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21.07 Full Council Background Paper

Agenda item 8iii: Finance – Finance Working Group

Budget 2021-22 Q1 report

Overspends at Q1:

Item	Budget	Actual	Difference	Reason
Computer supplies 4175	£0	£6	£6	No budget given
Raised beds maintenance 4303	£0	£60	£60	No budget given
Health & Safety 4004	£0	£92	£92	No budget given
Councillor expenses 4007	£0	£71	£71	No budget given
Improvements 4155	£0	£400	£400	No budget given
Totals	£0	£175	£175	

The projected year-end figure was £35,315.

Projects 2021-22

Agreed CFGA funded projects:

Item	2020-21	2021-22	Total	S106
Benches	£3,351	£3,250	£6,701	£3,351
Bus shelters	£9,300	£9,300	£18,600	£9,300
Festoons		£4,805	£4,805	£2,403
Totals	£12,651	£17,455	£30,106	£15,054

The above projects are agreed projects and CFGA funding is in place. The council has until end of March 2022 to progress the projects agreed for 2020-21 or the funding will be lost. The cost of two new bus shelters is £17,701, and will include frames for advertisers to purchase space within. The office is seeking help with the £8,850.50 balance towards the new shelters. Ripley Farmers' Market has offered £1,000 towards new benches. Norbury Park has now ceased trading, but an alternative supplier has been approached to provide a quote for Ranmore-style benches. If additional grant funding from other sources can be accessed, it should enable the council to carry out these projects without overly diminishing the general reserves.

Projects 2022-23

GBC invites parish councils to enter applications for Concurrent Functions Grant Aid every summer. Assuming the scheme will be run this year, the council can apply for funding for 50% up to £10,000 and 20% over £10,000. Any projects will have a knock-on effect on budget calculations.

GBC is also due to consult on transitioning from Section 106 to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) before the end of the year. If approved, the council will receive 25% of developer contributions (possibly £125 per sqm of almost any new development). GBC's *Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule* is available at: <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/25378/Community-Infrastructure-Levy>

Land for burials. If the council wishes to progress a potential purchase of suitable land then work has to be put into identifying where that could be. Land to the rear of West End and Grandis Cottages covers approx. 9.5 acres and is currently in multiple ownership. Owning this land would protect it from development and provide internment space for many years to come. Advice needs to be sought from the Environment Agency in the first instance. The land may be unsuitable, at which point the council would know if it had to consider other ideas.

Budget 2022-23

The working draft budget for 2022-23 is circulated with the Agenda. At this stage in the year, it is too early to guess what the council's Band D allocation will be, although it is unlikely to be significantly uplifted due to development.

Recommendations:

- That the budget overspends at end of Q1 be noted.
- That extra grant funding be sought towards new bus shelters and benches.
- That no CFGA schemes are entered for 2022-23.
- That initial enquiries to the Environment Agency are made regarding land suitable for burials.
- That the budget be for 2022-23 be considered at a future meeting.

Agenda item 9ii: *Planning & Environment – Parking Working Group*

Meeting held 21.06.2021. Mapping depicting potential new parking bay sites in the village to be forwarded to GBC and the issue of long-term parked cars on The Green to be raised with SCC. Cllrs Ayears and Shoesmith ask the council to begin discussions over forthcoming meetings and work towards resolving potential alterations to parking rules in the village.

Agenda item 9iii: *Planning & Environment – SCC Highways*

Meeting held 09.07.2021, details at Appendix i.

Agenda item 10ii: *Leisure & Facilities – Bin collections*

Please see separate report authored by Cllrs Moxon and Powell-Cullingford.

Agenda item 10iii: *Leisure & Facilities – Site visit*

Cllr Ayears attended site on 29.06.2021 and reports the following:

- Fred Dixon plaque needs to be moved to location at base of new crab apple tree.

- New Ripley Farmers' Market bench location approved.
- Bench at eastern end of The Green needs replacing*.
- Bench opposite Fairview needs repair work.
- List of events for 2022 needs to be commissioned.
- Bench in meadow needs replacing*.
- "Jumps" created in the fuzzies have been extended into more sensitive woodland areas.

*Parish Council is due to receive donation from Ripley Farmers' Market, and has extant grant approval towards new benches.

Agenda item 10iv: Leisure & Facilities – Correspondence

The book referenced in the correspondence is *Wilding* by Isabella Tree (2018). The book details how the former agricultural farm, Knepp in Sussex, changed its practices in order to commit to a rewilding project. Wilding has been hugely popular and sits within what can be described as a movement to restore nature and biodiversity. Knepp has re-established nature at the site to such a successful degree that wild storks have returned to Britain and it is part of the European Rewilding Network. See <https://knepp.co.uk> for more details.

Wilding is part of a movement that is being led by ecologists and conservationists. Other sources include *Feral* (2013) by George Monbiot, *Wild Kingdom: Bringing Back Britain's Wildlife* (2016) by Stephen Moss, and *English Pastoral* (2020) by James Rebanks. The success of the Knepp project, along with other schemes in broad consensus with rewilding goals, have led to an increase in the public's engagement with measures to increase biodiversity. Further current schemes are discussed in the following links:

Went to mow... but stopped: how UK cities embraced the meadows revolution (2021) Phoebe Weston <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/jul/10/went-to-mow-but-stopped-how-uk-cities-embraced-meadows-revolution-aoe>

The Blue Campaign – increasing biodiversity in grass verges (2021) Surrey County Council <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/trees-grass-and-hedges/grass/the-blue-campaign-increasing-biodiversity-in-grass-verges>

It is not unusual for conservation practices to change over time. A storm similar to 1987, if it occurred today, would be dealt with very differently than it was at the time, for example. The council discussed an idea to commission a new ecological survey and recommendations from Surrey Wildlife Trust's Ecology Services at the meeting held October 2020, with a decision being held over until the new financial year. Ecology Services' proposal is attached at Appendix ii.

In a related development, the parish council has been contacted by Arcadis, which is carrying out a project on behalf of Highways England to increase biodiversity. Highways England's representative for the M25 J10 project, Jonathan Wade, mentioned this at the recent meeting. The parish council office has been in touch with Arcadis and a member of its Ecology team is putting together a proposal. This is still developing but the council could be hopeful that The Green will be seen as a feasible project.

Recommendation: To commission Surrey Wildlife Trust Ecology Services to survey The Green and produce a report and recommendations for ongoing maintenance.

Once the report has been received, the council should commit to follow the recommendations.

Note: Discussions with Arcadis, working on behalf of Highways England, are ongoing.

Agenda item 10iv: Leisure & Facilities – Playground annual safety report

Maintenance findings from RoSPA PlaySafety's annual report:

Item	Description	Tasks
P5 Gates	Entrapment on side(s) of the gate.	Adjust gate / posts / fit new rubber buffer to ensure a spacing of at least 12mm throughout the range of the gate to remove the entrapment. The 12mm gap should also apply to the hinge side of the gate.
P7 Benches	Timber is not in good condition.	Replace.
P12 Junior Multiplay	Timber is rotting.	Early stages of rot / decay in platform boards – monitor for further deterioration and repair or replace as needed.
		The taller of the two towers is wobbly. This appears to be movement between timber posts and metal post shoes, rather than movement in the foundations – refer to manufacturer / supplier for comment.
P18 Rocker – Seesaw	Surface needs repair	Repair.
P22 Swings	Wear in the bushes.	Remove shackle bolt and check bush and shackle pin wear, replacing as necessary.
P26 Basket Swing	The supporting components should be dismantled and inspected.	Dismantle and inspect according to manufacturer's instructions.

A tub of surface repair is in the office for use on the seesaw area. Other items listed should be addressed by the council's usual contractor, Sawscapes Play.

Agenda item 10v: Leisure & Facilities – Christmas Fair

The Christmas Event Working Group met on 24.05.2021. the Working Group believes that the council should plan to hold the Christmas Fair on Sunday 5th December 2021 in the usual way, applying for Road Closure Notices, Temporary Event Notice, and Small Society Lottery. Stallholders should be contacted to be offered a pitch at the event, with an offer to either hold the pitch or have the fee returned should the Fair have to be cancelled.

The stall fee should be held at £40. In the event that the Fair is unable to go ahead, the council will incur losses of around £300, plus refunds to any stallholders not wishing to carry over their booking. There would also be an associated loss of income from the hot food stall and raffle. The income generated by 2020's appeal for donations over and above what was required to fund the lights display has, however, been carried over to use in future years if needed.



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Notes following SCC Highways Q1 09.07.2021 10:00

1. Rose Lane

A local resident has asked for mirrors to be added on the verge across from the junction with White Hart Meadows. Drivers find exiting the close to be difficult with sightlines compromised by parked cars.

SCC position: *"The Department for Transport is very much against the use of mirrors on the highway. Surrey County Council supports that view. People often have difficulty in assessing the speed of traffic and a mirror can distort images, especially when it is raining, and also at night when oncoming headlights can prove to be a problem when trying to judge distance. However, a mirror could be erected on private land."*

2. Newark Lane

Message from a local resident:

I was wondering if you would consider putting two of those circular mirrors either side of the Newark Lane crossing for pedestrians trying to cross?

I live on the High Street with a baby and a toddler, and every time I cross there (which is at least twice a day) I feel so worried. It's really tricky navigating both lots of traffic coming from the High Street, as they often drive so fast (another individual issue in Ripley I feel), but then to try and peer around the corner, especially whilst pushing a pram is just so hard and quite dangerous. Again, the cars coming from Newark Lane are often driving too fast.

With the mirrors, it would just give both sides of pedestrians a little more vision. And I imagine it wouldn't be too costly?

SCC's position is as above, however it could be possible with the property owners' agreement to place mirrors on the adjacent buildings. SCC notes that a speed table is to be installed at the junction of Newark lane and the High Street.

3. Newark Lane

Following representation from a local resident, it was suggested to extend an invitation to attend the meeting, with particular regard to safety measures at the High Street end Newark Lane:

The pavement outside my property in Newark Lane is just 50cm wide and dangerous for pedestrians as vehicles ride up onto the pavement because two vehicles cannot safely pass travelling in opposite directions and due to the lack of manners, giving way is not an option for many drivers, sometimes the "language" is terrible!

We returned from the shops this morning to find a lump had been taken out of our wall and garden gate, this is clearly unacceptable and dangerous.

Could I suggest that the solution may be to install some protective metal bollards fixed solidly into the narrow pavement which will keep vehicles away from our wall and property,

This is all a danger to pedestrians and property and the time to get it sorted is well overdue.

The question of bollards causing a restriction to wheelchair or pushchairs should not be a factor as the narrow strip 50cm is too narrow for either of these modes of transport to navigate safely. The

pavement on the opposite side is wider and the only option for wheelchairs or pushchair users, that is what they use.

Having to accept that my boundary wall and property will have to take the occasional knock or even levelled to the ground cannot be right? Can it??

The narrow pavement is unfit for purpose, no one uses it except vehicles who mount it to squeeze by oncoming traffic swearing at each other as they do so!

I guess one has to live down this narrow street to fully understand the problems and potential dangers such as wing mirrors clipping pedestrians as they pass too closely. The likelihood of serious injury is real.

SCC's position is that Newark Lane is un-mitigatable. A Newark lane relief road crossing the land adjacent to Georgelands could be the only potential solution, although there is no funding for such a scheme.

4. Newark Lane / High Street road markings

A request has been made to refresh the SLOW road markings at the junction of Newark lane. A local resident has also noted the fading cross-hatching at the entrance to Exchange Cottages:



Road markings have been raised with SCC Highways Maintenance Dept.

5. Bus Shelter bike racks

The possibility of adding cycle racks behind the bus shelter was discussed at the meeting held 23.06.2021. The shelter is due to be re-installed imminently, and local businesses have again asked for cycle rack provision.

SCC's position is to support the addition of cycle racks behind the bus shelter. GBC has to be asked to create a Traffic regulation Order to rescind the parking bay behind the shelter, after which cycle racks can be added. Funding which was available last year is no longer accessible, but the owner of local café business NEST has offered to help finance a scheme.

6. Newark Lane / Rose Lane

The Ripley Business Association would like to add 'shop local' signage on both Newark Lane and Rose Lane. This is supported by the parish council and a discussion regarding the process would be welcome.

SCC's position is to consider each potential scheme on its own merits. It is unusual for permanent signs to be erected at locations close to the village centre. SCC would have to consider schemes which would be on land it owns.

7. Newark Lane Car Park

A local resident notes that the Newark lane car park barrier is never closed. This has led to fly-tipping and overnight stopping.

To be passed to SCC Highways Maintenance Dept.

8. Polseden Lane

A local resident would like the possibility of hedgerow / bank management explored, and has also raised questions over the repair of potholes.

SCC is looking into the matter.

9. Grove Heath Road / Gambles Lane

Correspondence from a local resident:

11.02.21

In November 2019, Savills, as managing agents of the Ryde Farm estate, engaged a contractor to slash the hedges on the estate's side (ie the SE side) of Grove Heath Road. The contractor carried out this work using a vast and heavy tractor, at a time when the road and its verges were very wet. The result along much of the road was to create very deep ruts in the grass verge where it was wide enough to do so. More seriously, where the verge was narrow the weight of the tractor squashed the mud horizontally pushing some of it into the road and the rest of it into the ditch so as to block or demolish the ditch. We protested to Savills. They apparently arranged a roadsweeper, the effect of which was to remove as much of the mud, formerly part of the verge, as had been displaced on to the road. In many places this widened the roadway well beyond the tarmac surface and the underlying foundations of the road.

We protested further to Savills about the damage their contractor had done, and after some delay we succeeded in having a meeting on-site with Savills' representative from their Petworth office,

[REDACTED]. He acknowledged the extent of the damage, saying that they would certainly never use that contractor again, and in an email of 16 December 2019 he said

"The verges will require some remedial work, which has been discussed with a contractor. However, given the verges are very soft, this is not the correct time to be carrying out any maintenance as it would only create more of a muddy mess. Once the verges dry out, we will be able to attend and maintain the areas of the verge where ruts were created by the tractor. I will endeavour to keep you up to date with the planning of this."

While the words he used did not set out the full extent of the damage requiring to be dealt with, we took it as an undertaking to repair, especially at the points where we showed him how the verge had been so totally removed as to widen the apparent road by up to a meter, in places which have now been further damaged to create muddy potholed informal passing places.

In further exchanges early in 2020 and oral discussion at an on-site meeting in March 2020, he said - for reasons we understood and accepted - that the work would need to wait until the autumn.

Covid 19 then intervened and we had other things on our mind until in September and October we began to contact Savills about the repair work. It turned out that [REDACTED] had left the company, and his successor, [REDACTED], told us that no record had been left of the earlier exchanges so we sent him copies. It took us some time to get him to a further on-site meeting from which we got the clear impression that he was disinclined to implement the undertakings given about repair. He has said (in December 2020) that he will 'monitor' the state of the road and its ditches during the winter. Whatever such 'monitoring' during the winter might reveal, as already agreed the winter is not a time of year when the necessary remedial work, on the verges as well as the ditches, can be carried out. Meanwhile the state of the road, and the extension of its informal muddy potholed passing places, continues to deteriorate.

16.03.21

Recent wet weather has added further damage to the widening of the road beyond its foundations, caused by the demolition of its verges in various places. The resulting traffic use beyond the tarmac surface is causing extensive dangerous potholes which are not obvious when filled with water, and traffic on the very edge of the tarmac is breaking it up, which will add to the need for and cost of repair of the road itself.

While I am at it, my daily cycle route includes Gambles Lane below the Grove Heath Court mobile home site before its right-angle corner into Kiln Lane. The collection of rubbish there, and the pong from the apparently defective sewage treatment plant which runs effluent down the road, are

presumably not the responsibility of Surrey highways. But it looks as though the flow of water has undermined the roadway, and there are distinct signs of very recent subsidence where the road surface is breaking up for one third to one half of its single lane width - this has happened fairly suddenly, within the last 4 weeks. Surrey highways might want to take a look at that entirely separate problem.

27.05.2021

Any intelligence about the highway authority's views on Grove Heath Road damage, and any suggestions re Gambles Lane, would be gratefully received!

SCC is looking into the matter.

Updates on progress

- Drainage outside St Mary Magdalen Church. **On programme to investigate further**
- Line painting in High Street. **List of areas sent to Maintenance Dept.**
- West End Cottages pavement reprofiling. **SCC due to meet with contractor**
- High Street pothole repairs and bay repainting from One Stop – Richardson's. **Due 16th July**
- Re-installation of bollards removed by UKPN. **Further information requested and sent**

Date: 03/09/2020

Quotation reference: 4039-1

Jim Morris, Ripley Parish Clerk

Dear Jim,

RE: Management Advice Quotation**Site address: Ripley Green**

Thank you for inviting Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) Ecology Services to provide a quotation to provide you with management advice for Ripley Green. From our discussion I understand that you are looking to continue to enhance the site for biodiversity and have already taken a number of steps to do this, including starting to write a Management Policy - Woodland & Meadow for the site.

SWT Ecology Services is an excellent choice to deliver this project given our extensive experience in managing land and advising our clients on how to achieve the best return for biodiversity. Our management advice ranges from large-scale sites (e.g. Reigate Heath) to smaller projects, such as Wood Street Village roadside reserve management. We can therefore tailor our advice to your objectives and budget. During our phone conversation on 1st September, we also discussed updating the botanical report potentially next year, we can provide a quote for this work if required.

Based on the above, the scope of work includes the following items; methods are provided below.

- A brief site visit
- A short letter report detailing the habitats present and key activities you can undertake to further enhance your site for biodiversity.

Project costs

The management advice is **£500.00** excl VAT. This includes the cost of the site visit and the short letter report and any associated equipment and expenses.

Should you require a botanical survey, the indicative cost of this would be **£1000-1200** excl VAT. A formal quotation would be provided should you wish to proceed with this.

Project timeframes

We have availability for the site visit during September. The exact date would be confirmed at the time of commissioning, should you wish to proceed with the quotation. We can submit the short letter report within 10 business days of completing the site visit.

Quote acceptance

Should you wish to accept our quotation, please confirm by writing, citing the quotation number, date and value. We would kindly request you provide us with any specific invoicing details, contact information and/or Purchase Order numbers prior to us commencing the project. We will invoice for the project prior to submission of the short letter report.

Yours sincerely,

Isobel Girvan BSc (Hons) MCIEEM - Principal Ecologist (07811440892)

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Survey methods

Site visit

We will meet you on the site to discuss any ongoing management, current issues, available background information and your objectives.

Reporting

The information collected during the site visit will be used to prepare a short letter report, identifying the key areas for you to focus future management.

Assumptions and project specifics

It is understood that access will be arranged by yourselves.

Please note that this quotation is valid for 90 days and our payment terms are 30 days from the invoice date.

If the project is cancelled with less than 48 hours of notice, we will charged a stand-down fee.

We will invoice the project on submission of the draft report. The invoice will detail the activities undertaken. Please do let us know if you have a specific payment schedule.

We hold the necessary insurances, including £20 million for employer's liability, £10 million for public liability and £5 million for professional indemnity.

We are ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and Acclaim accredited and are gold members of Constructiononline.

In line with best practice guidelines, any species records resulting from this project will be passed to the relevant Biological Records Centre.

Health and safety is of utmost importance to SWT Ecology Services. We kindly request that you notify us of any key health and safety issues that have been identified for the side ahead of our visit. Our surveyors will undertake a dynamic risk assessment prior to undertaking the survey. If we identify unacceptable risks we will need to reschedule the survey to a time when the hazard can be appropriately controlled. During the Covid-19 pandemic we will keep meeting to small groups only and adhere to social distancing.