

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on April 8th 2024 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Scott (Chairman) Cllr Phillips (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Bingle Cllr Casella
Cllr Hodsdon Cllr King
Cllr Kipps Cllr Stewart
Cllr Wilson Cllr Williams
Mrs J. Nagy (Clerk) 2 members of the public

125 Public Question Time

The Chairman welcomed the two representatives from organisations applying for grants.

He invited the representative from St John's Church to address the Committee.

Rev Alex Wheeler advised that a Bereavement Group had been run by the Church monthly in the South Room for some time. The Church is putting on a different group, which will run a six- or seven-week course, supported by videos etc. She will be running this course as a trained counsellor. The course is open to all faiths, in both villages. It is felt that the South Room is a preferred venue, as is a separate environment from the Church building itself. The grant request is to cover the cost of room hire for six sessions, as the seventh session is Christian orientated, so attendance is optional. Local medical centres are signposting people towards the course, as the benefit of meeting with others in the same situation has been proven.

The Chairman thanked Rev Wheeler for her presentation.

He invited the representative from the Air Ambulance to address the Committee.

The Air Ambulance started in Kent in 1989 and covers Sussex and Surrey too. The helicopter can reach anywhere in this area within 23 to 30 minutes. The running costs are £16.8 million, with 88% coming from donations. 10% of costs come from the NHS, who provides doctors and paramedics to staff the helicopters; the remaining 2% comes from investment income.

The Air Ambulance does not replace the ambulance service, but works in conjunction with it. It operates three helicopters; indeed, it has just acquired a new one. It is hoping to raise £1 million by the end of May to fund the outright purchase, rather than leasing it as is the case with the others. This funding opportunity has been open since April 1st, and already has raised £180,000. Donors can get their name on the helicopter.

The Chairman thanked him for his presentation.

126 Apologies

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllr Pointer

127 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Scott declared a personal interest in the St John's grant application, as he is the Treasurer for the Church. Cllr Hodsdon also declared a personal interest in the St John's grant application, as his wife is a Churchwarden.

128 Minutes

It was AGREED by all present that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4th March were a true and correct record.

129 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman said that he was not prepared to put the financial information forward for discussion as this was not accurate.

130 Correspondence List

The Correspondence List was NOTED.

131 Accounts and Financial Matters

Financial information

The Clerk asked if any other Councillor had queries on the financial information as submitted in the meeting pack.

The Chairman advised the Clerk that as Chair of the meeting, as previously advised, he refused to allow any discussion on the financial information. He did not give details of his areas of concern.

Grants

Grant application from St John's Church for £473.20

Cllrs Hodsdon and Scott both remained in the room but took no part in discussions.

Cllr Phillips took the Chair for this section of the meeting.

This application is for £473.20 for the Council to pay for hall hire of the South Room to support the Bereavement Group.

Cllr Phillips, as Chairman, proposed the suspension of Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak; agreed by all present.

Cllr King asked what day the course was to take place; this is yet to be arranged. Cllr Williams suggested that the Church advertises in both village newsletters; this was the intention.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

It was proposed by Cllr Dorey, seconded by Cllr Wilson that the St John's Church Bereavement Group be award a grant of £475.00 (rounded up for ease of accounting) for hall hire costs.

Cllr Scott resumed the Chair.

Grant application from Air Ambulance for £350

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

The Chairman proposed the suspension of Standing Orders to allow members of the public to speak; agreed by all present.

Cllr Phillips asked if the grant was for general funds, or the new helicopter. The representative confirmed it was for general funds; the helicopter was a different issue.

The Chairman suggested that if the Air Ambulance were thinking of applying every year, it could ask for an annual donation. He said that they may be limitations on what they can request, but he check back.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

It was proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Hodsdon and agreed by all present that

the Air Ambulance would be awarded a grant of £350.

Cllr Williams wished her thanks to Air Ambulance for all their service to the community to be Minuted; this was endorsed by all present.

Agreement of future maintenance contract for CCTV equipment

This matter was deferred, as the Chairman thought that a sum of £6000 for maintenance was already included in the budget.

Conversion of SID camera to solar power

The current batteries are not retaining their charge, so it was suggested that the camera be converted to solar power, the alternative being to purchase a new camera. The CD Working Party has advised the preferred option would be to convert the camera, at a cost of £746.65 + VAT.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodsdon, seconded by Cllr Kipps that the SID would be converted to solar power, at a cost of £746.65 +VAT.

Purchase of branded promotional materials for village events

As part of its ongoing engagement strategy, the Comms Officer has designed a "What we do" diagram (included in this meeting pack). There is already table of different council roles, also included.

It has been suggested that these be reproduced on promotional materials to be handed out at community events such as the Carnival and Fayre.

Councillors considered the options for mouse mats and mugs and would prefer pens and key rings instead. Costs are to be obtained, and passed first to the two Working Parties for consideration.

The banner options were also considered. The Clerk suggests that once a logo is agreed for the Youth Club, a flag-type banner could be considered, to highlight the presence of the youth bus when at outside events for example.

Costs for flag banners are to be sought, and again passed to the two Working Parties for consideration.

132 Section 106 Monies

It was requested that this item be on future agendas. However, the Clerk has not had the opportunity to work on an update.

133 Projects

CCTV

The Clerk's update was NOTED, however, there was concern over how long this project is taking.

The Chairman said that he felt that the project needs reviewing. The Clerk advised that the Projects Assistant Clerk does have a project management plan in place for all projects.

It was agreed that Cllr Hodsdon would carry out a review of the CCTV project and will report back to Council within one month.

Bowers Place

The Clerk's update was NOTED.

Cllr Williams asked when the revised planning application was to be lodged. The Clerk did

not have the exact information to hand, but thought this was imminent.

Migration to Cloud Based Storage

All files and documents have now been transferred and the office is now working with Sharepoint.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Copthorne Recreation Ground

The Clerk's report was NOTED.

The Clerk reported that as previously advised, the bid for funding from the Community Ownership Fund had failed. The Copthorne Working Party is considering whether or not to re-apply.

Crawley Down Play Area

The Clerk's report was NOTED.

Michael Carter, the playground consultant, will be on site on 10th April, together with Cllr Williams and two representatives from the CDRA.

134 Council Premises and Land

Nothing to report

135 Matters for Consideration submitted by the Village Working Parties

Crawley Down Working Party

It was noted that notices and posters are still disappearing from the community boards at the shops.

The Working Party is considering the review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Copthorne Working Party

Copthorne Working Party has asked the Clerk to invite the local police inspector to a future council meeting.

136 Consideration of items for discussion by the Village Working Parties

There were none.

137 Personnel

The Clerk has advised that Stacey Westbrook has resigned from her position as Comms & IT Administrator, with her last day being 19th April. The vacancy has been circulated on social media, notice boards and the website.

Councillors NOTED this information.

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 relates to named staff members.

The Clerk's report and actions therein were NOTED.

The meeting returned to open session.

138 Date of the next meeting

Monday, 13th May 2024

Meeting closed at _____ *pm.*

Chairman: _____

Date: _____