Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

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

Present

Members

Cllrs G Bridgman, M Dennet, D Kilshaw (arrived at 20:42), D Morsley (Chairman), R Saunders (arrived at 20:54), K Strong, M Lock (arrived at 19:33), 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 19:31.

Part I

26/018 To receive any apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr N Carter, and S Child.

26/019 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.

26/020 Public questions

None.

26/021 Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the Community meeting held on Thursday 28 May 2026 were received with no amendments and approved unanimously for signature by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting. KS abstained

26/022 Chairman's remarks

The Chairman reported:

- Reminded members to submit any reports or supporting papers sufficiently in advance of meetings so that they could be included within the published meeting papers.
- Invited suggestions for an article to be submitted to the Mortimer Village Partnership newsletter. Cllr Morsley suggested a short article encouraging residents to subscribe to the Council's news bulletin. Cllr Bridgman suggested including updates on the Mortimer to Burghfield footpath and cycleway, which was expected to be fully connected by mid-October, and the reserved land planning application.

Action: The Clerk and Chairman to prepare an article for submission to the Mortimer Village Partnership newsletter.

26/023 Items to be taken into private session

It was proposed that the Committee move 26-026.5 Budget 2027/28 into Part II.

Cllr Morsley proposed the motion, Cllr Bridgman seconded.

Resolved unanimously.

26/024 Steering Group and Working Party Reports

1 **Climate and environment Steering Group**

No report was received from the Climate and Environment Steering Group.

2 **Community Events and Market Working Party**

Cllr Williams reported approximately 40 traders had been approved and invoiced, which may represent the maximum capacity. Loading, unloading and potential car park congestion would be considered at the next Working Party meeting, alongside the remaining arrangements for the October market. Advertising was being progressed.

It was suggested that separate working parties be established for the market and other community events.

3 **Scarecrow Working Party**

Cllr Strong reported the Council's scarecrow would be based on KerPlunk and displayed in the Utility Square car park. The entry had been submitted to the Mortimer Village Partnership. Arrangements for temporarily lowering the flagpole were discussed. Cllr Strong would lead the Working Party, with Cllr Kilshaw assisting with the electrics.

26/025 Policies

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

1 **SMPC Community Award Policy v3.1**

The Committee reviewed the amended policy, which clarified that posthumous nominations would not be considered.

Cllr Bridgman proposed that the policy be approved, seconded by Cllr Morsley.

Resolved unanimously.

26/026 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.

The Committee considered the need to understand young people's priorities, communicate through appropriate platforms and provide meaningful opportunities for participation and leadership.

Members discussed establishing a youth-led working party and potentially involving former Willink pupils, the football club and young people seeking experience for future education or employment applications. Finding an individual able to drive the appropriate media channels for young people is key.

Action: Cllr Williams to contact the Headteacher of The Willink School to discuss potential involvement.

2 **Christmas Event Proposals – moved this item to before 26-024.3 Scarecrow WP.**

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.

This item was considered before the Scarecrow Working Party update.

The Committee reviewed a draft calendar of Christmas events across the parish. Coordinating a large village-wide weekend was not considered achievable this year.

Ideas discussed included reviving the carols, music and readings around the tree on 16 December; developing the market with a stronger Christmas theme; locally provided refreshments, including alcoholic and non-alcoholic mulled wine; additional lighting; and a Santa's grotto.

Once finalised, the Christmas calendar would be publicised through posters and flyers.

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

To receive an update regarding the bin installation at the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field following the meeting of the Full Council on 30 July.

The Clerk was awaiting a response from the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field trustees regarding the proposed installation of litter bins and would continue to pursue the matter.

4 **Community Grants-**

To consider promotion and publicity of the 2026 Community Grant Funding round.

The Committee agreed to promote the 2026 Community Grant Fund through posters displayed on the Council's noticeboards.

5 **Budget 2027/28 and Medium-Term Financial Planning**

To consider the Community Committee's budget requirements for 2027/28, including indicative budget requirements for 2028/29 and 2029/30, and agree recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Minuted at Part II.

6 **Action Plan 2027/28**

To consider and identify priorities for inclusion in the Council's three-year Action Plan and make recommendations to Full Council.

Minuted at Part II.

26/027 New Ideas and Projects

To consider new ideas.

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

26/028 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.

26/029 Finance

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

Not needed.

26/030 Items for information only

None.

26/031 Minor matters

Concerns were reported about the visibility of pedestrians wearing dark clothing at the zebra crossing near the Fairground. The crossing had previously been assessed by West Berkshire Council.

The ownership of the hedge to the left of St Mary's School was raised. Cllr Lock would report the matter to the Clerk's Charity, and the Clerk would also contact its Secretary.

#Cllr Kilshaw arrived at 20:42. Cllr Saunders at 20:54

A protocol governing the flying of flags on the Council's flagpole was discussed. Cllr Bridgman would prepare a draft for consideration by Full Council and subsequent inclusion within the Fairground Policy.

26/032 Communications

To identify items for communicating if any.

None.

26/033 Future agenda items

To identify specific future agenda items.

None identified.

Part II

26/034 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.

#Cllr Saunders arrived at 20:54

1 **Budget 2027/28 and Medium-Term Financial Planning**

To consider the Community Committee's budget requirements for 2027/28, including indicative budget requirements for 2028/29 and 2029/30, and agree recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The 2027/2028 Budget for the Community Committee was reviewed and updated.

2 **Action Plan 2027/28**

To consider and identify priorities for inclusion in the Council's three-year Action Plan and make recommendations to Full Council.

The chairman asked each committee member for a potential priority for the Council's three-year Action Plan. Potential future CIL income from new developments was also noted.

Existing public feedback (from 2020 and 2025 questionnaires) would be consolidated before undertaking further consultation. Once priorities had been agreed, suggestions could be made as to allocation among the committees

 # Cllr Bridgman proposed a time extension to 22:00 and Cllr Morsley seconded. Resolved unanimously.

Actions – by 30 September 2026:

- The Clerk to circulate the ideas identified at the meeting.
- Cllr Bridgman to review the public feedback spreadsheet from 2020.
- Cllr Morsley to then allocate topics from that spreadsheet to committee members for production of short reports

Close

The meeting closed at 21:41

Date of next meeting: **19 November 2026.**

Miss Danielle Davis

04/09/2026