

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 1st December 2025 commencing at 8.20pm

Present:	Cllr Phillips (Chair) Cllr Casella Cllr Kipps Cllr Wilson	Cllr Scott (Vice Chair) Cllr Hodsdon Cllr Williams
	Mrs L Bannister (Chief Officer)	Cllr Bingle and Cllr Gibson as non-committee members

075 Public Question Time

No questions were raised at this point in the meeting.

076 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Coote, Dorey, King, Lord and Pointer.

077 Declarations of Interest

None.

078 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 3rd November 2025. These were duly signed by Cllr Phillips.

079 Chairman's Announcements

None.

080 Correspondence List

It was noted that the support and maintenance package for Rialtas has increased by £24 per year.

081 Accounts and Financial Matters

Financial information

Financial information was included in the meeting pack. It was RESOLVED that the financial information was a true representation of the current financial situation.

Cllr Phillips noted that the electricity usage for the street lights appears low. The Chief Officer explained that this is because of a mix up with the MPANs which were accidentally de-energised (although there is still power to the street lights).

Bank Reconciliations

It was NOTED that the bank reconciliations to 30th November have been completed and signed by Cllr Casella.

Grant

A grant of £550 was received from Crawley Down Ladies Choir. No members were available to attend, and so this decision was deferred until the next meeting that the applicant is able attend. The following questions were raised, and these will be communicated to the applicant:

- A grant of £4,000 was agreed from MSDC this year. This hasn't been accounted for so could it be explained the purpose of the grant and the plans to draw it down/spend it.
- There is a low membership fee in comparison to other choirs – is there a plan to increase this to cover costs?
- Sheet music is not normally used nowadays - is the grant to cover the rights to the music or for the physical sheets?

082 Section 106

It was RESOLVED to note the reports.

Cllr Hodsdon proposed that the Council investigate changing the use of the S106 funding of £27,398 allocated for additional allotments in local community infrastructure for Copthorne. This will not be needed as there are new allotments in Heathy Wood and this fund could be put to better use for the Copthorne Recreation Ground Rejuvenation Project. It was AGREED that the Chief Officer would investigate this.

083 Projects

Bowers Place Parking

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Note the tender has been published.
- b. Approve the scoring panel for the tender as:
Paul Budgen (Projects Manager)
Leanne Bannister (Chief Officer)
Kerry Scott (Councillor)
Thérèse Wilson (Councillor)
- c. Confirm the evaluation criteria for the Bowers Place tender.
- d. Appoint Cllr Wilson to act as Lead Councillor in Cllr Scott's absence.
- e. Note the updated timeline.

CCTV

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Note the Phase 1 update and timeline.
- b. Agree to split the CCTV Project into two separate projects for Phase 2.
- c. Split the earmarked reserve so that there is a separate reserve for each village.

Copthorne Recreation Ground

The update was noted.

It was RESOLVED to approve the use of the JCT Minors Works Contract 2024 for this project and for the Bowers Place project. It was noted that the Council will need accidental insurance coverage as per the terms of this contract.

Operation Watershed

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Note the update.
- b. Confirm the Chief Officer can instruct Squires to submit a planning application if necessary, with any costs to be paid from the Crawley Down Working Party budget.
- c. Add this to the projects tracker. The lead councillor will be Cllr Williams.

084 Budget

It was RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council to approve the budget and make a Precept request of £520,000.

This will result in an annual Band D payment of £96.01, which is an increase of £13.43 per year. This may change slightly when the tax base is confirmed. Members requested that some positive communications are published before ratepayers receive their Council Tax bills. This should ensure that residents are aware of the significant improvements in local facilities that the Council has delivered and is progressing, including:

- Bowers Place Parking Solution
- Copthorne Recreation Ground Rejuvenation
- CCTV in both villages
- A youth programme for school children in school years 4 to 9
- Crawley Down Play Area improvements
- Upgraded street lighting with a lower energy footprint

The budget allows for an increase of general reserves over the next three years to bring it up to the level specified in the Council's Reserves Policy. The risks of having a low general reserve were discussed, however it was accepted that the risk was low for the coming financial year because there are enough funds built into the budget and held in earmarked reserves to enable

movement of funds in an emergency situation.

085 Matters for Consideration submitted by the Village Working Parties

The Crawley Down Working Party were requested to discuss the planning application for Operation Watershed.

086 Consideration of items for discussion by the Village Working Parties

No items were submitted.

087 Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday 12th January at the Parish Hub, Copthorne.

Meeting closed at 9.13 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____