

Worth Parish Council
Minutes of the Full Council Meeting
June 24th 2019 commencing at 19.30hrs

Present:

Cllr Anscomb	Cllr Budgen
Cllr Casella	Cllr Coote
Cllr Cruickshank	Cllr D. Curzon
Cllr J. Curzon	Cllr Dorey
Cllr Flanagan	Cllr Hollands
Cllr Lord	Cllr Scott
Cllr Phillips	Cllr Webb
Mrs J. Nagy (Clerk)	2 members of the public

24 Public Question Time:

The Chairman highlighted the housekeeping rules and advised if anyone wished to film/record the proceedings could they make themselves known if they had not already done so to the Clerk.

Members of the public present did not wish to speak.

25 Apologies:

Apologies were NOTED from Cllr Hitchcock

Absent: Cllr Larkin

26 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

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

The Chairman reminded Councillors that Cllr Hitchcock was tasked to supply wording to the Clerk to put to Tom Clark as Monitoring Officer to ask if Standing Orders could be changed to allow Council to agree dispensations, rather than the Clerk. Cllr Hitchcock has responded "Having read through the parliamentary, county council, district council and parish council protocols for declaring interests, it is clear that the Solicitor to MSDC is unlikely to make any decisions which could be construed as being contrary to these protocols. I therefore do not wish to proceed further with approaching Mr Clark regarding dispensations for councillors when neighbourhood Planning issues are being considered. It is quite practical and legal to use other channels to ensure that all councillors views can be expressed and where necessary taken into account when relevant"

Councillors NOTED these comments.

27 To receive the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 20th May 2019

It was noted that the Clerk had failed to Minute that Cllr Gibson was elected as Chair of the Joint Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr Casella seconded by Cllr D. Curzon and agreed by all present that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 20th May 2019 were a true and correct record after the above addition.

28 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman reminded councillors that if they have not done so already, they needed to advise the Clerk whether or not they wished to have a tablet provided by the Council, and whether they wished to claim an allowance.

She reminded Councillors that it was the Copthorne Carnival on 29th June and if councillors could assist on the Council stall that would be appreciated.

A final reminder – Councillors must give apologies to the Clerk prior to meetings. If not received, they will be marked as absent.

29 Correspondence & Action Lists

These were NOTED

30 Committees

To receive and adopt the following Minutes

Planning & Highways Committee, 29th April 2019

Date of next meeting: 8th July 2019

General Purposes & Finance Committee 15th April 2019

Date of next meeting: 15th July 2019

These Minutes and resolutions therein were NOTED and ADOPTED

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Sub Committee 12th June 2019

Councillors were asked to ratify the decision not to include site selection in the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Phillips, Chairman of the Advisory Sub Committee, said that the group was anxious to get the Plan out, and it would be delayed if site selection was included as further documentation would need to be completed, such as a SEA. Only one potential site has been included in the second phase of the SHELAA – at Copthorne Golf Course. Green space policies in the Plan could direct the future use of this site.

Cllr Gibson queried whether a Joint Neighbourhood Plan Committee should consider the recommendation and not the Council

The Clerk advised that all recommendations could be considered by the Council as the overreaching body, and Copthorne were keen to progress with the Plan without delay.

Cllr Gibson was not in favour of excluding site selection as the Plan would have limited weight after only two years.

Cllr Dorey disagreed, saying that it was likely that with site selection there would be no Plan at all in two years.

Cllr Gibson said that a Neighbourhood Plan should ensure that there is housing to meet locally identified need, to which Cllr Dorey replied that there was already sufficient housing to meet such need.

It was proposed by Cllr Coote, seconded by Cllr Dorey to ratify the recommendation of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Sub Committee to exclude site selection in its Neighbourhood Plan. All were in favour, with the exception of Cllr Lord, who was against the motion, and Cllrs Cruickshank and Gibson who abstained.

31 County Councillors' Report

The Clerk invited County Councillors Acraman and Brunsdon to this meeting, and if unable to attend, asked that a report be submitted of updates in local County matters. However, no response has been received.

It was NOTED that neither of Cllrs Acraman nor Brunson had replied to the Clerk's emails,

32 District Councillors' Report

The District Councillors advised that much of their time is being taken up with training.

Cllr Phillips noted that MSDC has no CiL policy yet as it is awaiting updated government guidance. However, there is an indication that the government is considering going back to Section 106 payments instead of CiL

Cllr Coote advised that he has been elected Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.

33 Accounts

The GP&F Committee approved balances and transactions up to 31st May 2019 at its last meeting.

The Pot Common Association has confirmed that the court has agreed that legal proceedings should commence in relation to the Judicial Review; the Clerk has authorised payment of the £5000 supporting funding accordingly.

Councillors NOTED this payment

32 Attendance at meetings

The report of Councillors' attendances in 2018/2019 was submitted to the last meeting but was found to be inaccurate; a revised version has been circulated.

The revised report was NOTED; Councillors AGREED that it was not necessary for them to formally note this report in future.

33 Internal Auditor Report

The internal audit took place on 5th June 2019.

The auditor noted that the "Other income" was £19,681. However, this did not include debtors. Having sought the advice of RBS, who provide the Council's accounting package, the RFO corrected this error, resulting in an "Other Income figure of £21248, a difference of £1567. This is the figure now included in the Return documentation in Box 3.

Councillors NOTED this report, and the subsequent amendment of the Other Income figure

34 Annual Return

The Clerk drew Councillors attention to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return documentation previously circulated.

a) Annual Governance Statement 2018/2019 – Section One of the Annual Return

All boxes had been ticked to indicate compliance.

It was RESOLVED by all present that that Section One was AGREED.

b) The Annual Governance Statement 2018/2019

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Chairman sign the Annual Governance Statement 2018/2019

c) Accounting Statements 2018/2019 – Section Two of the Annual Return

It was RESOLVED by all present that that Section TWO was AGREED.

- d) The Chairman and the RFO to sign the Annual Accounting Statements 2018/2019

It was RESOLVED by all present that the Chairman and the RFO sign the Annual Accounting Statements 2018/2019

- e) The additional information to be sent to the External Auditor in support of the Annual Return 2018/2019 by the submission date of 15th July 2019 was NOTED by all present
- f) The public inspection period for the 2018/2019 of 1st July to 9th August 2019 was AGREED by all present

Cllr Scott arrived at 8pm

35 Vision

The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to the Vision Report, previously circulated. She advised that many of the issues just needed an indication of whether or not she should progress a project or not. For those projects agreed, she would research options, and bring these back to the Council for further consideration.

Operational Matters

- a) Meeting Venue and Schedule

It was suggested that some Council meetings take place in Crawley Down

It was AGREED that all meeting would continue to take place at the Parish Hub in Copthorne, where the parish office is situated.

It was suggested that the meeting day be changed from Mondays.

It was AGREED that Council meeting would continue to take place on Mondays.

It was suggested that the pattern of meeting dates was changed.

It was AGREED that Council meetings would be thus:

Week 1: Full Council and P&H (Applications only)

Week 2: No meeting

Week 3: GP&H and P&H

Week 4: No meeting

- b) Maintaining the Infrastructure Schedule

It was AGREED that the Infrastructure Working Group be re-formed, and meetings recommence in order to try to progress projects.

- c) Introduction of Parking Restrictions in Crawley Down car parks

The Council had previously tasked the Clerk to ascertain if it could put parking restrictions in the two car parks it owns in Crawley Down. The Vision report gave information as to the legal process to be followed.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would progress the implementation of limited waiting (time limit to be discussed) between the hours of 9am to 6pm with no overnight parking.

This report will include cost implications and the consultation timetable, plus the possibility of issuing parking discs to indicate the time of arrival.

- d) Action Lists

It was AGREED that the Clerk will continue to produce Action Lists.

- e) Succession Planning

It was AGREED that the Council would not change the way it deals with planning applications

f) Social Media

It was suggested that the Council considers opening Facebook and Twitter accounts, the settings of which will limit comments.
An alternative of a parish blog was discussed.

It was AGREED not to open Facebook and Twitter accounts, nor have a parish blog.

g) Village Pride

Having previously agreed to form two Environmental Working Parties, one for each village, it was subsequently suggested that there was only one such Working Party.

It was AGREED that there would be two Working Parties to promote the concept of "village pride" with the aim to create community cohesion and engage with residents, whilst improving the appearance of both villages. The remits for these groups would be agreed later in this meeting.

Strategic Matters

a) Splitting the Council into two parishes

It was suggested that Worth Parish be split into two parishes, one for Copthorne, one for Crawley Down.

It was AGREED not to split the parish into two.

b) Changing the name of the Council

The name of Worth is historic and bears little relation to the Council's current geographical setting, so it has been suggested that the Council changes its name.

It was AGREED that the Clerk will investigate further as per LGA s75 and report back to Council. The process will include public consultation.

c) Two-tier Council structure

It was suggested that the Council operates a two-tier system, with two village committees reporting to Council.

It was AGREED that this suggestion would not be progressed.

d) Royal Oak

The Council needs to decide what action it takes, if any, in relation to the now derelict Royal Oak Pub.

Cllr Gibson advised that the District Council is undertaking a review of village centres as part of its Economic Development Strategy; a health check for each village. He suggested that MSDC be approached to schedule such health checks for both Crawley Down and Copthorne

Cllr Coote was in favour of this suggestion. The Royal Oak is now in a dangerous condition. Compulsory purchase would only be considered by MSDC if the Save the Pub Team had the funds to buy it.

Cllr Gibson said that he was not aware of any national success in purchasing a pub ACV. Local residents in Stapleford had attempted to buy The Tree, and had raised £100,000, but this had proved to be insufficient.

One solution would be for MSDC to buy the pub, retain the freehold and the Parish Council could run it, giving an income guarantee to MSDC.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would approach MSDC to ascertain if health checks could be carried out for both Crawley Down and Copthorne.

- e) Lashmere Play area
It was AGREED that consultation should take place with Lashmere residents to establish what they would like the Council to do with this now redundant play area.
- f) Community Land Trusts
It was AGREED to continue to progress establishing CLTs in both parishes, with the assistance of the CLT Working Party
- g) Increase Local provision for Sport
It was AGREED to progress this project under the Infrastructure Working Party
- h) CCTV
It was AGREED that the Clerk would carry out a site survey of both villages to identify possible camera locations, to prioritise these, and then to tender for the work asap
- i) Promotion of Crabbet Park as a Strategic site
Cllrs Hitchcock and Gibson, together with the Clerk met with David Carden, former Clerk of Burgess Hill Town Council, to discuss the possibility of the Parish Council taking the lead in promoting Crabbet Park as a strategic development site with MSDC, similar to what Burgess Hill achieved with the "northern arc" development.

After consideration, it was AGREED that the Council would not progress with the promotion of Crabbet Park as a strategic site.

- j) Partnership Working
It has been suggested that the Council be more proactive in working with partners and local groups, such as WSCC, MSDC, Sussex Police and local clubs and societies, and the Clerk would welcome ideas as to how to progress this.

It was AGREED that councillors would consider this and will suggest ideas to the Clerk.

- k) Creating a Youth Council
It has been suggested that a Youth Council is formed for children of school years 5 and 6. This Council would have formal meetings, with the children setting the agenda, and would not only assist the Parish Council in engaging with the wider community, but would also teach the children how local democracy operates.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would progress this project with local village primary schools.

- l) Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Sub Committee
For reasons advised in the Vision Report, the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Sub Committee Chairman, Cllr Phillips would like the Sub Committee to become a Working Party or Steering Group. This will remove the requirement to have every decision ratified by a higher Council body and enable the Plan to be drafted as soon as practical.

It was AGREED that the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Sub Committee becomes a Steering Group/Working Party

Cllr Hollands left the meeting at 8.50pm

It was AGREED that a Vision Working Party made up of Chair of Committees and Sub Committees would be formed to assist the drafting of the Council Vision document.

It was NOTED that an informal staffing review will be undertaken by the HR Committee to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to support the work required, once the scope of the work is agreed.

36 Terms of Reference for Environment Working Party

The draft terms of reference for an Environment Working Party were AGREED. As agreed under Minute 35, there was to be on Working Party for each village, so the Clerk will duplicate these TOR for each.

37 Policing

The local data circulated from the Sussex Police website was NOTED and it was AGREED that the Clerk would include this on future Full Council agendas.

38 Council Land and Buildings

The Clerk reported that she has carried out an allotment inspection with Cllr Cruickshank, Chair of the Allotment Sub Committee. It was noted that more plots than last year are not being worked to a satisfactory standard, and letters are being written to tenant to rectify this.

A second inspection will take place at the end of July, and if no improvement is noted, eviction will be considered.

Councillors NOTED this information

39 Assets of Community Value

Royal Oak Pub

The Clerk reported that she is still awaiting a response as to whether MSDC has agreed to the re-registration of the Pub as an ACV.

Cllr Coot reported that he had spoken to Peter Stuart about the issue; Mr Stuart had apologised and said that there would be a response by the end of the week.

It was AGREED that if no response had been received by the end of the week, the Clerk would write to Mr Stuart complaining about the further delay.

Burstow Allotments

The submission to re-register has been lodged with Tandridge District Council, who have now confirmed receipt.

Prince Albert pub

The Clerk advised that she had delayed submitting an application for re-registration as she was awaiting the outcome of the Royal Oak.

It was AGREED that she would submit the re-registration documentation as soon as possible.

40 Personnel

The Chairman reported that having send out five application forms, only one was received back. An interview took place last week, and Tracy Cruickshank has been appointed to the position of Assistant Clerk.

It has been previously advised that the HR Committee will be carrying out a staffing review to ensure that there is capacity to progress projects in addition to the day to day running of the Council

Councillors NOTED this information

41 Reports from representatives attending outside meetings

Meeting with David Carden, former Clerk at Burgess Hill Parish Council on 21st May, attended by Cllrs Hitchcock and Gibson, together with the Clerk. This meeting has been reported in the Vision Plan document, submitted under Item 14

Meeting with the Clerk at Burstow Parish Council on 4th June, attended by the Clerk, to discuss CCTV. This meeting has been reported in the Vision Plan document, submitted under Item 14

Official Opening of English Rural's Development at Bolney by HRH The Princess Royal, on 11th June, attended by Vice Chairman Phillip Coote.

Cllr Coote reported that the development was a rural exception site. It was a good design, with each house having a heat pump. The power from the windfarm on the coast comes out at Bolney, which provides electricity for the development.

Rural & Community Led Housing Event on 11th June 2019 at Bolney, attended by Cllrs Gibson and Hitchcock.

This event followed the opening of the exception development. Cllr Gibson reported that the 12 houses had cost £2.4 million.

The housing event was useful; local council can bid to take on the 30% affordable housing element of a development and provide housing to meet local need, via a Community Land Trust, for example.

Cllr Gibson said that he discussed Crawley Down's aspirations to provide more 2-bed homes with English Rural, and they were very interested.

CAGNE presentation on 12th June at Lingfield Parish Council, attended by Cllr Gibson

Cllr Gibson reported that the presentation related to the impact of aviation on climate change.

Cluster Group meeting on 19th June, attended by Cllrs Ancomb and Gibson, and the Clerk

The Clerk reported that Richard Speller, Area Highways Manager, was present. He advised that the WSCC Highways budget had been cut from £14 million to £7 million and that there would be subsequent cuts in services. The most affected will be the winter management, with only 28% of the network being cleared of snow, a decrease from the previous 48%. Only essential line painting work is being carried out on major roads. Grass cutting is being reduced from 7 cuts a season to 5. The high grass at roundabouts reported by member councils is not seen to be a safety issue.

The Highways maintenance contract will be awarded shortly, to run from March 2020.

Mr Speller issued a list of maintenance work planned for the area in 2019/2020, with the only Worth project being footway works in Cophorne Common Rd. If projects overspend then some will be cut from this list.

WSCC has resolved the issue with MSDC, whereby MSDC had refused to hand over s106 highways contribution as it had been proved that WSCC had spent monies "inappropriately" leading to MSDC having to pay back fund to developers.

The Love West Sussex reporting app is being updated with new software, as the existing process is not customer friendly.

Other matters discussed by the group were a district plan update, accounts packages and social media. It was agreed not to suggest to Councils to buy an additional SID camera, as they will see how having two cameras goes.

Cllr Coote said that whilst he appreciated WSCC financial constraints, the road surface on road around the Dukes Head was extremely poor.

It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to the Chairman of WSCC asking that consideration be given to improving the road surface on the roads around the Dukes Head roundabout.

42 Consideration of items for inclusion on a future agenda

There were no suggestions of items for a future agenda

43 Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday, 29th July 2019.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____