



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Community Committee Meeting held on Thursday 29 May 2025 at 19:30 at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, 17 West End Road, Mortimer, RG7 3TB

Present

Councillors

Cllrs D Morsley (Chairman), G Bridgman, N Carter (arrived 20:17), M Dennett, H Geary, D Kilshaw, M Lock, A Richardson, and K Strong.

Officers of the Council

D Davis

Public/Press

No members of the public or press attended.

Part I

25/001 Public questions

None were received.

25/002 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr R Saunders, Mr J Hannawin did not attend and no apologies were received.

25/003 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 were received.

25/004 Minutes of last meeting

Not needed.

25/005 Chairman's remarks

- Members unable to attend meetings are requested to inform Cllr Morsley of any comments or input they would like considered.
- Cllr Morsley explained that the formation of this committee was a result of discussions held during the Parish Council's away day. At that time, a Community Involvement Steering Group had been proposed but was not progressed.
- Cllr Morsley emphasised the importance of active participation from all committee members and encouraged everyone to contribute ideas.

25/006 Clerk's Report

None received.

25/007 Items to be taken into private session

Not needed.

25/008 Steering Group and Working Party Reports

1 Climate and environment Steering Group- [M Dennett](#)

Cllr M. Dennett reported:

- The Steering Group has not yet met.
- He informed members of a recent visit to Foudry Brook and the sewage works, during which Thames Water provided a tour and gave a detailed explanation of the new equipment installed.
- It was noted that previously reported discharge figures have now been corrected.
- Although no article about the visit was included in the current newsletter, it was suggested that one be prepared for a future edition.
- The group also discussed the value of communicating key information from the visit to the public—particularly around appropriate waste disposal and what can and cannot be flushed—to help raise awareness and support environmental responsibility.

25/009 Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway

1 Report

To receive a report on the Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway project.

Cllr Kilshaw reported:

- That a significant amount of information had been received following the recent survey. He summarised the key findings of the survey report and outlined the implications for the design of the cycleway and bridge.
- A meeting of the Cycleway Steering Group is scheduled for next Wednesday, during which proposals to progress the project will be discussed. It is intended that the project will soon move to the tender stage, with three to four different contractors being considered.
- The initial response from Ridge to West Berkshire Council (WBC) was discussed and noted as having been received positively by the Chair of the Steering Group.
- Cllr Kilshaw will arrange a face-to-face meeting with WBC following the upcoming Steering Group meeting to communicate the group's intention to push the project forward.

2 Estimates and invoices

To review any recently received estimates and invoices (if any).

- Estimates for the bridge design have been requested by Ridge, although the project will not proceed with this aspect at the current time.
- Cllr Morsley thanked Cllr D Kilshaw for his continued involvement in the Steering Group.

- No estimates or invoices have been received to date.

25/010 Policies

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

1 Advertising and Fly Posting Policy v2.1

The policy was reviewed. One spelling error was identified and corrected.

A discussion took place regarding A0 signs and banners, particularly in relation to their size and the length of time they may be displayed. It was agreed that banners up to 2.4 metres by 1 metre may be permitted with a 14 day time restriction, at the discretion of the Clerk. The positioning on the fence to be agreed with Clerk.

Cllr Bridgman will amend the wording of the policy to reflect this conclusion. Subject to this amendment, the policy will be submitted to Full Council for approval.

2 Communications policy - to consider any changes.

The Committee discussed the existing Facebook Policy and its relationship to the current Communications Policy. The purpose and scope of the Communications Policy were considered, including what it currently covers and how it relates to member conduct.

A proposal was discussed to integrate relevant content from the Communications Policy into the Code of Conduct, thereby streamlining policies and improving clarity.

It was agreed to proceed with Cllr Bridgman's suggestion to move the communications-related content into the Code of Conduct and to redraft the Communications Policy accordingly.

The Committee also agreed that a full re-evaluation of the Communications Policy will take place once the relevant content has been removed and incorporated into the revised Code of Conduct.

3 Community Grant policy v3.0- to consider any changes.

Discussion took place around the application schedule and the issue of recurring grant requests from the same organisations. It was proposed that a single annual application period be introduced to streamline the process.

There was discussion around whether late applications should be accepted. Cllr Morsley proposed introducing one fixed application period per year, Cllr Bridgman supported the proposal and highlighted the importance of clear advertising, specifying the available budget, when to apply, and the timeframe for applications.

It was agreed that this year:

- Applications will open on 1st September.
- The deadline for applications will be 30th September.
- Decisions will be made at the 16 October meeting.

If applications exceed the available funding, the Council may reduce the amount granted or give preference to new applicants who have not previously applied.

The Clerk will begin advertising the scheme immediately. Additionally, the Clerk will contact applicants who have already submitted requests to update them on the revised process and timeline.

4 Community Grant v1.0 application Form.

It was agreed that the form should be made clearer and more user-friendly for applicants.

Specifically, the Committee decided to:

- Merge some of the entry fields to simplify the form layout.
- Replace the term 'Revenue' with 'Running costs' to improve clarity.

These changes will be incorporated ahead of the next application round and updated on the website.

25/011 Items for consideration

1 Summer Newsletter

To agree who will edit the summer issue of the newsletter.

It was agreed that:

- Cllr Morsley would take responsibility for editing the Summer Newsletter.
- The Committee agreed that editing articles for length, clarity or style may be required and obtain the authors' agreement will always be sought before publication. Since articles are credited to their authors, it was accepted that they may reflect different writing styles and tones.
- Discussion took place on how to improve future newsletters as a communication tool with the public.
- Cllr Carter will contact Burghfield Parish Council to inquire about their email distribution list practices, specifically whether they continue to use paper newsletters and how frequently they send out communications.
- After a discussion about the website it was decided that Cllr Geary will arrange a meeting with J. Hannawin and the Clerk to discuss website updates, including the use of photos.

2 Community Grant

To discuss and resolve a new timetable for the Community Grant.

a To discuss and resolve any changes to the Community Grant Policy and Application form.

This was discussed at Agenda item 25/009 iii.

3 Terms of Reference

a To consider ways to address item 1 of the committee TOR (*To develop and promote all the ways in which the Council may communicate with the community*) with respect to improved communications with the public and set up any necessary working parties.

The Committee considered ways to address Item 1 of its Terms of Reference.

Key points discussed included:

- Exploring the use of electronic notice boards as a means of public communication. Although this has been discussed previously, members were encouraged to submit further ideas on how best to enhance communication with the community.
- The suggestion of conducting a public poll on communication preferences and other issues, possibly via the Summer Newsletter.
- The possibility of developing an SMPC app was raised, with a proposal to discuss this further with Cllr Saunders.
- An email will be sent to all councillors to confirm attendance at Mortimer Funday.

Regarding community engagement:

- Cllr Kilshaw proposed, and Cllr Morsley seconded, allocating up to £250 for SMPC T-shirts for use by office staff and councillors at the forthcoming Funday event.

Resolved unanimously.

- Cllr Morsley proposed to seek affiliation with the Mortimer Village Partnership (MVP) and complete payment before Funday.

Cllr Bridgman seconded

Resolved unanimously.

The Clerk will ask Mr D Overett if the Council can have a gazebo at the event and confirm if the Parish Council can have a stall or spot. Cllr Dennet volunteered to man it alongside the Clerk, The Clerk will ask further councillors to volunteer their time on the day also.

- b To consider ways to address item 2 of the committee TOR (To liaise with organisations in the Parish to see how the Council can enhance and extend their activities for the benefit of residents) with respect to liaising with village organisations including setting up any necessary working parties and coopting individuals from them.**

It was agreed to revisit the role of outside bodies in contributing to the Council's communications strategy after the Funday event.

Additionally, a member of the public suggested introducing an alternative community award to recognise businesses or groups that make a positive contribution to the village. The Committee agreed to revisit this suggestion following the Funday.

4 Community Engagement

To explore ideas of new events or activities that could be beneficial to the village.

It was agreed to pause further consideration until after the Funday, at which point ideas may be revisited and developed. This topic could also be reflected in a questionnaire included in the Summer Newsletter to gather public feedback.

Cllr Morsley encouraged members to circulate ideas among councillors in the meantime.

A WhatsApp group will be created for members of the Community Committee to facilitate ongoing discussion and idea sharing.

5 Defibrillator

- a **To discuss the need for routine checks on the community owned defibrillators- (Samson and George, Horse and Groom, GP surgery) and agree further actions.**

Following discussion, it was agreed that regular checks of the defibrillators will be undertaken by councillors as follows:

- Cllr Dennett – location at the GP Surgery
- Cllr Strong – location next to the Horse and Groom pub
- Cllr D. Kilshaw – location near Sansom and George Estate Agents

The Office will continue to check the defibrillator located in the phone box on the corner of King Street and Victoria Road.

The Clerk will arrange appropriate training for the councillors carrying out these checks.

- b **To review correspondence from AEDdonate charity and agree any further actions.**

It was agreed that the Clerk will respond to the charity to:

- Provide an update on the Council's current defibrillator status, and
- Request further information on the services the charity can offer, including costs and funding options.

Further action will be considered once a response is received.

6 Community Committee Co-option

To resolve whether co-opted member Mr J Hannawin is voting member of the committee.

Cllr Morsley proposed that Mr J Hannawin be a full voting member of the committee, Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

Subsequent to the meeting it was realised that Mr Hannawin could not be a voting member of the committee (s13, Local Government and Housing Act 1989) – the Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation would need to be amended to reflect the legislation.

25/012 Finance

- 1 **Regular or previously authorised payments made - to note Clerk To receive and note a summary (Schedules Cii): Report 25/012.**

Not needed.

25/013 Items for information only

None.

25/014 Minor matters

- The Committee briefly discussed recent correspondence received from **West Berkshire Council** regarding potential funding for bus shelters.
- It was agreed that the correspondence should be **added to the Full Council agenda** for further consideration.

- Cllr Strong is investigating a design for a new logo based on Mortimer family heraldry
- The Clerk and Cllr Morsley will set up and populate an action tracker for the committee

Cllr Bridgman proposed a time extension to 22:00

Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved with one against.

25/015 Communications

To identify items for communicating if any.

It was agreed to:

- Communicate the Community Grant application schedule to the public, including key dates for applications and decisions.
- Inform residents that the Council will be present at the Mortimer Funday, with a stall and councillors identifiable by their Council-branded T-shirts.

25/016 Future agenda items

To identify specific future agenda items.

- It was agreed to include a review of the Committee's Terms of Reference (TOR) on a future agenda.
- Members will be asked to formulate and submit ideas ahead of the meeting to support this review and help shape the Committee's future direction.

Part II (if needed)

25/017 Exclusion of Press and Public

Not needed.

Close

The meeting closed at **21:30**

Date of next meeting: **31 July 2025**

Miss Danielle Davis

30/05/2025