

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on May 13th 2024 commencing at 7.30pm

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

139 Public Question Time

Cllr Lord was present as a member of the public.

The Chair of the CDRA was present to support its grant application. He confirmed that the event was very successful last year. Many attendees reported that the fencing made them feel safe, as their children could not run into the road. There was around £1500/£2000 surplus.

140 Apologies

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllrs Dorey, Pointer, Stewart and Williams.

141 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at this point of the meeting.

142 Minutes

It was AGREED by all present that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 8th April 2024 were a true and correct record.

143 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman reported that based on the end of year figures, the budget forecast had been mostly accurate.

144 Correspondence List

The Correspondence List was NOTED.

145 Accounts and Financial Matters

Financial information

Financial information was included in the meeting pack, with reconciled figures to date. The Clerk also circulated end of year figures for 2023/2024.

It was proposed by Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Philips and RESOLVED by all present that the financial information was a true representation of the current financial situation.

Unity Bank

It was noted that this account is now open. The Clerk/RFO asked how much should be transferred; it was RESOLVED by all present to top up the balance to £85,000.

Bank Reconciliations

It was NOTED that the bank reconciliations have been signed; this has been done by Cllr Casella.

Receipt of Precept

It was NOTED that £210,000 was received on 30th April 2024, this being 50% of the precept.

Groundworks for Notice Board installation in Crawley Down

Quotes have been sought for groundworks in preparation for the installation of new notice boards in Crawley Down village. Several contractors made site visits, but to date only one quote has been received.

The works required are as follows:

- To remove and dispose of existing notice boards
- To reduce the tree stump to the lowest level possible
- Install new boards with posts concreted into the ground at a max depth of 600mm

	Cost ex VAT
Contractor A	£2255.00 for 3 days work
Contractor A	£2800.00 for 4 days work

It was NOTED that the Clerk/RFO has strived to obtain more quotes for the work.

It was RESOLVED by all present to appoint Halsey Construction to carry out the ground works in preparation for the installation of the new notice boards at a cost of up to £2,800.

Supply of Notice Boards

Quotes have been sought for the supply of new notice boards in Crawley Down Village. The expenditure is over the limit that this Committee can authorise.

The requirements are as follows:

- To supply 6 x A1 boards, landscape, each to take 8 x A4 posters
- Of these, two to have lockable glazed doors, four to be open boards
- To supply mounting posts

	Type of Finish	Cost ex VAT
Company 1	Oiled Oak	£6920.00
Company 2	Stained Oak	£7000.00
Company 3	Stained Oak	£7323.00

The Crawley Down Working Party's preferred supplier is Company 1.

It was RESOLVED by all present to recommend to Full Council that Company 1 be contracted to supply new notice boards for Crawley Down shops.

Grant application from CDRA for £750

This application is for £750 to go towards Gig on the Green, to take place in June 2024; please see separate grant information pack.

It was proposed by Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Wilson and AGREED by all present that a grant of £750 should be given to the CDRA to support the Gig on the Green.

Membership of CAGNE

Communities Against Gatwick Noise and Emissions (CAGNE) has submitted an invoice for £10 as a subscription charge for membership of the CAGNE Aviation Town and Parish Council Forum.

WSALC advice about not subscribing to a lobby group was NOTED, however it was further NOTED Forum is a separate entity to the main CAGNE body.

It was RESOLVED to pay the invoice, and notes that the Council is a member of the Forum in order to obtain information only.

146 Internal Auditors' Report

The Clerk advised that this item will have to be deferred as the Report has not been received.

As requested, the Clerk asked Mulberry LAS to confirm its independence given that Andy Beams from Mulberry LAS worked as a Locum RFO for the Council earlier in the year. The advice as given in the Clerk's report was noted, and the independence of Mulberry LAC was agreed.

147 Section 106 Monies

The Clerk referred to her report, which was noted.

The Clerk was asked to work with Cllr Casella to try to encourage MSDC to consider varying the St Modwen's agreement to perhaps fund some elements of the Copthorne Recreation Ground Development project.

Cllr Phillips advised that other Councils ask for specific s106 allocations to be included in agreements when they submit comments on planning applications; Worth PC should do the same.

The Clerk said that work was ongoing on the Council's Vision document, and aspirations from that document could be fed into the s106 process.

148 Projects

CCTV

Cllr Hodsdon referred to his report and invited questions.

Cllr Bingle was of the opinion that the report did not identify what had gone wrong to delay the project. It should be abandoned, in his opinion.

Cllr Hodsdon said that there were several factors which had caused the delay – Covid and the CGR had taken staff time, and a lack of project management skills within the office had not helped. This had been addressed with the appointment of a Project Clerk, who was working on a tracker to ensure that project targets were met.

The Chairman noted that the scope of the project had changed over time. Cllr Hodsdon's report confirmed that the police state that CCTV is a deterrent to crime, and the project should be delivered.

Cllr Casella agreed with Cllr Scott; residents were expecting CCTV to be installed. Cllr Hodsdon pointed out that an alternative crime deterrent would be the employment of Neighbourhood Wardens, which would cost in the region of £90,000 per year.

Cllr Hodsdon referred to the recommendation in his report, and proposed that the Council progresses the installation of two of the four planned cameras, one in Burleigh Way in Crawley Down, and one on Copthorne Green as these were the easier options with regard to power supply. This installation should be given a target date of September 2024. Once installed, the Council would review the effectiveness of the cameras and consider additional provision. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Casella and RESOLVED by all present, with the exception of Cllr Bingle, who abstained.

Bowers Place

Currently awaiting the arboriculturist's report in order to apply for planning permission.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Migration to Cloud Based Storage

Final issues have been resolved, such as updating laptops; the Clerk considers this project now completed.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Copthorne Recreation Ground

Planning permission is being awaited.

The Council's solicitor has responded that there is nothing in the deeds for the land that does not allow a car park.

WSCC Highways has raised no objections to the proposals.

Councillors NOTED this information.

Crawley Down Play Area

The Clerk has contacted Squires Planning who can assist with the planning application, but not with project management. Planning permission is required for change of use of land, if it is decided to enlarge the play area to the south.

Councillors NOTED this information.

149 Council Premises and Land

Valuation of the Allotment Building

The Clerk has obtained a quote from Bray Estates to value the allotment building, which the Council has now taken back from the Allotment Association.

The allotment building is not on the Council's asset register, nor is it included in the insurance schedule, which should be rectified regardless of occupation.

The cost for a valuation is £1250 + VAT, a reduction from the usual fee of £1650 due to the ongoing business relationship.

It was RESOLVED not to have the building professionally value, but to list it on the asset register and with the insurance company with a nominal value.

150 Matters for Consideration submitted by the Village Working Parties

Crawley Down Working Party

Crawley Down are discussing Vision aspirations, which may include the Royal Oak.

Copthorne Working Party

Nothing additional to report.

151 Consideration of items for discussion by the Village Working Parties

There were none

152 Date of the next meeting

Monday, 3rd June 2024

The Clerk was asked to invite the Leader of MSDC to a future Council meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____