



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of the Community Committee Meeting held at Mortimer Methodist Hall, 17 West End Road, Mortimer, RG7 3TB on Thursday 28 May 2026

Present

Members

Cllrs G Bridgman, S Child, D Kilshaw, D Morsley (Chairman), R Saunders, and N Williams.

Other Members

None.

Officers of the Council

D Davis.

Public/Media

No members of the public or media attended

Commencement

The meeting commenced at 19:30

Part I

26/001 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Carter, M Dennett, and K Strong.

Apologies were not received from Cllr M Lock or Mr J Hannawin.

26/002 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.

Cllrs Bridgman, Kilshaw and Saunders declared an interest in matters relating to Mortimer Music Live, as directors of the company. The interests are already recorded within their Register of Interests. The declaration related specifically to the relevant section of Minor Matters to be considered in Part II of the meeting.

26/003 Public questions

None.

26/004 Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the Community meeting held on Thursday 23 April 2026 were received with no amendments and approved unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

26/005 Chairman's remarks

The Chairman reported:

- The Chairman reported that the Deputy Clerk had received an unexpected application for a community grant requesting immediate funding for a project commencing in June. It was explained that the Parish Council operates a published Community Grant application window in September each year.

It was agreed that the application details would be forwarded to Cllr Neil Williams, as Mortimer Football Club had expressed an interest in developing further opportunities for girls' football within the village.

26/006 Items to be taken into private session

It was proposed that the Committee move the discussion of Minor Matters and the Flagpole item into Part II due to the inclusion of commercially sensitive quotations.

Cllr Morsley proposed the motion, Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

26/007 Steering Group and Working Party Reports

1 Climate and environment Steering Group

No report was received from the Climate and Environment Steering Group as Cllr Dennett was not in attendance. It was noted that the Steering Group had not met.

26/008 Policies

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

1 SMPC Advertising and Flyposting Policy v3.0

The Committee reviewed the policy and considered the following:

Cllr Morsley queried whether the policy would be more appropriately considered by the Community Committee or the Planning and Highways Committee. Cllr Bridgman explained the reasoning for the item being considered by this Committee.

Cllr Williams raised questions regarding the removal of signs from public land.

Following consideration, Cllr Bridgman proposed approval of the amended policy, Cllr Morsley seconded.

Resolved Unanimously.

26/009 Items for consideration

1 Youth Engagement Initiatives

To consider opportunities for increasing engagement and awareness of the Parish Council amongst young people in the village, including potential involvement in the Mortimer to Burghfield cycleway project, youth participation in grant applications, competitions linked to community projects, and the use of social media platforms targeted at younger audiences.

Cllr Williams advised that he had given initial consideration to the matter but had not yet prepared any formal proposals. Members were invited to submit ideas and suggestions to Cllr Williams ahead of the next meeting for further discussion, including potential youth-focused social media initiatives.

The Committee also discussed concerns regarding a rise in antisocial behaviour within the village and the importance of improving positive engagement with younger residents.

2 **Flagpole Proposal**

To consider the research undertaken into the installation of a flagpole, including associated costs, flag options, and recommendations regarding implementation and usage, and to resolve any actions required.

Minuted at Part II.

3 **Christmas Event Proposals**

To consider proposals for a larger community Christmas event, including options for a Christmas market, ice skating provision, and collaboration with local organisations such as St John's Church and existing Christmas events within the Parish.

The Committee considered proposals for a larger community Christmas event, which could include a Christmas market, ice skating provision, carols around the Fairground Christmas tree, and collaboration with existing village organisations and events.

Members discussed the possibility of developing a larger joined-up community event with local organisations, including St John's Church, and acknowledged that further research and planning would be required. It was noted that the proposals shared similarities with previous discussions regarding a village market initiative.

The Committee agreed that it was too late to organise a significantly expanded event for 2026 and that focus should instead be placed on developing proposals for Christmas 2027.

It was agreed that a Working Party should be established to explore ideas further, with volunteers to be sought at the Full Council meeting on 11 June. See also 6 below for the wider remit of the Working Party

Action: The Clerk to add the Christmas Events Working Party to the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 11 June.

4 **Alfred Palmer Memorial Field (APMF) – Litter and Facilities**

To receive an update regarding litter issues at the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field following the installation of benches, and to consider arrangements for the relocation of the table tennis table to the site.

The Committee received an update regarding littering concerns at the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field following the installation of benches and discussed possible arrangements for additional bins and emptying.

Members noted that the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field Trust had not formally approached the Parish Council regarding litter issues or requested funding support. It was agreed that the matter should first be discussed further with the Trust to explore possible arrangements.

Action: The Clerk to contact Mortimer Football Club and the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field Trust to enquire whether either organisation would be willing to undertake emptying of litter bins at the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field benches should the Parish Council provide the bins.

5 Support for Mortimer Scouts

To receive any updates regarding potential Parish Council support for Mortimer Scouts following the recent fire, including any information available regarding uninsured losses and future assistance requirements.

The Committee received an update regarding support for Mortimer Scouts following the recent fire at the Scout Hut.

Members were advised that scaffolding had been erected and arrangements were being made for specialists to empty the building and insurance has agreed to cover the rebuilding. The Scouts are in the process of procuring a storage container; it was noted that several uninsured items will require replacement or rebuilding.

The Committee discussed possible financial support and noted that the Parish Council could procure certain items directly and reclaim the VAT. Consideration was also given to opportunities for the Scouts to assist with future youth engagement initiatives.

It was agreed in principle that the Committee would want to provide significant support, with the position to be reviewed further throughout the year as committee budgets progressed and further information was received from Scouts on items required and fund-raising progress.

Action: To add the review of the budget through the year to the Action Tracker.

6 Village Market Proposal

To receive an update on investigations into the feasibility of establishing a village market within Mortimer.

The Committee received an update regarding investigations into the feasibility of establishing a village market within Mortimer.

Members discussed the potential aims of a market, including supporting local producers and businesses, increasing social interaction and dwell time within the village, and encouraging community activity. Consideration was also given to practical matters including parking, power supply, toilets, waste disposal, marketing, legal requirements, and avoiding negative impacts on existing local businesses.

It was noted that there was significant overlap between the village market and Christmas event proposals. Members agreed that a joint Working Party should initially be established to explore both projects, with the option to separate into individual groups at a later stage if required.

The Committee agreed that interest in joining the Working Party should first be sought from councillors at the Full Council meeting on 11 June, before wider engagement with residents through the June news bulletin.

Action: Cllr Williams to circulate initial research and information to the Clerk for distribution to members.

Action: The Clerk to include details regarding the proposed Working Party within the June news bulletin.

7 Mortimer Hobby Hall / Garth Hall

To receive a briefing note from Mortimer Hobby Hall charity and consider whether the Community Committee wishes to recommend support from the Parish Council, including a letter of support and assistance with compiling a history of Garth Hall.

It was noted that the briefing note had not yet been completed and therefore the Committee was unable to formally consider the request at this meeting.

Cllr Bridgman proposed that authority be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to progress the matter once the required information had been received, seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

8 Arts Festival Proposals

To receive any initial ideas or proposals relating to a potential arts festival.

No update was received regarding Arts Festival proposals as Mr J Hannawin was not in attendance.

9 Appointment to Finance & General Purposes Committee

To resolve which additional member of the Community Committee will be appointed to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Committee considered the appointment of an additional member from the Community Committee to serve on the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Clerk conveyed that Cllr Carter expressed an interest in serving on the Committee. Cllr Kilshaw proposed Cllr Strong for appointment.

Following a vote, five members voted in favour, with one abstention.

Resolved: Cllr Strong be appointed to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Action: The Clerk to inform Cllr Strong of the appointment.

26/010 New Ideas and Projects

To consider new ideas.

No further new ideas or projects were raised beyond those already discussed during the meeting.

26/011 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, with outstanding items discussed and further actions identified and noted.

26/012 Finance

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

Not needed.

26/013 Items for information only

None.

26/014 Minor matters

One item was identified to be considered in Part II.

Members received an update regarding advice provided by West Berkshire Council Legal Services regarding the requirement for street trading licences, confirming their view that the licensing requirements extend to public open spaces.

Cllr Bridgman advised that he had challenged this interpretation by reference to the related Parliamentary debate, however no response had yet been received from the officer at West Berkshire Council. It was noted that, depending on any future response received, a formal question may be submitted to the Leader of West Berkshire Council. The matter would be revisited once further information became available.

26/015 Communications

To identify items for communicating if any.

Members identified the following items for communication:

- the Parish Council newsletter and news bulletin were nearing completion and would be sent to print following final edits; and
- the Annual Parish Meeting minutes would be published on the Parish Council website the following day.

26/016 Future agenda items

To identify specific future agenda items.

None identified.

Part II

26/017 Exclusion of Press and Public (if needed)

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.

26/014 Minor matters

Cllrs Kilshaw, Saunders and Bridgman declared interests in matters relating to Mortimer Music Live.

Members received an update regarding the future of a local community music event following the discontinuation of the previous organising group. It was noted that discussions had taken place regarding the potential continuation of the event from 2027 onwards, and that a future request for Parish Council support may be submitted.

The Committee discussed practical considerations including security arrangements and noted general support for exploring the proposal further.

1 Flagpole Proposal

To consider the research undertaken into the installation of a flagpole, including associated costs, flag options, and recommendations regarding implementation and usage, and to resolve any actions required.

The Committee considered the research undertaken into the installation of a flagpole, including associated costs, flag options, and implementation arrangements.

Following discussion of the quotations received, Cllr Bridgman proposed acceptance of the quotation from Union to Supply, Cllr Saunders seconded, and it was resolved unanimously.

Action: The Clerk to raise a purchase order.

Close

The meeting closed at 20:55

Date of next meeting: **3 September 2026.**

Miss Danielle Davis

01/06/2026