

Worth Parish Council
Minutes of the General Purposes & Finance Committee Meeting held on
April 17th 2023 commencing at 7.30pm

Present:	Cllr Scott (Chairman)	Cllr Phillips
	Cllr Casella	Cllr Coote
	Cllr Hitchcock	Cllr Mayor
	Cllr Pointer	Cllr Stewart
	Cllr Webb	
	Mrs J Nagy (Clerk)	No members of the public
	Mrs E Smith (RFO)	

125 Public Question Time

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting; there were no members of the public present.

126 Apologies

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllrs Cruickshank, Dorey and Gibson.

Cllr Gibson will be arriving late.

127 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations at this point of the meeting.

128 Minutes

It was AGREED by all present that the Minutes of the General Purposes & Finance Committee meeting held on 20th March 2023 were a true and correct record.

129 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman had no announcements.

130 Correspondence List

The Correspondence List was NOTED.

131 Accounts and Financial Matters

Financial Information

The Chairman asked Councillors to consider details of income and expenditure, bank balances and reserves, as at 28th February 2023 as presented in the meeting pack.

To summarise;

Total receipts for February 2023 of £1,630.88 excl. VAT
Total payments for February 2023 of £23,912.48 excl. VAT
Bank Balances as at 28th February 2023 of £412,680.14 of which
Earmarked Reserves of £139,706.94

Councillors NOTED the latest financial situation.

Cost of transport to Plumpton College for youth event

At the last meeting, Cllr Dorey advised that an opportunity had arisen for 30 young people aged 13 to 16 could go to Plumpton College for the day for a cookery session and a visit to the dairy. The event will be run by the Table Talk Foundation, who ran the recent very successful nutrition

courses. The usual cost is £1000, but Worth PC have been offered a free session.

The Clerk has investigated how best to get the children there; a coach will cost £648 - another quote was nearly £900. It is planned to charge £5 to attend the event, to avoid last minute cancellations.

Other local minibus options, such as WSCC, the Crawley Down Monday Club, local scout groups and Copthorne Prep School have also been explored, but there is currently no availability on the day.

Councillors are asked to consider expenditure of £498 (648 – 150 attendance fee) It is hoped that this cost can be reduced, e.g. by finding minibuses, so this would be the maximum expenditure.

Expenditure of £500 was AGREED by all present, to transport young people to the event on 28th July.

Litter picking equipment

The Council currently owns 10 sets of equipment (litter picker, gloves, hoops and hi vis jacket) The Copthorne litter pick on 2nd April was very well attended. It may be considered prudent to get more equipment as litter pick events are becoming more popular.

It was AGREED by all present to purchase an addition litter picking kit of 10 sets at £425 + VAT.

Street light maintenance contract

The Clerk and RFO are still researching alternatives to Streetlights, to present alternative quotes to Council. Firms which national colleagues have recommended do not operate in this area.

This contract will be re-presented to Full Council on 24th April, hopefully with a choice of options.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Replacement Shutter at Copthorne Pavilion

Cllr Phillips declared a personal interest in this item, as he is Chair of the Sports Association; he took no part in discussion.

The shutter over the main entrance at the Pavilion has failed; cost of replacement will be £1244.00 + VAT.

It was AGREED by all present, with the exception of Cllr Phillips, to purchase a new shutter at Copthorne Pavilion. It was noted that cost code 4200 Pavilion Maintenance only budgeted £1000 expenditure, and that this purchase would exceed budget.

132 Council Premises and Land

Bridge over Copthorne Stream

The pedestrian bridge over the stream is in very poor repair. It is a solid earth structure, with stone paviours on the side walls, all covering two large bore pipes through which the water flows. Vegetation growing though the stonework has caused some paviours to become dislodged, with cracks appearing.

The Clerk spoke to Scott Wakeley, Drainage Engineer at MSDC for advice. He was of the opinion that Watershed monies could be sought to repair the bridge, as its collapse could impede water flow. It should be noted that one version of the recent Watershed project in this location included total removal of the bridge. This was discounted; only works to the trash screen and walls were carried out.

WSCC do not agree that the repairs falls under Watershed; discussions are ongoing.

Councillors will recall the triangle of land to the south of the stream, previously unregistered,

was claimed by the Diocese of Chichester. The Council, which occupies the land on the other side under licence from the Diocese, will share riparian responsibilities and cost.

The Carnival Committee has been alerted that there should be no vehicular traffic across the bridge during the event.

The Clerk will keep the Committee updated; the Deputy Clerk is taking the lead in this project.

Councillors NOTED this information.

The Grounds Supervisor is to install a physical barrier to stop vehicles crossing.

Use of South Room as a venue for a MSDC drop in health check session

MSDC is offering health checks to residents aged between 40 and 74. These are free, but appointments have to be booked – in a day they hope to see 8 people. They are asking for venues.

The Comms Administrator is going to run a survey to ascertain interest.

It was AGREED by all present that if there is interest, that the South Room be offered free of charge.

Gig on the Green 29th July 2023

The CDRA has completed the application form to hold the Gig on the Green on Crawley Down Green on 29th July.

The event is to be held 12 noon to 11pm on 29th July, but set up is 9am on 28th July, with pull down by 2pm on 30th July. The Clerk has asked for a timetable for clarification; this is yet to be received.

Tickets for the event are now up for sale on a ticket website, with booking fees applied, with total cost for 2 adults/2 children will be £16.26 for a CDRA member. This website states that the tickets are non-refundable.

It was AGREED by all present that permission would be granted for the event, giving delegated authority to Clerk to ensure that all documentation was in place prior to the event taking place. However, the following conditions would apply:

- A timetable/schedule of set up and pull down must be supplied, in particular when the fencing is to be erected. If possible, this should be on the morning of the event to limit restriction of public access.
- There is to be no vehicular access from Bowers Place at any time due to the need to protect the Root Protection Zones (RPZ) in that area, even if on the date of the event, the proposed parking scheme and path have not been implemented. The only possible access would be at the northern end, provided that metal sheets are laid to protect the ground.
- As per Conditions of Use Clause 4, the CDRA must make good any damage to the surface of the green. It is suggested that coconut matting or similar is put down at the pedestrian access points, where wear will be concentrated.
- All documentation must be supplied at least 7 days prior to the event taking place to allow time to resolve any queries.

It was further agreed that the Use of Land application form would be amended to include the condition that all documentation for the event must be supplied and agreed at least 7 days prior to the event taking place.

Access onto Crawley Down Green

Further to discussions pertaining to fencing off the Green, the CDRA raised some queries over the Bowers Place Parking proposals, in that they were advised that vehicular access from Bowers Place across the new footpath will not be possible due to its limited weight bearing capabilities and due to the high kerb. Access will be possible at the northern end of the Green where the kerb is minimal, provided that metal sheets are put down to protect the path.

The CDRA asked that the Council change the specification of the footpath to allow vehicular access.

Having conferred with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council, the Clerk has advised the CDRA that as the contract has been awarded, any last-minute changes are not possible. Access to the Green from Station Rd is still possible.

The CDRA is still querying the construction of the path. Cllr Hitchcock advised that he had spoken to the arboriculturist who carried out the survey who reiterates that vehicular access should not be permitted from Bower Place, as this could damage tree roots even prior to the footpath works taking place.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Football Foundation Grant

Cllr Phillips reported that the Copthorne Sports Association had been awarded a grant of £33,500 from the Football Foundation, to be spent over 6 years on improving the playing surfaces.

133 Copthorne Recreation Ground

A plan of the proposals has been included in the meeting pack for reference.

Michael Carter from Sport & Play Consulting met with Cllr Dorey, the Youth Support Worker and the Clerk to discuss plans for the Recreation Ground

It was agreed to remove a replacement skate park from the original proposals, as this structure alone would cost around £200,000. The area it was to be sited is to be left open, so a ramp could be put in at a later stage.

Sport & Play Consulting has drawn up two tenders, one for the MUGA and one for the play area, to be released at the end of April, advertised on the Contract Finder website. There is no requirement for the Council to formally agree the publication of these tenders, as Sport & Play Consulting was appointed to manage procurement.

Once quotes and detailed proposals have been received, and a preferred supplier identified, public consultation will take place during July/August. It is at this point that, for example, the play equipment can be modified if required.

The Clerk has submitted a request for pre-application advice from MSDC, which has been acknowledged, with a response date of 1st May. This advice is FOC, as had been submitted by a Parish Council.

The planning application will be submitted in October/November, with permission received hopefully by the end of the year. It is envisaged works will commence on site March 2024.

Sport & Play Consulting will not manage the provision of the car park; this will be addressed after the pre-application advice is received.

It is hoped that the project will be funded via s106 monies and grant funding; the Comms Administrator is actively pursuing this.

Councillors NOTED this information.

134 Matters for Consideration submitted by the Infrastructure and Environment Working Parties

Raised Flower Bed in Copthorne

The Grounds Supervisor has designed a raised flower bed at the junction of A264 and Brookhill Rd. This consists of 16 hard wood railway sleepers forming a square bed, lower at the roundabout end, plus soil. Construction will be carried out by the grounds team.

The cost of materials and soil will be £1000 ex VAT.

This expenditure was AGREED by all present. The Clerk was asked to ensure that signage included to advise that Worth PC had provided this feature.

The Clerk will need to apply for a licence from WSCC.

135 Consideration of items for discussion by the Environment & Infrastructure Working Parties

As Leader of the Crawley Down EIWP, Cllr Scott advised that plans for the Coronation event at the Have on Sunday, 7th May were progressing well. He asked if any Councillors would be available in the morning to assist in the set up.

Cllr Stewart advised that Copthorne Councillors would be involved in the Copthorne Coronation event on the Green on the same date.

136 Date of the next meeting

The Governance Working Party is proposing a change to the meeting schedule, to be discussed at the Full Council Meeting on 24th April, so the date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____