

# **WORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Annual Council Meeting**

**20<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

**Issued: 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

## **Notice of Meeting**

You are hereby summoned to the **Annual Meeting** of Worth Parish Council to be held on **Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.30pm** in the South Room of the Parish Hub, Borers Arms Rd, Copthorne, RH10 3ZQ when the following business will be considered and transacted.

Mrs. J. Nagy  
**CLERK TO THE COUNCIL**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Election of Chairman & Acceptance of Office** – to elect a Chairman for 2024/2025 and to receive their acceptance of office.
- 2. Election of Vice Chairman & Acceptance of Office** – to elect a Vice Chairman for 2024/2025 and to receive their acceptance of office.
- 3. Public Question Time – 15 minutes** – to receive and act upon if considered necessary, comments made by members of the public.

Members of the public are welcome to ask questions of the Council on matters that arise under its remit. The question should not be a statement and it would be appreciated to be kept short, to maximise the time for other questions. The Chairman will call the question from those who are indicating that they wish to speak.

- 4. Apologies** – to receive and approve apologies for absence.
- 5. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests** – to receive any declarations of interest from Councillors.
- 6. Minutes** – to discuss, amend if necessary and thereafter approve the Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024
- 7. Chairman's Announcements** – to receive any announcements by the Chairman of the Council.
- 8. Correspondence & Action Lists** – to note correspondence received and actions since the last meeting.
- 9. Committees** – to report and if necessary, approve the Minutes including recommendations as a true and correct record of the following Committee Meetings:
  - **Planning & Highways Committee: 4<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April**  
**Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024**
  - **Finance & General Purposes Committee: 4<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April**  
**Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024**

10. **Working Parties** – to receive and note the Notes from the following Working Parties
  - Copthorne Village Working Party, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024
  - Crawley Down Village Working Party, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024
  - Co-Ordination Group, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024, to be discussed under Item 25
11. **Committee Structure** – to appoint Standing Committees for 2024/2025
  - Finance & General Purposes Committee (12 members)
  - Planning & Highways Committee (12 members)
  - Amenities & Assets Committee (8 members, four from each ward)
  - Human Resources Committee (6 members)
  - Neighbourhood Plan Committee (8 members, four from each ward)
12. **Appointment of Committee Chairman** – to appoint Chairmen to all the above Committees; Vice Chairmen to appointed at the first meeting of those Committees
13. **Working Parties**– to consider the continuance of all Working Parties and to agree membership:
  - Copthorne Working Party (*up to 10 members, including members of the public*)
  - Crawley Down Working Party (*up to 10 members, including members of the public*)
  - Co-ordination Group (*Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees*)
14. **Appointment to Outside Bodies** – to appoint Council representatives to outside bodies for 2024/2025
15. **Civility & Respect** – to note that the Council has signed up to the Civility & Respect Pledge
16. **General Power of Competence** – to affirm that the Council complies with Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, and the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, and therefore continues to have the General Power of Competence.
17. **Authorised banking signatories** – to review current councillor signatories authorised to deal with the Council's banks, and amend if necessary.
18. **Councillor Allowances** – to confirm the Members Allowance Policy for the 2024/2025 financial year.
19. **Meeting Schedule** to agree meeting dates and venues up to March 2025.
20. **Council Policies** – to consider the following Policies:
  - Risk Management Plan 2024/2025; to confirm this document
  - To note that Standing Orders were reviewed in November 2023
  - To note that Financial Regulations were reviewed in November 2023; an updated version has been issued by NALC, to be considered at the next meeting.
21. **Confirmation of Internal Auditor** – to confirm Mulberry & Co as Internal Auditor for 2024/2025 financial year.
22. **Internal Auditors Report** – to receive and note the Internal Auditor's report and to consider and agree any recommendations made therein.
23. **Annual Governance & Accountability Return and Public Inspection of 2023/2024 Accounts** – to agree the following:
  - a) Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024 – to agree Section One of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return
  - b) That the Chairman signs the Annual Governance Statement 2023/2024

- c) Accounting Statements 2023/2024 – to agree Section Two of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return
- d) That the Chairman and the RFO signs the Annual Accounting Statements 2023/2024
- e) To note the additional information to be sent to the External Auditor in support of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2023/2024 by the submission date of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024
- f) To agree and adopt the public inspection period for the 2023/2024 Annual Governance & Accountability Return, this being 3<sup>rd</sup> June to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024

**24. Accounts** - to consider and approve other financially related matters if necessary, including

- To receive recommendation from F&GP Committee in relation to provision of notice boards in Crawley Down

**25. Personnel\*** - to receive a report from the Co-Ordination Group in relation to ongoing staffing, and to agree necessary action

**26.**

**27. Date of the next meeting** – July 15<sup>th</sup> 2024, at the Glebe Centre in Crawley Down

**\*The press and public may be excluded from this item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 due to the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed.**

**ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HAVE THE RIGHT TO ATTEND, AND ARE WELCOME AT MEETINGS**

**Clerk's Report**  
**Meeting of the Annual Council Meeting to be held 7.30pm on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

To be considered in conjunction with the agenda for this meeting.

**1. Election of Chairman**

This is the first business of the meeting, prior to Public Question Time.

Cllr Dorey as Chairman 2023/24 will Chair the meeting up until such time as the Chairman 2024/25 is elected.

There is nothing in Standing Orders to state how long a Chairman can be in office, and nothing as to which Ward the incoming Chairman should represent.

The Clerk plays no part in the election of the Chairman; this is decided by members.

Councillors will be invited by the current Chairman to nominate/second a candidate; a candidate cannot nominate or second themselves although they can vote for themselves. In the case of a tie in the voting, the current Chair has the casting vote.

Individual councillors should be aware that they cannot nominate and/or second more than one candidate; Councillors must be present at the meeting to nominate or second a candidate and to vote. Nominated candidates must be present at the meeting.

Voting will take place via show of hands.

The successful candidate will be required to sign acceptance of the office of Chairman immediately; this is a legal requirement. The Clerk will provide hard copy at the meeting.

**2. Election of Vice Chairman**

The advice of the Clerk is as for Election of Chairman, except that the newly elected Chairman has the casting vote in the event of a tie. Also, as it is not a legal requirement to have a Vice Chair, nominated candidates do not have to be present at the meeting.

The Clerk will provide hard copy of the acceptance of office at the meeting for the successful candidate.

**3 Public Question Time**

To invite MOPs present to address the Council.

**4 Apologies**

To receive and note apologies.

**5 Declarations of Interest**

Members are advised to consider the agenda for the meeting and determine in advance if they may have a Personal, Prejudicial or a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any of the agenda items. If a Member decides they do have a declarable interest, they are reminded that the interest and the nature of the interest must be declared at the commencement of the consideration of the agenda item; or when the interest becomes apparent to them. Details of interest will be Minuted.

If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, Members are reminded that they must take no part in the discussions of the item at all; or participate in any voting; and must withdraw from the meeting, unless they have received a dispensation.

## **6 Minutes**

To approve the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

## **7 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman may choose to make an announcement.

## **8 Correspondence and Action Lists**

To note these lists

## **9 Committees**

To receive and note the Minutes of

- Planning & Highways Committee: 4<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April  
Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024
- Finance & General Purposes Committee: 4<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April  
Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024

## **10 Working Parties**

To receive and note the Notes of

- Copthorne Village Working Party, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024
- Crawley Down Village Working Party, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024
- Co-Ordination Group, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024, to be discussed under Item 25; circulated separately to this meeting pack.

## **11 Committee Structure**

Finance & General Purposes Committee – 12 members

This Committee deals with all aspects of finance, grants, land and property management and community safety.

Planning & Highways Committee – 12 members

This Committee deals with consideration of planning applications, monitoring of the District Plan, Neighbourhood Planning, Highways matters and Minerals & Waste matters.

Amenities & Assets Committee - 8 members, four from each ward

This Committee deals with land and property management, Council asset management and influencing the retention of community assets outside the Council's ownership.

Human Resources Committee – 6 members

This Committee deals with staffing matters. It reports to Council.

Neighbourhood Plan Committee – 8 members, four from each ward

This Committee oversees the future development of the Neighbourhood Plan Areas in accordance with the overall vision of Worth Parish Council. It reports to the Planning & Highways Committee

## **12 Appointment of Committee Chairman**

Now that membership of all committees has been agreed at Agenda Item 11, members of those committees can vote for a chairman, via a show of hands.

Signing Acceptance of office declarations for Committee Chairmen are NOT a legal requirement so it is suggested these are done at the first meeting of the relevant Committee.

Vice Chairman are elected at the first meeting of that Committee.

## **13 Working Parties**

Working Parties are groups which can meet and discuss matters outside Standing Orders, i.e., outside the restrictions of Council meetings.

They have no power to spend, or to take any action; they report to Council or to a Committee, which can authorise such action or expenditure.

Working Parties have Leaders not Chairmen.

Copthorne Village Working Party – up to 10 members, including members of the public.

This Group provides advice, recommendations, and proposals to the Council in relation to projects and initiatives within the village. It reports to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Crawley Down Village Working Party – up to 10 members, including members of the public.

This Group provides advice, recommendations, and proposals to the Council in relation to projects and initiatives within the village. It reports to the Finance & General Purposes Committee

Co-Ordination Group – Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees

This Group provides advice, recommendations, and proposals to the Council in relation to strategic activities. It reports to the Council.

## **14 Appointment to Outside Bodies**

Councillor are asked to consider representation on various outside bodies, as follows

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Representative(s)</b>
CAGNE	One councillor
Central Sussex Rotary	One councillor
Copthorne Sports & Community Association	Usually a Copthorne councillor
Copthorne Village Hall Management Committee	Usually a Copthorne councillor
Copthorne Village Association	Usually a Copthorne councillor
Copthorne Community Group	New organisation
Crawley Down Village Hall Committee	Usually a Crawley Down councillor

Crawley Down Surgery PPG	Usually a Crawley Down councillor
Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign	One councillor
Gatwick Liaison Group	One councillor
Mid Sussex District Association of Local Councils*	Two councillors
Shelley Education Foundation	Two councillors
St Modwen Liaison Group	Two councillors and the Clerk
Sussex Police Focus Group	The Chair and the Clerk
West Sussex ALC Ltd	Usually Chair and Vice Chair

- \* Representatives to MSALC need to be aware that they could be elected to the WSALC Board and become Directors

The Council may add or delete from this list if it considers this to be appropriate.

Once agreed, the Clerk will advise those bodies accordingly.

## **15 Civility & Respect**

Although not a legal requirement, it is best practice to note that Worth Parish Council has signed the SLCC/NALC Civility & Respect Pledge.

## **16 General Power of Competence**

It is a requirement to affirm GPC after every election as in order to comply with Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council must have two thirds of its members elected, and have a qualified Clerk.

The Clerk is qualified, in that she holds the Certificate of Local Council Administration or CILCA.

The General Power of Competence allows for a Council to have the power that an individual might legally do in the UK.

Councillors are asked to formally note that Worth Parish Council continues to have the General Power of Competence.

## **17 Authorised Bank Signatories**

The Clerk and RFO are signatories on all accounts, in order to be able to access online banking; they are NOT cheque signatories, however.

For information, the current signatories are.

Barclays – Cllrs Coote, Dorey and Scott  
 Nat West – Cllrs Dorey, Lord and Scott  
 CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund – Cllrs Dorey, Lord and Scott  
 Unity Bank – Cllrs Dorey, Lord and Scott

## **18 Councillor Allowances**

The Council has budgeted an allowance of £500 per councillor per year.

Circulated with this pack is the Members Allowance Policy for information. It should be noted for future reference that only elected councillors can apply for the allowance; co-opted councillors are not eligible.



The Clerk/RFO will be circulating forms for councillors to complete indicating whether they want to receive the allowance or not in this 2024/2025 financial year. Please note that this is considered taxable income for HMRC purposes, and is processed via the Council's payroll, payable quarterly.

Councillors are asked to note this Policy, and to supply information to the RFO when requested.

## **19 Meeting Schedule**

Please see proposed schedule included in this meeting pack.

The Clerk has found it impossible to find venues in Crawley Down on Monday evenings. The Glebe Centre, the Haven Centre and the school have bookings. The Scout Hut can only be hired for educational purposes.

She has managed to book the Glebe Centre on 15<sup>th</sup> July due to a cancellation of the regular hirer. Councillors may wish to consider meeting on a different evening; the next meeting due to take place in Crawley Down would be Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup>.

Proposed dates of Co-Ordination Group meetings were included in the schedule, as requested at the last Group meeting.

Councillors are asked to agree the proposed schedule and to consider a change of day for the November meeting.

## **20 Council Policies**

### Standing Orders

Standing Orders were reviewed in November 2023; Councillors are asked to note this information.

### Financial Regulations

Financial Regulations were reviewed in November 2023. NALC has just issued an update, but these appear to contain some inaccuracies (typos and incorrect numbering references) which has caused some disquiet in the sector. The Clerk will review the revised document and will present to the next Full Council meeting for consideration.

### Risk Management Plan 2024/2025

A copy of the Risk Management Plan is included in this meeting pack.

Councillors are asked to formally note the Risk Management Plan.

**Grants Payable:** The s137 allowance for 2023/24 is £10.81 per elector. Due to the Council having the General Power of Competence, this power is not used, but should be noted in case qualification for GPC lapses.

Councillors are asked to note the current s137 allowance.

## **21 Confirmation of Internal Auditor**

The Council agreed a three-year agreement with Mulberry Local Authority Services (previously Mulberry & Co) in January 2024.

Councillors are asked to confirm Mulberry LAS as Internal Auditor for 2024/2025

## 22 Internal Auditor's Report

Mark Mulberry of Mulberry LAS carried out the internal audit on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. His report will be circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillors will be asked to formally note the report, and to consider these recommendations.

## 23 Annual Governance & Accountability Return and Public Inspection of 2023/2024 Accounts

The AGAR documents are included in this meeting pack.

It is a legal requirement that each section of the AGAR is considered and agreed separately.

## 24 Accounts

### Supply of Notice Boards

Quotes have been sought for the supply of new notice boards in Crawley Down Village; these were presented to F&GP for a recommendation.

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

\*It may be necessary to add £300 for "sleeves" for the posts.

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

The F&GP Committee recommends to Full Council that Company 1 is appointed to manufacture the new boards.

Councillors are asked to agree this recommendation.

## 25 Personnel

Please refer to the notes of the Co-Ordination Group meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May, circulated separately to this meeting pack.

Councillors are asked to agree the definition of "Lead Councillor" as discussed at this meeting.

**The meeting will go into Confidential Session at this point.**

The Chairman will propose action in relation to the personnel issues raised at the Group's meeting.

## 26 Date of the next meeting

Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at the Glebe Centre, Crawley Down.

## **Worth Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the South Room, the Parish Hub, Copthorne on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 commencing at 7.30pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Dorey (Chairman)	Cllr Scott (Vice Chairman)
	Cllr Casella	Cllr Coote
	Cllr Cruickshank	Cllr Dymond
	Cllr Gibson	Cllr Hodsdon
	Cllr Kipps	Cllr Phillips
	Cllr Stewart	Cllr Williams
	Cllr Wilson	
	Mrs J Nagy (Clerk)	4 members of the public

#### **200 Public Question Time**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

A resident of Crawley Down, and a member of the Crawley Down Health Action Group, wished to address the Council in relation to the failings of Crawley Down Health Centre. It was put into special measure for six months, which is now due for review. He asked for support to lobby MPs etc to find out what is to happen in the future.

Cllr Scott, as leader of the Crawley Down Working Party, said that the Working Party had been aware of the issue for several years, and has been liaising with the Practice Patient Group and the Integrated Care Board. The Council has previously called on Jeremy Quin MP and Mims Davies MP to intervene, but it has very limited powers to act.

Cllr Gibson, speaking as a County Councillor advised that WSCC will not intervene. He suggested writing to the Integrated Care Board. Cllr Williams suggested that the Clerk requests data from the time the Surgery went into special measures and the latest data, so see if any improvements had been made. This should be supplied by practice, not over Modality as a whole.

A second resident asked that the Council posts its intended action on social media.

The Council was thanked for its certificate of recognition to Neil Lewis for his work in keeping Copthorne village tidy.

All four members of the public left the meeting.

#### **201 Apologies**

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllrs Bingle, Lord, King and Pointer.

#### **202 Declarations of Interest**

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

#### **203 Minutes**

It was agreed by all present that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 were a true and correct record.

#### **204 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman advised that the Council had sent flowers to Cllr Pointer, who had expressed her thanks.

#### **205 Correspondence & Action List**

The correspondence and action lists were NOTED.

## **206 Committees**

The Minutes and actions therein of the following Committees as previously circulated were NOTED.

- Planning & Highways Committee, 8th January, 5th February 2024  
Date of next meeting, 8th April 2024
- Finance & General Purposes Committee, 8th January, 5th February 2024  
Date of next meeting, 8th April 2024
- Amenities & Assets Committee, 22nd January 2024  
Date of next meeting, 15th April 2024

## **207 Working Parties**

The notes and actions therein of the following Working Parties as circulated were NOTED.

- Copthorne Village Working Party, 24th January, 7th February, 21st February, 6th March 2024
- Crawley Down Village Working Party, 20th February 2024
- Co-Ordination Group, 29th January 2024

The Clerk was asked to write to MSDC about the dangerous chimney on the Royal Oak pub. The Crawley Down Working Party is to consider whether or not to re-apply for an ACV on the Royal Oak; the Save the Pub team is to be invited to the meeting at which this is discussed.

Cllr Gibson noted that an ACV had been refused on Crawley Down Village Hall. He suggested that the Council needs to review the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan.

## **208 County Councillors' Report**

Cllr Gibson's report as circulated was noted.

## **209 District Councillors' Report**

Cllr Gibson's report as circulated was noted.

Cllr Phillips advised that the application to demolish and replace St Francis' care home is to be discussed at MSDC on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

## **210 Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2022/2023**

The Clerk referred to her report.

Councillors formally NOTED and AGREED the amendment to Box 8, Section 2 of the AGAR, which should read £380,722, not £370,722.

## **211 Accounts & Financial Matters**

### Consideration of opening additional bank accounts

Please see separate report. The balances in current accounts are such that the Council needs to consider spreading financial risk.

It was AGREED by all present that the preferred option was the Nationwide 35-day saver account; the Clerk will review all the bank balances and come back with a suggestion of how much to transfer to this new account.

### Additional Topographical Survey at Copthorne Recreation Ground

Paul Budgen is preparing a revised master plan for the site, showing the removal of the row of car parking spaces next to the road.

He has identified some issues with measuring the splays required for the car park entrance, and as such has requested that the topographical survey is extended.

This will cost £995 +VAT. As per Financial Regulations, the Clerk has authorised expenditure together with Cllr Dorey as Chairman of the Council, this being under £1000.

Councillors NOTED this expenditure.

## **212 Council Land and Buildings**

### Funfair on Crawley Down Green

The funfair has changed its dates to 8th April to 15th April, rather than end of March due to weather forecast and concerns over damage to grass.

Councillors NOTED this information.

### Dog training on Crawley Down Green

The Clerk has written to the company running dog training classes on the Green to ask for insurance etc, and dates that the classes will be running with a view to charging for use.

Councillors NOTED this information.

### Removal of play equipment from Copthorne Bank

The Clerk is liaising with the contractor, the removal is imminent.

Councillors NOTED this information.

## **213 Youth Provision**

### Youth Bus

Based on children's designs from the art workshop held over half term, a possible logo has been drawn up for putting on the side of the Youth Bus, and for use in literature.

Cllrs Pointer and Stewart have been invited to review the design, prior to it being costed up for formal consideration.

Other councils have enquired about using the Youth Bus. The Clerk had consulted with the Council's insurance company, and it is possible to hire out the bus, if the hirer has suitable insurance of its own in place. This hire would be for the vehicle only, not with the Youth Worker accompanying it.

Councillors NOTED this information.

### Level 3 Youth Support Work Qualification

Drew is currently undertaking this qualification, which takes up 4 to 6 hours of his time per week.

### Better Lives

The Clerk has been asked to stand in for the Youth Worker (who is on annual leave) at a MSDC Better Lives presentation on 21<sup>st</sup> March. The event is about youth provision (or lack of it) in the District, and the Clerk has been asked to share WPC's experience in setting up the youth club after the demise of SCYP.

The Engagement report was NOTED.

## **214 Website**

The usage report was NOTED.

## **215 Anti-Social Behaviour**

It was noted that persons unknown are removing notices from the Crawley Down boards.

## **216 Sussex Police**

The latest crime figures for December 2023 and January 2024 were NOTED.

## **217 Representatives attending outside meetings.**

WSALC Chairmans' Forum, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 attended by Cllr Dorey.

He reported that there are still issues over the retention and recruitment of clerks, with many leaving over abuse problems. There are four councils in West Sussex operating with Locum Clerks. The Civility & Respect pledge was highlighted; Worth PC has already signed up to this. It was noted that as both County and District Councils are cutting back, Parish Council are being asked to take on more services.

The Clerk was asked to chase the progress of the WSALC Working Party formed to discuss better communication with MSDC.

NALC Seminar "How Councils can benefit from the Levelling Up agenda", 31st January, attended by Cllr Williams.

Cllr Williams report on this seminar has been circulated.

Practitioners Conference, 31<sup>st</sup> January to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024, attended by the Clerk.

Topics covered included AI, retention of volunteers and prevention of knife crime.

WSCC Active Travel Team, 29<sup>th</sup> February, on site walkabout by Cllr Dorey, with Ian Myhill, Principal Transport Improvements Officer.

The walkabout took around three hours. Ian was very proactive, and there were useful discussions about how particular areas can be improved, such as routes to and from local schools. There is around £300,000 in TAD monies available, and WSCC can match fund.

Cllr Dorey will pass Ian Myhill's details to Cllr Scott, so that he can arrange a similar visit in Crawley Down.

Copthorne Ladies Group Meeting, 7<sup>th</sup> March, attended by Cllrs Dorey and Hodsdon, as invited guests.

Cllr Dorey gave a presentation of what the Council does, and its vision for the future, which was very well received.

Councillors NOTED these reports.

## **218 Date of the next meeting**

Monday, 20th May 2024 in the South Room, Parish Hub, Copthorne; this will be the Annual Council Meeting.

The Annual Council Meeting is where the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council are elected, Committee and Working Party membership agreed, and Chairs of Committees elected.

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Monday, 22nd April 2024.

The Clerk was asked to invite Adam Hawksbee, one of the speakers at the NALC "How Councils can benefit from the Levelling Up agenda" seminar, to the Annual Parish Meeting. This would be in addition to inviting grant recipients.

*Meeting closed at 8.40 pm.*

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Actions from Meetings – May 2023

Meeting	Action	Responsibility	Completed
<b>2020</b>			
FC 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	Cllr Hodsdon to carry out internal staffing review	Clerk/Cllr Hodsdon	Ongoing
GP&F 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Investigate opening 3 <sup>rd</sup> Bank account	RFO	Unity account now open
<b>2022</b>			
GP&F 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Instruct Surrey Hills re area in front of CD shops	Clerk	Draft lease produced, but now on hold
FC 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Seek quotes for valuation of Lashmere Play area	Clerk	On hold
FC 12 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Arrange photos of councillors for website	Comms	Ongoing
<b>2023</b>			
GP&F 9 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Seek further advice on Lashmere	Clerk	Ongoing
GP&F 17 <sup>th</sup> April	Apply for licence for Brookhill Rd flower bed	Clerk/Grounds	Granted, waiting for road works to stop
FC 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Compare quotes for tree survey	Clerk/RFO	Tender issued, waiting for return quotes
GP&F 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Invite the owner of the Royal Oak to a Council meeting, in closed session	Clerk	No longer responding to emails
GP&F 10 <sup>th</sup> July	Instruct solicitor to prepare Peter Pan licence	Clerk	Completed and signed
FC 24 <sup>th</sup> July	Migration of IT data storage to Cloud	Cllr Scott	Completed
P&H 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Request speed camera on A264 to police	Clerk	Ongoing
P&H 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Query crossing point on A264 near Smugglers Cottage with WSCC	Clerk	Waiting for response from Cllr Williams re Community Highways Scheme
<b>2024</b>			
F&GP 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Prepare draft lease for SUP Foods in Crawley Down	Clerk	In discussion with owners
F&GP 8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Pay £1000 grant to Haven Centre	Clerk	Not requested by March 2024, so "cancelled"
FC 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Arrange removal of play equipment in Copthorne Rec	Clerk	Ongoing
FC 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Converting existing SID to solar power	Clerk	With Shane awaiting construction
F&GP 5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Appoint Michael Carter for CD play area	Clerk	Completed
FC 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Write to MSDC re chimney on Royal Oak	Clerk	Completed
FC 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Invite Adam Hawksbee to Annual Parish Meeting	Clerk	He politely declined

## **Copthorne Working Party Meeting 20.03.24.**

Present TD, GC, LS, HR, CM, TH, AD, CP, JN

Also present was Paul Budgen

### **Copthorne Playground and Muga and Carpark**

Due to recent discussions between Cllr Casella as Lead Councillor, the Clerk and Paul Budgen, this meeting was held for Paul to update the group.

The Clerk had asked Paul to update the masterplan originally drawn by Gwynn Cheesmur FOC, and to remove the car parking spaces next to Copthorne Bank.

However, in doing so, Paul identified a number of issues in drawing up a master plan for the site.

The following were discussed:

- The levels of the MUGA, which due to these levels, has to be sunk into the ground, with slopes leading the gates
- Establishing the correct sight lines at the proposed entrance
- The location of bike racks and paths
- That the surface of the car park is to be grasscrete
- That the path between the play area and the car park is to have some "fun" paving, such as including a hop scotch grid

This revised masterplan will be submitted to MSDC planning, together with an updated tree survey, in order to obtain planning permission. Details could then be revised at a later date.

The revised master plan is to be included in the next newsletter, with copy being due early May.

Paul was asked for ball park build costs for the car park; in the region of £100,000.

Paul advised that the Council needed to consult with a utility consultant and a drainage consultant to produce a drainage strategy for the whole site. He can assist if required.

Ongoing project management was discussed; the Clerk is to speak to Michael Carter with a view to Paul overseeing the project, with Michael offering specialist advice on the MUGA and play area.



## **Copthorne Working Party Notes 03.04.2024**

**Present TD, BK, GC, LS, TH, HR, EL, ML, HS**

### **Copthorne Rec**

Unsuccessful bid for the COF fund, GK is contacting the Parish Clerk to see if they would be willing to share the details of the application for us to compare. The successful application was from Normandy Parish Council near Guilford.

Meeting to be arranged between JN, TD, GC to start the process of asking for a variation of S106 monies to be allocated to the Rec from King George Playing field. HR would like some of the allocated funds for improvements to the pavilion and for a new storage facility.

The question was also asked can we ask about a variation for monies allocated to the Doctors surgery to be put towards the Carpark?

Electricity box to be placed on the site of the rec? In case we do decide to use the carpark for pop up stalls, local market etc Speak with JN, GK, PB, MC.

### **St Modwens Meeting 04.04.24**

TD attending the meeting at St Modwens tomorrow, topics to raise include

Allotments- update

Footpaths- path between Hawthorns and Heathy Wood, water company.

Playground update

Bins

Sales Office, what is going to happen to it shop?

TD to feed back after meeting.

### **Land between Erica way and the Hawthorns Estate.**

TH gave an update on the screening which has taken place behind the houses on Erica way. There was supposed to be trimming and removal of non-indigenous species, this has gone way beyond that, the houses in Erica way have been left being overlooked and any privacy removed. The Clerk is aware.

### **Is the strategy of Worth Parish Council to take over some of the issues from Mid Sussex?**

No vocal complaints from the precept rise in the Council Tax this year.

### **Electricity Box on the Green**

Graffiti has been removed; question was asked can we plant round it. HS to speak with SP

### **Future Meetings**

17<sup>th</sup> April Tina Coulson coming along New Practice Mgr at Poundhill

1<sup>st</sup> May Vanessa Cummings to discuss Schools, HS to invite both the heads along.

May 15<sup>th</sup> Shane Portman Est Mgt Plan

-When are we going to see improvements.

-Flower beds at either end of the village.

### **Actions**

Invite the Inspector from West Sussex and Katy Bourne to a future Full Council Meeting.

Millennium Posts both need repairing, rotten at the bottom.

HS to invite both heads along to the meeting with Vanessa Cummings.

Working Party Meeting 17.04.2024

Attended TD, GC, TH, AD, CP, LS, ML, CM, HR, HS, JN

Tina Coulson had to cancel the meeting at the last minute. HS has reinvited to a future meeting. TD has requested to meet with Tina separately if this is easier than waiting for 6 weeks plus for another meeting. HS to ask.

Meeting to be set up with TD, JN, GC, CP on the 23rd of April 10am to discuss variations to S106 allocations. HS to send out invite.

**Copthorne Rec** – Planning application on Mid Sussex portal, comments can be made till the 30th of April, no consultation responses so far.

Entrance to Car park to stay where it is

PB to project Manage. JN to document what PB and MC are each responsible for.

**St Modwens Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024-** Sales hut, Thomas Snell has said this will go back to open space, it is not a permanent structure and is only designed to last several years. The same will apply to the visitor parking for the sales hut, this will also return to open space.

Doctors Surgery land, first tranche of S106 money paid to Mid Sussex.

Complaints of fly tipping on land as well as parking.

Do we ask the residents what they would like to do with the land?

TD to speak with TC would they support reallocation of S106 monies from surgery to help fund the car park. HS to arrange meeting.

Both connecting footpaths to be completed Summertime. A264 –Hawthornes open water course, permission required.

St Modwens has slowed down development to match sale rate.

Allotments and Playground have both been pushed back to EOY.

Post Box Heathy Wood (outside sales office?) JN waiting for a reply. Might lose one from Copthorne side depending on distances.

Bus Timetable- one bus per hour and nothing after 6pm. Ask Bruce Forbes HS to follow up.

**Actions** – to ask St Modwens what their occupancy is, and what is built but not occupied. How Many Dwellings are there yet to be started? HS to contact Thomas Snell.

**New bus stops** – HS to contact West Sussex as a few locations make the footpath not accessible to wheelchair/ mobility users.

**Allotment Heathy Wood**- shopping list- Liz Lancaster, (Holly Farm S106 Monies)

**King Georges Field** - HR to get quotes for Workshops

**STROP**- STROP could apply for an ACV, we could put on the next Finance agenda to see if WPC will support.

### **Other Actions**

Yellow Lines Akehurst Close onto Church Lane. HS to put on P&H agenda

HS to chase Ian Myhill for his report from visit with TD.

Vanessa Cummins is attending the Next working party meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup>. HS has invited both School heads with no response so far.

Working Party Notes 01.05.2024

Present TD, AD, TH, GC, CP, BF, LS, ML, BK, HS, JN

Guest Vanessa Cummins - West Sussex Schools

Update- 3 million Build Element, land was given for free. The first two tranches have been paid (second tranche currently with Mid Sussex) third tranche to be paid once occupancy is at 450.

Current occupancy has been confirmed by St Modwens at 350 across the entire site, with the other 150 plots all having commenced construction. (some are at preliminary stages as in not yet at foundation level)

The initial plan was to have a thorough Junior school over in Heathy Wood and one at the Copthorne Juniors current site. There is now no plan for a junior school on the Heathy Wood Site, however West Sussex has approached St Modwens with the possibility of a SEN school on site instead.

Air pollution was originally monitored during lockdown with little traffic on the motorway and no planes flying to and from Gatwick airport. It was also mentioned that the monitors were placed half a mile south of the site.

The M23 has since been turned into a smart motorway with improvements made to the j10 turnoff allowing more queuing traffic. There are also plans for Gatwick to have a third runway, and there are now three distribution centers on site, increasing traffic flow.

Graham's Olways letter also stated concerns from a public consultation about noise and air pollution.

WPC asked the question if the site is not deemed suitable for a junior school why is it suitable for a SEN school? And did the report suggest that Air Pollution was a problem and who did the survey?

Vanessa has stated that reports regarding air quality and pollution have been available for a while, and she cannot see why she would not be able to share these with the council, to be able to answer these questions.

Vanessa stated that £350,000 was spent on fairways to replace wooden timber frames with steel ones to make structurally safe. WPC questioned this.

Money has also been spent replacing aluminum frames in 2019/2020.

The 350,000 was from the government and not from the 3 million S106 monies.

Miss Singleton Headteacher and Bev Horner Chair of Governors have been in contact directly with West Sussex and said that they need updating the kitchen, they are in the process of looking at providing wrap around care at the site in conjunction with Copthorne Juniors.

A reminder that the S106 monies are for capital use only and not for refurbishing.

The working party are concerned there is no joined up thinking, both heads of the schools were invited to attend this meeting but did not respond to the emails.

The Mid Sussex local plan recognises a need for a SEN school and potential sites have been discussed, Ansty, Burgess Hill and Crabbett Park, however the urgency of needing a SEN school Heathy Wood was discussed as an option.

Graham Olways letter to all stakeholders and parents about the potential development of an SEN school at Heathy Wood site had very little response and St Modwens were favorable to the idea.

Current school occupancy at Fairway's is 95%. Most of the children from the hotels have now been housed out of the area and have left fairways.

There were no discussions on social media from families who had not gotten their first choice of school for this year's intake to either the Juniors or Fairway's. It was also noted that both the schools take children from Surrey and Crawley. It was noted that the families of Heathy Wood are still unhappy at the prospect of not getting a junior school on site or a doctor's surgery as they felt this was promised to them when purchasing their properties. (Taylor Wimpey changed advertising due to mis representation)

It was also noted that in the Copthorne Neighbourhood plan, all primary children in the village would be able to go to school in the Village.

West Sussex also noted that the money for a SEN school would be directly from the government.

The SEN school would have an occupancy of 60-150 pupils and would not offer living-in accommodation.

The Working party were concerned that Fairway's was deemed not fit for purpose 15 years ago and £350,000 is not enough spend to bring it up to date. It was originally thought that a new school could be built on the existing site at the back, but this was deemed not possible as there would not be enough play space for the children. ML noted that there was an area of land owned by Mid Sussex behind Bramble close approx 100 yards away that could be used for outdoor play.

TH would like to see a projection of school places for the next 10-15 years and to have a joined-up plan from both schools in the village as to what the future will look like.

Copthorne Juniors built 3 new classrooms 15 years ago, if Fairway's were to expand could the Juniors have the capacity to cope with this?

It was also noted that Crawley schools are under subscribed. Both schools in the village take pupils from the Crawley and Surrey area.

Asbestos, affecting teachers in old schools, how much does this affect the Fairway's site?

The working party are ambivalent to a SEN school being built on the site depending on the results of the air quality results. If an SEN school is going to be built on site, they would like to know timescales. Vanessa said that they would need to apply for funds from the government first before submitting planning. (predetermination). It was also suggested that we formulate a response to Jeremy Quinn ( Mims) re his FB post.

It was suggested that there is a site close to the curious pig Blackthorne Farm in Effingham Lane owned by Mid Sussex that could be another potential site for an SEN school. It was suggested by CP that West Sussex had plans for this site as he had already enquired.

CP noted that the site at Heathy Wood would be an excellent location for Copthorne Football club.

Occupancy Heathy Wood, currently sitting at 350 with the remaining 150 still to be occupied or completed. There is no provision if they do not reach 450 when the final tranche is due to be paid.

**In other news**

TD had a chat with John Prior, 3 issues

Church Lane Rat run (roundabout installation would relieve this)

Worth Way (Ian Myhill awaiting report)

Roundabout A264- Adam Denby – prove community support

It was agreed that in the Copthorne vision document in our 1–2–year plan, we would submit an application for a roundabout at Newtown/A264.

West Sussex construction plans – Copthorne Bank relay and resurface in the next year.

Update on Car Park – Legal advice has confirmed there is nothing in our deeds which states we cannot build a car park on recreational grounds.

Time has now lapsed for comments on the planning portal, only 4 complaints but comments suggested they were happier now the trees and screening were staying.

Plan notice board locations- we have permission to display in the following areas

Copthorne Post Office

Copthorne Doctors Surgery

Olivers and the Village Hall

The Christmas tree on the green is in the wrong place, speak with Shane as we may need to trench for power. Shane is attending the next working party meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> May to discuss his estate Mgt plan.

Flagpole – Scouts and Shane are both key holders for this- 6<sup>th</sup> June 80 years D-Day it should be lowered.

Paul Budgen has approached Phillip Coote re community housing project. Action, to invite Paul to a future Working Party meeting to discuss further.



**Next Working Party Meeting Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May**

## CDWP Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024 7.30pm at The Haven Centre

**1. Present:** KS, KW, TW, SK, GK, FL, IG

**2. Apologies:** PC, SB, AC, LW and PB

### **3. Project Updates**

- **Noticeboards** – quote received from Ashley Halsey for groundworks of £3000 plus a further £220 + VAT for the tree surgeon to remove the stump. These, together with the cost of £8000 for the noticeboards themselves from Acorn Workshops, will go before the full Council for approval. Shane has requested that he repurpose the old noticeboards which received approval **TW**

- **Car Park behind Shops** – further action has stalled due to the legal situation. Letters to be sent to all parties involved advising that all items will be removed on a given date. SK and KW agreed to investigate Metal Collection businesses locally and Cox Skips to be asked about the possibility of a free skip **SK/KW**

- **War Memorial Stone** – no update as PC not at meeting. KS agreed to contact PC **KS**

- **Pond and Stream** – Larches Way tree has been cut down but a 20ft trunk remains. SK has contacted MSDC and awaits a reply. SK has sent a question asking the Ranger if we could carry out works around the pond if we had our own insurance and tools. The reply was that WSCC are “waiting for a pond assessment” – a long and slow process. SK agreed to investigate insurance through Sussex Wildlife and then pass to WPC **SK**

- **Playground** – LW design competition was a great success with over 80 entrants. KS has presented prizes to the three winners. Michael Carter, a playground consultant, has been engaged. S106 money of c£100k is available, but may not be enough. The existing equipment is OK for inclusion in new scheme. A plan by the end of the year is hoped for **LW**

- **Coronation Bench** – due for delivery imminently. Shane will fix it in place and MSDC have already agreed the site (alongside the new Village Map).

- **Bowers Place** – Paul Budgen is doing the new drawings which are due shortly. They will then be sent to GK for onward transmission to various departments. JH is confident all will be well. The funding is earmarked and we have 12 months to draw it down. JN will check if deferment is possible. There is a query as to whether the interest rate has been fixed, will it be fixed on drawdown? Check in August of no further news **KS**

**4. Village Hall Update** – work has started on the old Hall. Marion Welchman to be invited to meet with WPC for further information regarding the new Hall. MSDC have withdrawn their offer of a peppercorn rent on the new site as The Haven doesn't have the same deal. JH is looking at a rent holiday for The Haven. The new Hall may not be done for four years as the developer may wait for profit from the development of the old site. Simon Hughes/John Anderton of MSDC are aware of the situation and there are grave doubts over the future

**5. District Plan** – this is being collated and will then go to the Inspector. The Huntsland planning application (Wates) doesn't supply anything useful for the Village. LW, AC and PB are monitoring **LW/AC/PB**

**6. Health Centre** – unlikely to come out of special measures any time soon as the CQC 6 month review has been delayed. It would seem that we are powerless to act. KS and KW still on PPG and will monitor **KS/KW**

**7. SID** – options have been received from Stacey either converting the existing model to solar or purchasing a new solar powered one. As value for money is an issue it was agreed to convert the existing one. A 20mph zone around Hophurst Drive, Burleigh Way and Station Road was discussed, which would need a Community Highways Scheme application through WSCC. WPC can act on behalf of the Village in this regard. It was felt a build out scheme was needed to prevent parking across the bollarded spaces outside the shops – a Community Highways Scheme would again be needed.

**8. Annual Parish Meeting** – This is on 22<sup>nd</sup> April at The Hub and is an open meeting for all residents. An interesting speaker was suggested to bring people in. Suggestions were the local Air Ambulance or the Chief Executive of QVH **GK**

**9. Council Awards** – Crawley Down winners will be presented with their awards before the next CDWP 17.4.24 at 7pm at The Haven.

**10. WPC Quarterly Update** –GK handed Jan to March 2024 hard copies to all present.

**11. New Parking Charges** – (which have no impact on Crawley Down parking) IG explained why the changes are happening and that all parties were involved in MSDC's decision. WSCC have allocated £150m to put roads right together with a further £4m also found. IG has tabled a question re timing for the Dukes Head repairs **IG**

## **12 AOB –**

- **FL** asked for permission to circulate our minutes to The Haven Committee but this was refused.
- **TW** 30mph limit sign on Hophurst Hill going towards East Grinstead has been flattened. IG agreed to report **IG**
- **GK** suggested a Lead Councillor for each project. Playground LW, Bowers Place KS, CCTV CP/AC and Noticeboards **TW**
- **SK** asked if we would like Julie Etheridge (an environmental expert to come to one of our meetings. Perhaps she could make our Litter Pick on March 23<sup>rd</sup>? A lady in the village has expressed concerns about the wildflower meadow on Burleigh Way – SK has given her MSDC contact details **SK**
- **IG** stated that providers of affordable housing seem to be moving away from maintenance of small developments to concentrate on larger ones. Could WPC pick up?
- Could a time limit on parking in the Village Car Parks be put in place with parking restricted to a given number of hours? JN to be asked to check **JN**

**13 Date of Next Meetings – 17<sup>th</sup> April and 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 7.30pm at The Haven Centre**



**Worth Parish Council - Schedule of Meetings**  
**April 2024 - March 2025**

<b>April 2024</b>	
Monday 8th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday 15th	Amenties & Assets
Monday 22nd	Annual Parish Meeting
<b>May 2024</b>	
Monday 13th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday 20th	Annual Council Meeting
<b>June 2024</b>	
Monday, 3rd	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday 24th	Amenties & Assets
<b>July 2024</b>	
Monday, 1st	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 15th	Full Council *
Thursday, 25th	Co-Ordination Group
Monday, 29th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
<b>September 2024</b>	
Monday, 2nd	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 16th	Full Council
Monday 23rd	Amenties & Assets
<b>October 2024</b>	
Monday, 7th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 14th	Co-Ordination Group
<b>November 2024</b>	
Monday, 4th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 25th	Full Council
<b>December 2024</b>	
Monday, 9th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 16th	Amenties & Assets
<b>January 2025</b>	
Monday, 6th	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 20th	Full Council
<b>February 2025</b>	
Monday, 3rd	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
<b>March 2025</b>	
Monday, 3rd	Finance & GP and Planning & Highways
Monday, 17th	Amenties & Assets
Monday, 24th	Full Council

\* At the Glebe Centre in Crawley Down



# WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

## MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES POLICY

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 came into force on 1 May 2003. The regulations apply to local authorities in England only and substantially change the system that previously existed.

### **2. Types of allowance**

2.1 These regulations allow Town and Parish Councils to pay a **basic parish allowance** (Regulation 25) to its chairman only or to each of its elected members. Co-opted members do not qualify for the basic parish allowance. The amount payable to the chairman may differ from that of other members (i.e. a higher sum could be paid because of extra duties that may be required of the chairman) but otherwise the sum shall be the same for each member.

2.2 The regulations also allow payment of a **parish travelling and subsistence allowance** (Regulation 26). Travel and subsistence allowance can be paid to elected and co-opted members. Parish and Town Council members are not entitled to claim a dependants' carer's allowance.

2.3 The Local Government Act 1972 s.15 (5) states a local council may pay a **chairman's allowance** for the purpose of enabling him to meet the expenses of his or her office. A co-opted member elected as the chairman is entitled to the chairman's allowance, but not the basic parish allowance.

2.4 The basic parish allowance and chairman's allowance are not salaries. They are figures calculated to cover expenses which are normally associated with the duties of being a local councillor. Travelling and subsistence allowances are used to reimburse members for specific expenses incurred while attending meetings, training course or events on behalf of the council.

### **3. Setting levels of allowances**

3.1 Regulation 27 of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 states that a parish remuneration panel may be established by a responsible authority, which is defined as a district or unitary authority.

3.2 When convened, a parish remuneration panel will produce a report making recommendations including:

- The amount of basic parish allowance payable to elected members
- The amount of chairman's allowance payable (if different to the basic parish allowance)
- The amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable

3.3 Parish and Town Councils must take into account these recommendations when setting their levels for allowances.

3.4 Mid Sussex District Council's remuneration panel does not meet to consider parishes, so it is not possible to note its recommendations. The Council has considered allowances set by local

town councils and have agreed an appropriate rate for a basic allowance and Chairman's allowance accordingly.

3.5 Travel and subsistence allowances are paid at agreed HMRC rates, for travel outside the parish boundary.

#### **4. Procedure and payment**

4.1 Payment of participation allowances (basic parish allowance and chairman's allowance) will be made quarterly in arrears to eligible members. Travel and subsistence allowances are treated as expenses and reclaimed via an expenses claim form.

4.2 When paying participation allowances to elected members, local councils are obliged by law to deduct income tax, where appropriate, under the PAYE system. It is unlikely National Insurance Contributions will need to be considered as the allowances are likely to be below the lower earnings limit.

4.3 At the end of the financial year, the council must publish a notice in a conspicuous place for a period of at least 14 days stating the total amount that it has paid for all Member allowances.

4.4 A member is able to elect in writing to the Clerk that he or she wishes to forgo all or part of their entitlement to the allowances.

4.5 The council is required to maintain records of payments made in respect of the allowances specifying the name of the recipient and the nature of the allowance. These records can be inspected by any local government elector for the parish or town without payment of a fee upon giving reasonable notice. Copies must be provided if so requested, for which a reasonable fee can be charged.

**Date of Adoption: 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**Reviewed: May 2021**

**Reviewed: May 2023**

**Reviewed: May 2024**





## WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

### Risk Management Plan

2024/2025

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risk of all of its functions, and to satisfy that it has taken adequate steps to minimise this risk. In conducting this exercise, the following process was followed. a) Identify the areas to be reviewed

- b) Identify what the risk might be, and whether this is High, Medium or Low risk (H, M or L)
- c) Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings
- d) Review, assess and revise the above steps on an annual basis, usually at the Annual Meeting of the Council, unless otherwise stated.

### Financial & Management

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of Precept	L	Sound budgeting process in place to support the annual precept. The budget is an agenda item in November Council meeting, where a report is considered that includes expenditure to date and projected expenditure. Using this information together with project aspirations and overheads assists setting the budget and precept for the following year. Once agreed, the RFO submits the precept request to Mid Sussex District Council. On receipt of precept monies (usually in May and September) this is reported to Council.	Existing procedure adequate

## Financial & Management (Cont)

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review / Assess / Revise
Financial records	Inadequate records Financial Irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements, based on the NALC model	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure Financial Regulations are reviewed regularly
Bank & Banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking. Cheques and internet banking payment authorisation require two signatories. Latest financial situation (income and expenditure against budget, reconciliation) reported to each Finance Committee and each Full Council meeting for formal acknowledgement. Salaries and associated costs are paid via BACS, with payment schedule authorised by two signatories. Access to online banking limited to RFO and Clerk Any banking error identified via reconciliation process	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure Financial Regulations are reviewed regularly Review authorised signatories at each Annual Meeting.
Investment	Loss of deposits due to failure of financial institution	M	Ensure that Council investments are reviewed annually to keep risk to a minimum. Investments are spread between more than one financial institution.	Review at Annual Meeting, or sooner in times of economic instability.
Financial Reporting	Information communication	L	Latest financial situation (income and expenditure against budget, reconciliation) reported to each GP&F Committee and/or each Full Council meeting for formal acknowledgement. This includes predicted expenditure to year end, provided each quarter.	Existing procedure adequate.
Direct costs	Goods supplied and not invoiced Incorrect invoicing Incorrect cheques	L L L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements At each Finance Committee and each Full Council meeting the list of payments is authorised, payable by BACS BACS payments are made via a two stage authorisation process by officers Any payment cheque requires two signatories and that the stub is initialled	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure Financial Regulations are reviewed regularly Review authorised signatories annually



## Financial & Management (Cont)

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review / Assess / Revise</b>
Grants payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All grants requested to comply with Grants Policy, with requested documentation supplied. Such requests to be considered by the Finance Committee or Full Council dependent on the amount and compliance with Financial Regulations. Payments made via s137 power of expenditure to be Minuted and recorded accordingly	Existing procedure adequate. RFO to report s137 allowance at each Annual Meeting.
Grants/s106 monies received	Receipt of Grants or s106 monies	L	Applications for such monies and successful bids to be reported to Finance Committee or Full Council. Receipt to be noted via Financial & Reconciliation reports. Project(s) identified for expenditure monitored, and necessary reports back to donor completed in compliance with necessary deadlines - see Project Management below.	Existing procedure adequate
Best Value accountability	Contracts awarded incorrectly  Overspend on contract	L  M	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements, dependent on value of contract. Legislation under Public Contracts Act 2015 to be complied with, with appropriate publication if necessary. Ensure provision for late completion.  See Project Management	Existing procedure adequate
Project Management	Overspend on contract  Late completion and retention monies	M  M	All contracts for goods and services to comply with Financial Regulations and the Public Contracts Act 2015. Expenditure and supply on such contracts to be monitored monthly to identify issues early. Any indication of potential overspend to be reported to Council at next meeting, and reasons identified and resolved  Project progress to be monitored monthly to ensure achievement of defined milestones, issues identified and remedial actions agreed	Existing procedure adequate  Project Planning and Monitoring procedure being implemented.

			Retention clause included as in Best Value above activated if applicable. All to be reported to Council	
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### Financial & Management (Cont)

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Council Officers	Fraud	L M L	Ensure references taken for Clerk and RFO to prior to confirmation of employment Ensure insurance Fidelity Guarantee fit for the purpose and requirements followed. Clerk and RFO to attend relevant training, to be provided with relevant reference books, to access assistance and legal advice	Existing contract of employment requires this Review at each renewal of insurance policy  Ensure budget in place to allow for this.
VAT	Reclamation	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements VAT to be claimed on a quarterly basis. RFO to ensure that VAT is monitored on an ongoing basis.	Existing procedure adequate. Ensure Financial Regulations are reviewed regularly
Annual Return	Comply with deadlines	L  L	Clear instruction given by External Auditor. Return completed complying with latest edition of Governance & Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England.  Internal audit carried out  Internal Audit report and Annual Return accepted by resolution of Council, documentation signed and submitted to External Auditors to comply with deadline. Notice of Public Rights published in accordance with guidance.	Existing procedure  Review Internal Audit arrangements every five years Existing procedure adequate
Insurance	Fit for purpose  Cost Compliance	M  L	Asset Register is updated on the purchase or disposal of any asset. A review is undertaken prior to the renewal date of all insurance in place. Contract is considered and awarded as per Best Value above	Existing procedure  Review provision and compliance at time of renewal

	Fidelity Guarantee	L M	Employers and Public Liability are a statutory requirement Ensure insurance Fidelity Guarantee fit for the purpose and requirements followed as per Council Officers above	
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### Financial & Management (Cont)

Subject	Risk(s) identified	H/M/L	Management/Control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets	Loss or damage  Injury to third party	M  L	Office equipment monitored on an ongoing basis to identify damage. Inspection of play areas carried out by trained maintenance team weekly to identify damage, worn equipment and vandalism. Monitoring of street furniture (bins, streetlights) ongoing by maintenance team Land inspected annually. Tree surveys commissioned and work completed Land management plan in place.  Appropriate Public Liability Insurance in place	Existing procedure adequate  Vandalism reported to the police and insurance company  Tree and Land management plan reviewed October 2021; due for review  Tree survey due 2024.
Freedom of Information Act	Policy  Provision  Website	M  M  M	Records kept on all the above  The Council has adopted the model publication scheme for Local Councils. All requests for information are dealt with promptly within the deadlines  Updated website went online September 2018, supplier approved council supplier	Monitor and report impacts of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. Website complies with Transparency Code

### Record Keeping

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Risk(s) identified</b>	<b>H/M/L</b>	<b>Management/Control of Risk</b>	<b>Review / Assess/Revise</b>
Council paper records	Loss through fire, theft and damage	L	<p>Paper records include Minute Books, correspondence, personnel records, legal documents, such as leases, stored in Parish Office. Legal documents in fire resistant storage</p> <p>Some historical records archived off site. Insurance and fire risk assessment in place</p> <p>Insurance in place. Building alarmed with restricted access via programmed key fobs</p> <p>Low risk</p>	Existing procedure adequate
Council electronic records	Loss through fire, corruption or cyber crime	M	<p>On cloud storage. Passwords locked in fire resistant safe.</p> <p>Virus protection in place, renewed annually. Email spam filters in place. IT support contracted out.</p> <p>Access to online banking limited to the Clerk/RFO and Accounts Clerk</p> <p>Unauthorised access to bank accounts covered by Bank.</p>	IT contractor/provider in place

Adopted June 2017.

Reviewed May 2018.

Revised May 2019.

Reviewed Jan 2021

Revised May 2021

Revised May 2022

Revised May 2023

Revised May 2024



# Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities\*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
  - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
  - The **Annual Internal Audit Report must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - **Sections 1 and 2 must** be completed and approved by the authority.
  - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2024**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2024**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2024
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

## Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2023/24**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2024 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review. It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

\*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.



## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide\** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty) and is properly signed and dated. Any amendments must be approved by the authority and properly initialled.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2024.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- You must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chair, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide\**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the bank reconciliation is incomplete or variances not **fully** explained then additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2023) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2024).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2024**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Has all additional information requested, including <b>the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights</b> , been provided for the external auditor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Section 2	Has the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounting statements before presentation to the authority for approval?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chair of the approval meeting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Has the bank reconciliation as at <b>31 March 2024</b> been reconciled to Box 8?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? <b>NB:</b> do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*\*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)



# Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

## WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

www.worth-pc.gov.uk

PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.			✓ none
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓ N/A
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

09/11/2023 03/05/2024

Mark Mulberry BA(Hons) FCCA CIA

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

M. Mulberry

Date 03/05/2024

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).



## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

We acknowledge as the members of:

WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

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PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS



## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/24 for

### WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2024 £	
1. Balances brought forward	362,624	290,431	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	300,000	350,000	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	28,614	24,500	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	175,413	182,653	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	9,726	9,726	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	215,668	118,864	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	290,431	353,688	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	380,722	356,498	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	847,286	853,110	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	61,838	53,678	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval**

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED



## Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of

WORTH PARISH COUNCIL

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02 as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

(Except for the matters reported below)\* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (\*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

### 3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify/do not certify\* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

\*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date