

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on March 4th 2024 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Phillips (Chairman) Cllr Dorey (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Bingle Cllr Casella
Cllr Hodsdon Cllr King
Cllr Kipps Cllr Stewart
Cllr Wilson
Mrs J. Nagy (Clerk) No members of the public

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, it was agreed that Cllr Dorey would act as Vice Chair as per SO 3 q), with Cllr Phillips in the Chair.

113 Public Question Time

No member of the public was present at the meeting.

114 Apologies

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllrs Pointer, Scott and Williams

115 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations at this point of the meeting.

116 Minutes

It was AGREED by all present that the Minutes of the General Purposes & Finance Committee meeting held on 5th February 2024 were a true and correct record.

117 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman had no announcements.

118 Correspondence List

The Correspondence List was NOTED.

119 Accounts and Financial Matters

Financial information is included in the meeting pack, with reconciled figures to end of February 2024.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Non-domestic rates

The Clerk referred to her report in relation to the current rates bill for 2023/2024 of £600, and anticipated rates bill for 2024/2025 of around £1200, which is unbudgeted expense.

Councillors NOTED that they had not been previously advised of requirement to commence paying rates, and NOTED the predicted unbudgeted expenditure.

Fun fair on Crawley Down Green

The Amenities and Assets Committee gave permission for a local company to hold a children's fun fair on the Green between 19th and 25th March, with the fair itself to be open 21st to 24th March, from 12 noon to 7pm. Children will pay a flat rate of £15 for a 3½ hour session.

The company agreed to pay a fee to use the land; this Committee needs to decide what to

charge.

It was AGREED by all a fee of £500 would be charged plus a damages deposit for the grass at £250; the fee will be added to the Crawley Down Working Party budget, for use within the village.

Provision of Tablet and Digital Registration Package for Youth Club

The Clerk referred report from the Assistant Clerk.

It was AGREED by all present to purchase a Lenovo M10 tablet, plus case, at a cost of £158.59 + VAT, and the IPAL software package at £1500 + VAT for a three year contract.

Grants

It was noted that there is currently £360 in the grant budget, not taking into account the £1000 awarded to the Haven Centre not yet drawn down. The Haven has agreed that if the grant is not claimed before the end of the financial year, it will reapply in 2024/2025.

Grant application from Air Ambulance for £350

The application is for £350 to go into general funds.

It was noted that there was no representative from the Air Ambulance at the meeting, which is contrary to the Grants Policy.

After discussion, it was AGREED to defer consideration of the grant to the next meeting, which will be into the next financial year. The Clerk will invite a representative.

120 Projects

It was agreed by the Co-Ordination Group that reporting progress on projects should be an agenda item for the Finance & General Purposes Committee and not Full Council as previously.

The Group is still working on a project management plan, and the definition of a "project" is yet to be defined, and whether the term "initiative" would be more appropriate.

However, CCTV, Bowers Place, Copthorne Recreation Ground and Crawley Down Play area are the main capital projects that the Office is currently working on.

CCTV

The delay has been caused by the requirement from WSCC to have a licence to connect to its street lights. Some progress has been made, as it seems that WSCC thought that WPC wanted to put a CCTV camera on the lighting columns, when in fact only power is needed. That is a simpler process, but quotes are needed from UK Power Networks to connect from the CCTV post to the lighting column. These are currently being sought.

Councillors NOTED this information.

The Clerk was asked to check where the police will be monitoring the cameras, as a recent article had suggested that this is to revert back to local police stations.

Bowers Place

The report from the Assistant Clerk (Projects) was noted.

Once revised plans are drawn up, planning permission can be sought again, followed by a new tender.

It is hoped that site works could commence as early as May 2024, with all works completed by the of June 2024.

It was noted that £50K public works loan must be drawn down before October.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Migration to Cloud Based Storage

File transfer is to commence on Tuesday, 19th March; it is likely that the office will be "off-line" for part of the day.

The server will run in parallel to cloud storage to at least the end of March, as we need to ensure that Sage Payroll end of year is completed. From 1st April, payroll will be outsourced.

Transfer of the Rialtas accounts package has been actioned.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Copthorne Recreation Ground

The final reports requested by MSDC Planning are imminent; hopefully planning permission will follow thereafter.

£164,300 has been secured for the MUGA via s106 monies. The bid for £50,000 via the Suez fund, applied for by our grants' facilitator was not successful, reasons were not given.

The Clerk is yet to hear on the Community Initiative Funding for the play area.

Councillors NOTED this information.

A short discussion took place on s106 monies; it was agreed to have this as an agenda item on future Finance & General Purposes Committee agendas.

Crawley Down Play Area

As agreed at the last meeting, Michael Carter has been appointed to assist in the design and tendering process for the replacement play area.

The Playground design competition was very successful with 82 valid entries received. The judging panel of Cllr Cruickshank, Frances Lancaster and Drew took two hours to consider them all and to agree the first, second and third places. The prizes of £30 voucher for first, £20 for second and £10 for third places will be presented at a Crawley Down Youth Club session on Monday, 11th March by Vice Chairman Cllr Scott (Chairman Cllr Dorey being unavailable)

A display of some of the entries is being put up at the Haven Centre on 8th March.

Information from all the entries will be considered when preparing the specification for the tender.

Councillors NOTED this information.

121 Council Premises and Land

Use of Burleigh Way car park for CDRA Easter Egg Hunt on 29th March 2024

Whilst it was agreed that permission to use Council land was now the responsibility of the Amenities & Assets Committee, the CDRA emailed in January for permission to use the car park, but this was not received for some reason.

The CDRA wishes to close off the Burleigh Way car park as it did last year, which it will manage.

It was AGREED by all present to give permission for the event to go ahead on Council Land; the Clerk will ensure that all insurance, risk assessments etc are in place.

122 Matters for Consideration submitted by the Village Working Parties

There were none.

123 Consideration of items for discussion by the Village Working Parties

There were no items submitted.

124 Date of the next meeting

Monday, 8th April 2024

Meeting closed at 8.01pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____