



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Minutes

**Minutes of the Estate Management Committee held on
Thursday 22 January 2026 at 19:30 at**

Mortimer Methodist Church Hall, West End Road, Mortimer, RG7 3TB

These minutes are subject to approval.

Present

Members

Cllrs D Backhouse, G Bridgman, H Geary, S Hill (Chairman), D Kilshaw, M Lock.

Officers of the Council

Miss D Davis.

Public/Press

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

Commencement

The meeting commenced at 19:30

Part I

25/047 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Saunders.

25/048 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/or gifts and hospitality, in line with the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

None.

25/049 Public Questions

None were received.

25/050 Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the Estate Management meeting held on Thursday 9 October 2025 were received and approved unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting following some minor suggested edits at the meeting.

25/051 Chairman's remarks

Cllr Hill:

- Welcomed Cllr Backhouse to the Estate Management Committee.
- Advised that Fairground Fence works will be commencing in the next few weeks.
- Thanked those involved in erecting the Christmas tree, including J & W Strang.

25/052 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported verbally that works to the electrical cabinet in Fairground Car Park will commence shortly, following a site visit by Stanley Electrical Services and a review of the original quotation.

25/053 Items to be taken into private session

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

Cllr Hill proposed item 25/054 Fees and Charges for 2026/27 be taken into private session.

Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

25/054 Items for consideration

1 Policies

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

- It was noted that the minutes of the previous meeting recorded the need to review the fees table and cemetery regulations.
- It was agreed to add a future agenda item on memorial wall plaques for discussion at the next meeting.

2 Fairground Operational Inspection Report (quarterly)

To receive 'The Fairground Operational Inspection Report- October 2025'

It was noted that the quality of the report was poor and difficult to read; however, it identified only minor issues assessed as low risk..

3 Fees and Charges 2026/27

To review and agree the service charges for 2026/27 and approve for recommendation to full Council on the 12 March.

Minuted at Part II.

4 Utility square

To consider and discuss potential future uses of the Utility Square and to agree any further actions.

Suggestions included a flagpole, small non-conflicting food traders, and seasonal uses such as an ice cream cart.

Members had no specific additional uses to propose; GB noted the need to await WBC feedback regarding a street trading licence.

Cllr Hill reported that a member of the public confirmed he would be willing to install a wood carving.

It was agreed that community/fundraising use would be permitted at the cost of power only, with income directed to community funds, and commercial use subject to a daily fee allocated to the Estates budget.

It was agreed not to advertise the space publicly at this stage; promotion to affiliated groups only via MVP.

The Clerk to investigate the cost and options for a collapsible or telescopic flag and to confirm the hole diameter (approx. 12 inches).

25/055 Action Tracker

To review the Action Tracker, receive an update outlining actions taken since the last meeting, and consider further actions.

The Action Tracker was reviewed and updated.

25/056 Finance

Regular or previously authorised payments made - to note Clerk To receive and note a summary (Schedules Cii): Report 25/056.

Nothing reported.

25/057 Items for information only

Cllr Hill advised that:

- The use of split bricks for the wall will proceed.
- Grass growth on the cemetery extension is looking reasonable.
- All Christmas wreaths are to be removed from the cemetery.
- **Action:** Cllr Kilshaw to prepare a map of the cemetery extension.

25/058 Minor Matters

- It was noted that Mortimer to Burghfield Cycleway matters are due to transfer to the Estates Management Committee as the project moves into the build phase and will require consideration by Full Council.
- A request from a member of the public to hold a monthly classic car meet on the Fairground, when the ground is dry, was discussed. The proposal would involve 10–20 vehicles, with approximately 5–6 events between May and September. It was noted that a volunteer assessment and risk assessment would be required, and no fee was proposed. This will need resolution at a future meeting.
- It was confirmed that Mr M Shaw remains the Council representative on the Wokefield Park Committee.

25/059 Communications

Ideas for potential uses of the Utility Square were discussed.

- As agreed under Agenda Item 25/039.1 (Policies), the Cemetery Regulations and Cemetery fees will be reviewed at the next committee meeting.
- To discuss and agree a name for the Utility Square (e.g. Community Square or Fairground Square).

- To include an agenda item on woodland management, including a review of previous tree inspections for commons and other Council-owned land, including Windmill Common.

Part II

25/060 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 Hill proposed to proceed into Part II,

Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

1 Fees and Charges 2026/27 - CLERK

To review and agree the service charges for 2026/27 and approve for recommendation to full Council on the 12 March.

- The introduction of tiered charges for commercial, non-commercial, and small business use was discussed, including reduced or no charges for small businesses and local community events, with charges applying to the Fairground and grazing area.
- The need to clearly define what constitutes a small business was noted.
- It was agreed to amend the reference from ERB to ERI on the Fees and Charges spreadsheet.

Cllr Hill proposed a 3% increase to the fees and charges, Cllr Kilshaw seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

Close

The meeting closed at 20:54

Date of next meeting: **16 April 2026.**

Miss Danielle Davis

23/01/2026