

## **Worth Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the Birch Room, the Haven Centre, Crawley Down on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 commencing at 7.30pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Dorey (Chairman)	
	Cllr Casella	Cllr Coote
	Cllr Cruickshank	Cllr Dymond
	Cllr Gibson	Cllr Hitchcock
	Cllr Hodsdon	Cllr Mayor
	Cllr Lord	Cllr King
	Cllr Pointer	Cllr Phillips
	Cllr Stewart	Cllr Williams
	Cllr Webb	
	Mrs J Nagy (Clerk)	
	Mrs E Smith (RFO)	3 members of the public

#### **170 Public Question Time**

There were three members of the public present.

A resident in Sandy Lane wished to the flooding issues currently being experienced to the Council's attention. Water was coming off King George's Field, from Squires Close and beyond, through their property. The Parish Council had previously indicated that it would be willing to apply for Watershed funding to assist in resolving the issue, but it now appeared that the solution suggested by MSDC was not feasible; WSCC is now involved as the flood authority.

The resident said that despite ongoing correspondence and meetings with both MSDC and WSCC, both bodies were now not responding to her emails requesting updates.

In the meantime, three pumps were operating 24/7 pumping 850 litres of water a day away from their property, at considerable expense.

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council had been advised by MSDC not to become involved with the matter, due to ongoing legal issues.

Cllr Gibson as County Councillor and Cllr Coote as District Councillor both said that they would take this up with their respective authorities as a matter of urgency. The Clerk will pass on the residents' details to both Councillors.

#### **171 Apologies**

Apologies were NOTED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Scott.

#### **172 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations at this point in the meeting.

#### **173 Minutes**

It was agreed by all present that the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 were a true and correct record.

#### **174 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised that the Governance Working Party was planning to meet imminently, to discuss meeting schedules, Committee and Sub Committee remits, and the way councillors were notified about meetings etc.

#### **175 Correspondence & Action List**

The correspondence and action lists were NOTED.

## **176 Committees**

The following Committee Minutes and actions therein were NOTED.

Planning & Highways Committee, 31st October & 14th November 2022  
Date of next meeting, 12th December 2022

General Purposes & Finance Committee, 31st October 2022  
Date of next meeting, 9th January 2023

It was NOTED that an HR Committee meeting was held on 19th December; recommendations from that meeting to be considered at Item 13.

## **177 County Councillors' Report**

Both County Councillors were asked to provide reports. Cllr Gibson has reported that there are concerns over the budget particularly in years 3 and 4 when changes to business rates come in, and reaction to the water outage. He has requested an update to the projected need for school places in the EG area and pressed the HA to request that highway upgrades are made a condition of a planning permission; they say that is down to Mid Sussex.

Councillors NOTED this information.

## **178 District Councillors' Report**

District Councillors had nothing to report.

## **179 Precept & Budget 2023/2024**

The Clerk referred to her report.

Following the recommendation from the GP&F Committee to raise a precept of £350,000, some issues had arisen.

The £6000 annual monitoring cost of the CCTV cameras has been added, with £6000 taken off the Lashmere improvement cost to compensate.

Due to the possible delay in obtaining approval for a £50,000 Public Works Loan to support the Bowers Place Parking project, it has been calculated that there will sufficient funds in general reserves to finance the project, should the loan not be forthcoming.

Councillors NOTED the Clerk's report.

Cllr Gibson said that whilst he agreed with the budget of £486,000, he was of the opinion that a higher sum could be transferred from general reserves to address the deficit, thus reducing the precept.

Cllr Dorey proposed that the Council agree the budget of £486,000 to be supported by a precept demand of £350,000. This was AGREED by all present, with the exception of Cllr Gibson who voted against.

It was agreed that the Clerk would engage with residents to collect evidence to support a Public Works Loan application to part fund the Bowers Place project, with a view to making the application before the end of this financial year.

## **180 Accounts & Financial Matters**

Consideration of the latest financial situation was not considered at the January GP&F Committee due to the RFO's ill health. With the agreement of the Chair of this Committee, Cllr Scott, these will be considered at the next meeting on February 6th 2023

Councillors NOTED this information.

## **181 Bowers Place Tender**

**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 sensitive commercial issues. Members of the Public left the meeting.**

The draft Minutes of the GP&F Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> January, when discussion took place on the tender responses took place, were noted.

### **The meeting returned to Public Session.**

It was AGREED by all present to accept the recommendation from the GP&F Committee to award the contract for works at Bowers Place, to McHugh, at a cost of £61,081.13 + VAT. Cllr Hitchcock will discuss the timetable for these works with the contractor, to ensure that residents are kept fully informed both before and during the works. He will liaise with the Clerk to discuss completion of the remaining legal documentation.

## **182 Personnel**

In order to join the WSCC Pensions Scheme, the Council has to submit a Discretionary Policy. This has been considered by the HR Committee at its meeting on 19th December, and is included in the Policy Pack, with the recommendation to adopt.

It was AGREED by all present to adopt the Discretionary Policy

## **183 Council Land and Buildings**

Nothing to report

## **184 Council Policies**

### Dignity at Work Policy

The Clerk advised that Council is required to have an up-to-date policy in order to be able to consider signing the Civility & Respect Pledge.

A draft policy, using a template provided by SLCC, working in partnership with NALC, One Voice Wales and County Organisations, was considered at the November Council meeting. It was passed to the HR Committee for consideration.

At its meeting on 19th December, the HR Committee considered the draft policy and recommends adoption.

It was AGREED by all present to adopt the Dignity at Work Policy

### GDPR Training Policy

It was AGREED by all present to confirm the GDPR Training Policy with no amendments.

### Parish Awards Policy

It was AGREED by all present to confirm the Parish Awards Policy with no amendments.

### Statement of Community Engagement

This policy has been amended to include reference to the Council's Facebook page.

It was AGREED by all present to confirm the Statement of Community Engagement, after the above amendment.

## **185 Civility & Respect Pledge**

This matter was deferred from the November Council meeting; the Clerk referred to her report.

It was AGREED by all present to sign the Civility & Respect Pledge.

## **186 Warm Hubs**

At the GP&F meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> November, it was agreed to defer this matter to this meeting.

As Burstow Parish Councillor, Cllr Lord advised that Burstow had opened a Warm Hub facility; only one family had used it, who were in an emergency situation unrelated to being unable to afford to heat their home.

It was agreed to continue to advertise the potential Warm Hubs, and to monitor the responses. The Clerk will report to Council if a significant need is identified.

## **187 Youth Support Worker**

The Clerk referred to her report.

The first sessions will start in Copthorne at the Pavilion on Mondays and Wednesdays from 20th February 4.30pm to 6.30pm for 10 to 13 year olds, and 6.30pm to 8.30pm for 14 to 16 year olds. These are being advertised.

However, there issues remain with trying to set up at the Glebe Centre in Crawley Down. It was agreed that Cllrs Stewart and Pointer, meets with the Clerk and the Youth Worker to discuss a way forward.

The two Nutrition Courses being hosted by Table Talk Foundation are going ahead on 14th and 15th February. The Youth Worker will be present at these, and this will be used as an opportunity to publicise the Copthorne Club

Councillors NOTED this information.

## **188 Anti-Social Behaviour**

There had been reports on social media relating to minor ASB in Crawley Down; the Clerk will make the PSCOs aware.

## **189 Policing**

The latest crime figures were NOTED.

## **190 Representatives attending outside meetings**

SLCC Branch Meeting, 13th January, and WSALC Clerks Forum 16th January, both attended by the Clerk

The Clerk referred to her report; her intention to draft a vexatious complaint policy was noted.

## **191 Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

*Meeting closed at 8.23pm.*

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

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