Commercial Services: Fairground grounds maintenance January 2024 in. VAT	£384.14
2.	19/03/24	David Sturt: IT monitoring & support February 2024	£105.00
3.	19/03/24	Englefield: quarterly cemetery rental	£62.50
4.	19/03/24	Tactical Facilities Ltd: cemetery grounds maintenance inc. VAT	£79.57
5.	27/03/24	Microsoft: 15 x councillor licences	£882.00
6.	01/04/24	Google: DNS network services	£0.35
7.	02/04/24	Lloyds: card fee	£3.00
8.	02/04/24	Salaries (Month 12 March 2024) inc. pension contributions	£ 4583.82
9.	02/04/24	HMRC - PAYE & NI for Month 12	£1349.26
Direct Debits			
10.	07/03/24	Smart Pension: admin fee inc. VAT	£26.40
11.	11/03/24	EE: mobile phone charges & WiFi hotspot	£22.25

12.	25/03/24	OVO: Electricity inc. VAT	£6.00
13.	28/03/24	Suez – waste collection inc. VAT	£99.58

The payments were received and noted.

23/154 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. **Planning 14/03/2024**
- b. **Fairground and Cemetery 28/03/2024**

The minutes for the Fairground and Cemetery meeting had not yet been circulated.

2. District Councillor Reports

- Cllr Bridgman pointed out that the map in Cllr Carter's report showing the proposed site of school drop-off/car park was incorrect and the correct location is at Church Lane.
- Cllr Carter confirmed that he met with a WBC officer regarding the gully cleaning and drainage. WBC acknowledge there is a problem with the pipes but due to budget issues cannot say when the required work will be done.
- Cllr Lock reported that the Patients Participation Group had been told that Mortimer Surgery will be emailing prescriptions to other pharmacies from April/May.

3. Correspondence:

1. West Berkshire Council (WBC)

Information regarding flood grants for eligible residential properties.

2. Member of Public

Expressing concern regarding the burial plot that is covered in astroturf and flowers. A response has been provided.

4. Planning decisions and information from West Berkshire Council.

24/00054/FUL: St Margarets Ravensworth Road Mortimer West End Reading RG7 3UD

Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and construction of replacement dwelling

WITHDRAWN – 19 March 2024

SMPC Comments: The committee has no objection to this application.

23/01332/HOUSE: 16 Windmill Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3RN

Demolish existing garage and construct new detached garage building.

DISMISSED ON APEAL – 20 March 2024

24/00024/PACOU: 6a Victoria Road Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3SE

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: change the use of the current offices (Class E) on the first floor to a residential dwelling (Class C3).

APPROVED subject to conditions – 27 March 2024

SMPC Comments: The parking requirement when office space is converted to domestic use under permitted development was queried. It needs to be clarified if there is adequate parking in this case.

23/02956/HOUSE: 29 King Street Mortimer Common Reading RG7 3RS

Single storey rear extension with roof light.

APPROVED – 28 March 2024

SMPC Comments: The Committee have no objections in principle, but do have concerns about the parking if this proposed development increases the number of bedrooms at the property and support Highways comments (seeking a car parking layout in accordance with WBC Policy P1).

23/01552/REG3: Four Houses Corner Caravan Site Reading Road Ufton Nervet Reading

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 – 3 April 2024

SMPC Comments: At its meeting on 27th July 2023, under item 23/0041, the SMPC Planning Committee considered the application 23/01552/REG3 and have no objections to the proposed redevelopment of the site but did have some concerns as follows:

- The Design and Access Statement v3.3 (“D&A”) states the site is in Ufton Nervet but the site is within the parish boundary of Stratfield Mortimer.
- Items 2.2 and 2.7 of the D&A state that a public consultation will take place but this has not been held to date.
- Item 5 of the D&A references no known planning history for the site but on checking West Berkshire’s planning portal, two are clearly listed from 1980 and 1981, i.e. 81/14908/ADD and 80/12338/ADD.
- Item 6 of the D&A states the access road is to be tarmacked for the first 10 metres. The remainder is of a permeable material to allow for SUDS drainage. It was noted this can still be a Tarmac type material.
- Under item 9, the Committee were concerned with the wording that the “site is by necessity located away from other developments” as already used as a Travellers and Gypsy site (but is in fact currently vacant) and a reference to there being no public transport provision but in the next point state that public transport bus stops are located near the entrance to the site. With regard to ecological considerations not being taken into account we believe they should be, and see no reason for their omission.
- The Committee would be interested to know what plans are going to be put in place to stop recontamination of the site in future?
- Item 10.1 regarding site access and local facilities there is no direct link from the site for pedestrians to nearby public footpaths STRA/30/1 and STRA/29/1 but by walking alongside busy main road.

The planning decisions were received.

5. Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) Report.

The next NAG meeting is on the 7 May.

6. Health and Safety.

The Clerk reported that playground equipment remedial work has been undertaken. As mentioned at 23/148. Councillors are to monitor the playground and fitness equipment and report any issue to the Clerk.

7. Minor Matters.

- Cllr Lock reported Friends of Mortimer Library has been awarded a grant of £500.00 by Mortimer Relief in Need and that the current librarian is retiring.
- Cllr Richardson reported he is arranging the Council sponsored Alan Thorpe Trophy annual village cricket match.

23/155 Communications

To identify items for communicating.

- D-Day commemorations.
- Annual Parish Meeting.
- Councillors undertaking The Fairground litter picking.
- Councillor surgeries.

23/156 Future Agenda Items

To identify future agenda items

- St Mary's Church grant.
- Councillor away day.

23/157 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 23/150 on the Agenda, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed by Cllr Morsley.

Seconded by Cllr Bridgman.

Resolved unanimously.

Part II

23/152 Items for Consideration and Resolution

2. Governance and Management Risk Register

To receive the Risk Register as recommended by Finance and General Purposes

Cllr Bridgman confirmed that the Code of Conduct, that will be reviewed at May's meeting, will have a Gift and Hospitality appendix as mentioned in the Risk Register.

The Risk Register was received.

3. Asset Register

To receive the Asset Register as at 31 March 2024

The Asset Register was received.

Close

The meeting closed at 21:27.

Next meeting: 9 May 2024.