



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 10 April 2025 at 19:30 at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer, RG7 3TB

Present

Councillors

Cllrs D Morsley (Chairman), G Bridgman, M Dennett, S Hill, H Kilshaw, A Richardson, K Strong, J Todd, M Shaw, and M Lock.

Officers of the Council

Miss D Davis.

Public/Press

Two members of the public were present (Mr D Graham for item 24/150.5 and Mr R Saunders for item 24/153.1), plus Dist Cllr Vicky Poole. No members of the press were in attendance.

Part I

24/143 Public questions

None were received.

24/144 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs H Geary, N Carter, and D Kilshaw.

24/145 To receive any declarations of interest

None were received.

24/146 Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on Thursday 13 March 2025 were received with no amendments and approved unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

24/147 Chairman's remarks

- The Chairman welcomed Cllr Todd to her first meeting of the Council.

- It was noted that this was the final meeting of the municipal year for the full Council.

24/148 Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report was received.

Additional comments conveyed by Cllr Geary were noted, highlighting the need for more volunteers for the ASWC, SID, and Councillor surgeries.

Cllr Bridgman provided an update on the procurement of additional SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices).

24/149 Items to be taken into private session

Cllr Morsley proposed that in addition to items 24/153.4, and 24/153.7, item 24/153.3, will also be moved to Part II.

Cllr Hill seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

24/150 Reports from Committees, Steering Groups, Working Parties and Outside Bodies

1 Planning Committee

Cllr Richardson reported that no meeting had taken place today. At the previous meeting, Mr H. Kilshaw had volunteered to attend a CPRE planning workshop, which has since been cancelled. A new date is to be confirmed.

2 Climate and Environment Steering Group

Cllr Dennett reported that the latest Environment Agency annual report on storm discharge has been released and reviewed. Stratfield Mortimer appears to have improved in the rankings; however, the data may be inaccurate. An Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) request has been submitted, and findings will be reported to the Council once received and analysed.

Cllr Morsley thanked Cllr Dennett for his ongoing analysis of discharge levels at Foudry Brook.

3 Communications Steering Group

Cllr Bridgman reported that the list of required article topics had been circulated to the relevant councillors. A reminder was issued to submit their contributions promptly to allow editing to commence.

4 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Bridgman reported that the last Steering Group meeting was cancelled due to low attendance. Work is ongoing in relation to the AECOM report, and a meeting is scheduled for next week.

5 Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway Steering Group

Cllr Morsley provided an update on the progress of the Steering Group:

- Following the last meeting of Full Council, Mr Don Graham had joined the Steering Group, and his technical expertise was supporting project advancement.

- Ridge has submitted the technical drawings pack to West Berkshire Council for review. A response is awaited and has been followed up by both Ridge and Cllr Morsley.
- The proposal for the geo-technical ground investigations and report was received and discussed. (Note: the Council approved these under 24/154.2 Schedule Ai.)
- Mr Graham presented and explained a proposal for Ridge to act as Principal Designer. The proposal was received and discussed, with a decision deferred until after the ground investigation works.
- A revised bridge proposal, involving a 'kit' and foundations, was reviewed and noted to be significantly more cost-effective than the original design.
- In response to a query regarding outstanding costs prior to tender, Cllr Morsley advised that, to date, only the ground investigations and decision on the Principal Designer remain.

6 Emergency Planning Working Party

Nothing to report.

7 Neighbourhood Action Group report

Nothing to report.

8 Outside Bodies

- **Willink JAC** – Cllr Richardson reported receipt of minutes from the last meeting with West Berkshire Council, including an action tracking log. However, the requested benchmarking data and user breakdown have not yet been received.

24/151 Policy amendments

Risk register

Cllr Bridgman proposed that the document formerly titled *Governance and Management Risk Register* be renamed *Risk Register* and assigned to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (to be reflected in the Policy Guidance and Glossary).

Seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

24/152 Changes to Bodies or Body memberships

Cllr Todd was appointed to the Neighbourhood Action Group.

24/153 Items for consideration

1 Councillor Vacancy - to consider any applications for co-option to fill the Casual Vacancies on the Parish Council and resolve as needed

Mr R Saunders application was considered for the current vacancy. He gave a brief introductory talk and answered questions from the floor (and then left the meeting whilst a vote was taken).

Cllr Bridgman proposed Mr Saunders be co-opted onto the Council.

Cllr Richardson seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

Cllr Saunders then signed an acceptance of office and joined the meeting at 20:22

- 2 **Willink Leisure Centre Agreement Review – (a) to consider the terms of the Willink Leisure Centre agreement dated November 2006 and resolve any action to be taken, and (b) if necessary, to resolve the wording of any communication to be sent to West Berkshire Council**

The terms of the agreement were discussed in detail, along with the wording of the proposed communication to West Berkshire Council.

Cllr Bridgman proposed that, for the reasons set out in the draft communication, the Council withdraw from the agreement, and that the Clerk of Burghfield Parish Council be asked to inform West Berkshire Council and the School Governors of this decision, and that a payment (the withdrawal payment, representing a twelve months' notice period for the 2025/26 financial year, plus an additional ten days to cover the period up to the notice) of £15,530.04 be made to WBC.

Seconded by Cllr Hill.

Resolved unanimously.

The resulting payments to West Berkshire Council under the agreement were discussed. The payment in arrears for the 2024/25 financial year (£15,075.70, as shown in Schedule Ai of the Appendices) was due to be agreed under item 24/154.2. Thus, two payments would now be made – the arrears payment and the withdrawal payment. This second payment will be reported to the Council once made.

- 3 **Risk Register - to receive the Risk Register as recommended by Finance and General Purposes**

Moved to Part II.

- 4 **Asset Register**

To be dealt with in Part II.

- 5 **Annual Governance and Accountability Return - to receive and note the guidance on the financial year end and AGAR process**

The guidance was received.

- 6 **Annual Parish meeting**

The Chairman reminded everyone regarding the APM on 28 April, and noted that the Clerk had distributed some flyers for the noticeboards advertising it.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the same budget as last year (£250) for refreshments – Cllrs D Kilshaw and Geary would be undertaking the purchasing.

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

- 7 **End of year appraisals**

To be dealt with in Part II.

- 1 **Accounts to the 28 February 2025 - to receive and approve the Income and Expenditure Report to the 28 February 2025 and the Balance Sheet as of that date**

Cllr Morsley proposed to approve the Income and Expenditure Report and the Balance Sheet as at 28 February 2025.

Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously

- 2 **Accounts for Payment - to receive and approve items of expenditure (Schedules Ai and Aii)**

Cllr Bridgman proposed to approve the items of expenditure.

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

Cllr Shaw left at 20:49

- 3 **Payments made with the authorisation of Chairman/Vice-Chairman and/or the Clerk - to receive and note a summary of payments made (Schedules Bi and Bii)**

The summary was received and noted.

- 4 **Subscriptions and Continuous Payments - to receive and note a summary of payments made (Schedule C)**

The summary was received and noted.

- 5 **Transfers between accounts authorised by Chairman and Clerk – to receive and note a summary (Schedule D): Report**

The summary was received and noted.

(See Appendix for all payment schedules.)

24/155 Items for information only

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

- a **Planning 27/03/2025**

The meetings were noted and minutes received.

- 2 **District Councillor Reports**

The written report was received and discussed.

- Cllr Bridgman and the Clerk said that they had each requested clarification on Cllr Carter's comments regarding SMPC policies.
- Cllr Hill clarified that it was he, not Cllr Geary, who expressed dissatisfaction with the waste survey shared.

District Cllr V Poole provided an update to the Council, covering:

- Speed limits on Goring Lane.
- The increase in speed check vans.
- Road resurfacing relevant to SMPC.

- The reopening of Four Houses Corner and the associated management contract.
- Devolution of powers concerning the proposed unitary council.
- Fly-tipping and the push for the use of spot cameras, particularly around Beech Hill.
- The introduction of the three-weekly black bin collection.

The Council received the report and asked Cllr Poole questions.

#Cllr Shaw returned at 21:00

#Cllr Shaw and Cllr Dennett left at 21:05

3 Correspondence

The written report was received.

4 Councillor Surgeries

The verbal report was received. It was noted that attendance at the Bistro was low, while the Horse and Groom saw good attendance.

Cllr Richardson and Cllr Lock reported on the following:

- The need for double yellow lines to prevent parking between Church Lane and Church Farm Barns on The Street.
- Some fly-tipped items were removed during the MVP Spring Clean event.

5 Minor Matters

- Cllr Richardson reported that a date has been set for the Alan Thorpe Trophy match on 28 September 2025.
- Cllr Richardson suggested that the Council consider holding a poetry competition for the Chairman's Competition in 2026. This year's competition is an art competition, with prizes awarded at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- Cllr Strong discussed the need for logoed clothing for representation at Mortimer Fun Day and will investigate branding and associated costs.
- Cllr Hill asked the Clerk to instruct the Custodian to top up some of the graves at the cemetery.

Cllr Bridgman proposed a time extension to 22:00

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

24/156

Communications

- A reminder had been given to the Mortimer Methodist Walk to submit their risk assessment for the Easter walk.
- Advertisements for VE Day will be sent out shortly.

24/157

Future agenda items

None.

Part II

24/158 Exclusion of Press and Public

To pass a resolution under s.1(2), Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Cllr Bridgman proposed.

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

Part II

Governance and Management Risk Register

1 Asset Register - to receive the Asset Register as at 31 March 2025

The Asset Register was received.

2 End of year appraisals - to receive a verbal report on the Assistant to the Clerk's end of year appraisal and to be updated on any changes as per her contract

The Clerk reported that an appraisal was conducted for the Assistant to the Clerk, resulting in a 1-point pay scale increase.

3 Risk Register - to receive the Risk Register as recommended by Finance and General Purposes

The Risk Register was received and noted.

Close

The meeting closed at **21:38**

Date of next meeting: **15 May 2025.**

Miss Danielle Davis

11/04/2025

Appendix – payment schedules

Schedule Ai

Item	Date of Invoice	Payee Details	Amount £
	06.03.25	WBC: Willink Leisure Centre contributions	15075.70
	03.04.25	Ridge: Geo-technical drilling ex VAT	1400
	03.04.25	Top Drill: Geo-technical engineer and factual report ex VAT	2567.00

Schedule Aii

Item	Date of Invoice	Payee Details	Amount £

Schedule Bi

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
		Electronic Bank Payments	

Schedule B ii

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
		Electronic Bank Payments	
1.			

Schedule B ii

Item	Date of Payment	Payee Details	Amount £
1.	14/03/25	S Taylor: NPSG admin support February	75.00
2.	14/03/25	Dads Shop: 12V Battery inc VAT	2.38
3.	18/03/25	St John's Hall: Annual Parish meeting Hall Rent inc VAT	48.00
4.	14/03/25	Stanleys Electrical Services: repair of defib coop inc VAT	54.00
5.	14/03/25	S Taylor Reimbursement: Safeguarding in Tennis course inc VAT	30.00
6.	14/03/25	Tactical: Replace dog waste bin and move old bin inc VAT	441.00
7.	14/03/25	Rialtas: Training for end of year D Davis inc VAT	216.00
	14/03/25	Digital Credibility: 9 hours of support for Jan/Feb 25	208.53
8.			
9.			
10.		Card Payments and Direct Debits	

11.	07/03/25	Smart Pension: admin fee inc VAT	26.40
12.	03/03/25	Lloyds: monthly card fee	3.00
13.	17/03/25	Amazon: A4 Paper for office inc VAT	24.92
14.	18/03/25	Amazon: Laminator sheets and yellow ink for office inc VAT	111.74
15.	31/03/25	Amazon: Envelopes	5.74
16.	31/03/25	Amazon: Envelopes	5.00

Schedule Ci

Item	Payment Date	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank and Card Payments			
1.	14/03/25	Tactical Facilities: dog waste empties Feb inc VAT	145.60
2.	14/03/25	Purple Dragon: IT support for office Jan and Feb 25 inc VAT	260.00
3.	31/03/25	Salaries: Month 12, March 2025 inc pension contributions	4686.54
4.	31/03/25	HMRC: PAYE & NI for Month 12 , March 2025	1,131.58
5.	14/03/25	SCS Ltd: Fairground grounds maintenance January 25 inc VAT	407.20
6.	14/03/25	Englefield: quarterly rent for cemetery inc VAT	62.50
10.	14/03/25	Tactical: Cemetery grass cutting 6/3/25 inc VAT	96.00
Direct Debits			
	03/03/25	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	24.00
	03/03/25	OVO: Electricity inc VAT	33.00
	10/03/25	EE: mobile phone charges & WiFi hotspot	40.85
5.	24/03/25	OVO: Electricity inc. VAT	36.00
6.	28/03/25	Suez: Waste collection February inc VAT	106.56
7.	31/03/25	Unity Trust: service charge	11.10
8.	17/03/25	Google: DNS services	0.23
9.	24/03/25	Gigaclear: Monthly Fee	72.00
10.	25/03/25	BT quarterly bill	330.67

Schedule Cii

Item	Payment Date	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank and Card Payments			
1.	28/03/25	Englefield Garden Centre: West End Road Carpark border inc VAT	511.36

Schedule D

Item	Payment Date	Payee Details	Amount £
Electronic Bank and Card Payments			
1.	31/03/25	CCLA to unity trust	20,000