

**Worth Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on**  
**21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 commencing at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllr Dorey (Chairman)  
Cllr Casella  
Cllr Gibson  
Cllr Lord  
Cllr Mayor  
Cllr Webb

Cllr Dymond  
Cllr Hitchcock  
Cllr Hodsdon  
Cllr King  
Cllr Phillips  
Cllr Stewart

Mrs T Cruickshank (Deputy Clerk)  
Mrs E Smith (RFO)

**199 Public Question Time**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting. There were no members of the public present.

**200 Apologies**

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllrs Anscomb, Coote, Cruickshank, Scott and Pointer.

**201 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Phillips declared an interest in the item relating to The Copthorne Pavilion.

**202 Minutes**

It was AGREED by all present that the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were a true and correct record.

**203 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman had no announcements.

**204 Correspondence & Action List**

The correspondence and action lists were NOTED

**205 Committees**

The following Committee Minutes and actions therein were NOTED.

Planning & Highways Committee, 24<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022  
Date of next meeting: 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022

General Purposes & Finance Committee, 10<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022  
Date of next meeting: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**206 County Councillors' Report**

The Deputy Clerk had invited Cllr Forbes who had a prior engagement.

In his role as County Councillor Cllr Gibson gave the following updates –

He advised that the County Council meeting on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> had been cancelled due to storm Eunice, there was a meeting scheduled on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the budget.

WSSC would be discussing their response to National Highways Consultation on the A27 Arundel Bypass.

Cllr Gibson also brought to councils' attention that the Community Highways Scheme system of reporting was being updated and was to be managed via a bidding system.

## **207 District Councillors Report**

Cllr Phillips, speaking in his capacity as District Councillor advised that the Budget was approved by cabinet and is due to go before Full Council next Wednesday.

## **208 Community Governance Review**

Cllr Dorey shared the below outline of activity over next few weeks:

- 2/3/22 – CGR WG meeting prior to first public meeting on 4/3
- 4/3/22 – First public meeting in Haven Centre
- 16/3/22 – First public meeting in Parish Hub
- 17/3/22 – CGR WG meeting to discuss what to present to FC on 21/3 following public meetings
- 21/3/22 – Full Council – update on CGR including outcome of first public meetings
- 23/3/22 – CGR WG meeting to discuss consultation response to MSDC
- 30/3/22 – Further CGR WG meeting if required
- 4/4/22 – Hold Full Council meeting to agree consultation response

A lengthy discussion took place.

Debate took place around the costs and draft budget shared by the promoters on Facebook.

Cllr Gibson, one of the promoters, said he had seen no figures from Worth Parish Council clarifying costs associated with the possible division of the council. Cllr Hodsdon advised that as soon as consultants had calculated these figures they would be shared.

Cllr Gibson said that costs of renaming the council, websites, notice boards etc would be regarded as modest.

The Chairman asked Cllr Gibson if he could provide a comparable estimate of what he thought the cost of the process of dividing the council would be, as in the Chairmans view it was reasonable to assume this would be far more complex than the case of Hextable and Swanley and could be in the region of £100,000.

Cllr Gibson advised that it was NALC who had recommended the case of Hextable/Swanley as a key comparable case.

The Chairman disagreed that the case was comparable, as Worth Parish would be effectively split into two.

Further debate took place regarding the possible cost implications regarding dividing the council.

Cllr Gibson stated that the promoters had tried to get support from WSALC but had been denied. The Chairman advised this was because Worth Parish Council had already consulted WSALC on the matter, and to assist the promoters would be a conflict of interests.

The Chairman was of the opinion that the promoters should have brought the suggestion of dividing the Council to a Council meeting for discussion prior to the petition being

launched. Cllr Gibson said the Council had previously voted against any division. The Chairman disagreed with Cllr Gibson's statement saying he thought the Council had voted against changing the name of the council, not any division.

During the discussion the Chairman suggested that if the CGR resolved to divide the Council, this would result in a rise in precept to Copthorne. Cllr Gibson responded by asking why he should care as he would be part of the CDVC. The Chairman responded by reminding Cllr Gibson that he is currently a Worth Parish Councillor responsible for both villages.

Cllr Gibson voiced his opinion that splitting the council was the best thing for both villages, a key issue was that Copthorne now had their own Neighbourhood Plan in place and the two villages had different visions and there was a clear separation.

During the discussion regarding the CGR, Cllr Gibson announced that he felt under attack. At this point the Chairman suspended the meeting due to expressions of concern from some councillors to reassure those present that the robust debate was not intended to be personal in nature or in any way attacking.

This was NOTED by all present and the meeting continued.

Cllr Webb asked if MSDC would take the cost implications of dividing the council into consideration when making their decision and it was thought that they would.

## **209 Accounts & Financial Matters**

The RFO has received a quote from EDF for a 12-month contract to supply Street Light Energy, the quote received is for £25,000 per annum excl. vat.

The quote given has expired, the RFO has requested an extension to the expiry date but EDF cannot give an extension as the rates are now updated on a daily basis.

The RFO would like council to approve a sum which would enable the RFO to get an updated quote and to be able to act on it quickly before the new quote goes up again. The quotes from EDF generally only last for one month.

Councillors AGREED to approve delegation to the RFO to spend up to £32,000.00 to secure the contract.

## **210 Council Land & Buildings**

The Deputy Clerk advised that the storm had brought down some trees on Council owned land - one oak on the Copthorne Recreation ground and one silver birch on the Copthorne Green.

The RFO has spoken to the tree surgeon who inspected the trees earlier today, who advised that both trees were unsafe and needed to be felled, quoting a cost of £1680 + VAT

Cllrs AGREED for this work to go ahead.

Cllr Hodsdon asked that replacement trees are planted, it was agreed the trees would be felled as soon as possible for safety and the matter of the replacement trees will be discussed at a future meeting.

### Permission for use of the Copthorne Green for the Platinum Jubilee

Copthorne Carnival Committee have written to request permission to use The Green for the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

The event is still in the planning stages but is likely to begin at 11am with a Dog Show, followed by a Children's Tea Party at 2.30pm, stalls and games run by local organisation in the afternoon and a proms style concert in the evening finishing at 10pm with a

lantern parade.

The event is being run by The Copthorne Queen's Jubilee Group, a collaboration between village organisations, set up and constituted specifically for the purposes of this event.

All activities will be covered by the appropriate oversight and insurances.

Copthorne Carnival Club holds a premises licence for The Green; this event will be run under this licence.

It was AGREED by all present to give permission for use of the Copthorne Green for the Jubilee Celebrations, with the Clerk being given delegated powers to ensure that all insurance and risk assessments etc were in place prior the event.

#### Permission for use of the Burleigh Way car park for CDRA Easter Egg Hunt

The secretary of the CDRA has written to ask if permission may be given to close the car park next to the Royal Oak to use for registration for the Easter Egg Hunt on Friday 15th April. The CDRA committee believe it will be safer to hold registration in the carpark.

It was AGREED by all present to give permission for use of the Burleigh Way car park for the Easter Egg Hunt registration, with the Clerk being given delegated powers to ensure that all insurance and risk assessments etc were in place prior the event.

#### Consider applying for S106 funding for acoustic improvements at the Copthorne Pavilion

The Deputy Clerk has investigated and there are no S106 monies allocated for the Pavilion building, either from St Modwen or Holly Farm.

Formal Sport funding does not cover the building at The Copthorne Pavilion and the list of Community Buildings also does not include the Copthorne Pavilion.

Speaking as a member of the public Cllr Phillips queried this and said he would seek further guidance from the Clerk.

Councillors NOTED this information

#### Donation for playground improvements

A representative from Jack and Jill preschool has approached Cllr Dorey.

The Jack and Jill preschool is closing down and at their EGM there was discussion about what to do with the left-over funds. It was suggested that They are wondering if money towards refurbishing the Copthorne play area, as this would give back to the local community. They estimate there would be around £7000.

It was AGREED by all present to gratefully accept this donation of £7000, putting the sum in earmarked reserves to ensure that it was used for upgrading/refurbishment of the Copthorne Recreation Ground play area.

### **211 Reporting of Anti-Social Behaviour**

There were not incidents reported.

### **212 Policing**

The December figures were NOTED.

An update on the beat surgeries was provided from PCSO Sophie Norman;

'In regard to Copthorne, we had three residents turn up for our first session and our last session one councillor with another resident turned up. The few sessions in between we have had no one attend.

Our Crawley Down sessions, we have had a few residents turn up when we first started the surgeries but nothing as recently.'

Cllr Hodsdon asked if there was any further information about the increase in sexual assault crimes noted in the previous meetings crime figures. The Deputy Clerk will investigate.

Cllr Lord said there had been another spate of catalytic converter thefts and during the recent power cuts there had been more crime in the Smallfield area whilst CCTV was down.

### **213 Reports from representatives attending outside meetings.**

There were no reports to note.

### **214 Location of future council meetings-**

It was AGREED by all present that council meetings would resume in the South Room with chairs only.

### **215 Personnel and Staffing Matters-**

**At this point the Chairman announced that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 the press and public would be excluded during the next item due to the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed, as it related to staffing matters.**

The Chairman and Cllr Hodsdon appraised council of their discussion with Worknest regarding HR implications of a potential divide of the Council

**The Meeting returned to Open Session.**

### **216 Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 in the Main Hall of the Parish Hub

*Meeting closed at 8.45 pm.*

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_