



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Media Release

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Demands Accountability Following Late Action on Cross-Boundary Development

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council has issued a strong statement following West Berkshire Council's decision on 16 July 2026 to approve a motion responding to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council's proposal for a 350-home development directly on the West Berkshire border. The development would rely heavily on services accessed through Stratfield Mortimer, creating substantial and unavoidable cross-boundary impacts.

The motion, brought by Cllr Nick Carter and passed at the meeting, required West Berkshire Council to:

- secure **clear, verifiable evidence** of how cross-boundary infrastructure impacts would be assessed, funded, and delivered **before** any allocation is confirmed at Regulation 19;
- publish **site-specific capacity assessments** relevant to West Berkshire communities;
- ensure that **West Berkshire's interests were fully represented** throughout the Local Plan process;
- confirm that **no development allocation adjoining West Berkshire should proceed** unless mitigation for impacts within West Berkshire was secured.

Although the Parish Council welcomed the fact that West Berkshire Council ultimately adopted these positions, it remains deeply concerned that this action came **far too late** to influence the stage of the process where such representations carry full weight. The Regulation 18 consultation — the only point at which Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council can consider external submissions — closed in January 2026.

The Parish Council notes that:

- **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council had already raised these issues during Regulation 18**, submitting detailed concerns directly to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council;
- Senior West Berkshire Council representatives — including the Leader, Cllr Jeff Brooks; Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing, Cllr Denise Gaines; and senior planning officers — had publicly stated in December 2025 (and Cllr Brooks then confirmed in April 2026) that these matters **needed to be formally communicated to Basingstoke & Deane well before the Regulation 18 deadline**.

Given these facts, the Parish Council is compelled to ask why the motion was only introduced in July 2026 — **months after the critical consultation window had closed** — and why **district councillors representing Stratfield Mortimer did not bring these issues to West Berkshire Council at the appropriate time**, despite the clear and significant implications for local residents.

The Parish Council is now seeking:

- a full and transparent account of **what actions West Berkshire Council leadership — and specifically Mortimer’s district councillors — took prior to the passing of the motion;**
- clarification on **which elements of the motion remain outstanding;**
- an explanation as to **why any outstanding actions were not undertaken during the Regulation 18 period,** when they would have been most effective and most likely to influence the Local Plan process.

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council has also requested confirmation of the steps West Berkshire Council will take to ensure that the interests of Stratfield Mortimer and other affected communities are fully represented as Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council progresses its Local Plan toward Regulation 19.

The Parish Council maintains that residents deserve timely engagement, clear accountability, and evidence of meaningful action from their district representatives.