

Worth Parish Council
Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on
15th May 2023 commencing at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr Dorey (Chairman)	Cllr Casella
Cllr Bingle	Cllr Dymond
Cllr Cruickshank	Cllr Hodsdon
Cllr Gibson	Cllr Kipps
Cllr King	Cllr Phillips
Cllr Lord	Cllr Stewart
Cllr Pointer	Cllr Wilson
Cllr Williams	2 members of the public.
Mrs J Nagy (Clerk)	

1 Election of Chairman

Cllr Dorey as Chairman 2022/2023 welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the first item is the election of the Chairman.

The Chairman advised that Voting would take place via a show of hands and invited nominations.

Cllr King proposed Cllr Dorey; seconded by Cllr Dymond.

There being no other nominations, it was AGREED by all present that Cllr Dorey be elected as Chairman of Worth Parish Council for 2023/2024

Cllr Dorey duly signed the Acceptance of Office.

2 Election of Vice Chairman

The Clerk advised that although not present at the meeting, Cllr Scott had indicated that he was willing to stand again, should Councillors so wish.

Cllr Dorey as Chairman invited nominations.

Cllr Dorey proposed Cllr Scott; seconded by Cllr Williams.

There being no other nominations, it was AGREED by all present that Cllr Scott be elected as Vice Chairman of Worth Parish Council for 2023/2024

Cllr Scott will sign the Acceptance of Office at the next meeting.

3 Public Question Time

A resident advised that following the recent resurfacing in Vicarage Rd in Crawley Down, the drains were blocked by loose tarmac.

The Clerk will report this to Highways.

4 Apologies

Apologies were noted and accepted from Cllrs Coote, Lord and Scott. Cllr Gibson will be arriving late.

5 Acceptance of Office

It was AGREED by all present that those Councillors who had not yet signed their Acceptance of Office documentation had fourteen days to do so.

6 Declarations of Interest

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

7 Minutes

It was agreed by all present that the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 24th April 2023 were a true and correct record.

8 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Cllrs Bingle, Kipps and Wilson to their first meeting.

He reminded Councillors that the Chairman's Dinner was to take place on Friday, 26th May; invitations had been sent out.

9 Correspondence & Action List

The correspondence and action lists were NOTED.

10 Committees

The following Committee Minutes and actions therein were NOTED.

Planning & Highways Committee: 17th April 2023

Date of next meeting: TBA, dependent on Agenda Item 18

11 Committee Structure

General Purposes & Finance Committee – 12 members

The membership was agreed as follows:

Cllr Bingle	Cllr Casella
Cllr Hodsdon	Cllr King
Cllr Kipps	Cllr Phillips
Cllr Pointer	Cllr Scott
Cllr Stewart	Cllr Williams
Cllr Wilson	Vacancy

Planning & Highways Committee – 12 members

The membership was agreed as follows:

Cllr Bingle	Cllr Casella
Cllr Coote	Cllr Kipps
Cllr King	Cllr Lord
Cllr Pointer	Cllr Stewart
Cllr Williams	Cllr Wilson
Vacancy	Vacancy

Human Resources Committee – 6 members

The membership was agreed as follows:

Cllr Casella	Cllr Coote
Cllr Dorey	Cllr Hodsdon
Cllr King	Cllr Pointer

Allotment Sub Committee – 6 members

The membership was agreed as follows:

Cllr Cruickshank	Cllr Hodsdon
Cllr Phillips	Cllr Pointer
Cllr Scott	Cllr Stewart

Joint Neighbourhood Plan Committee – 8 members, four from each ward

The membership was agreed as follows:

Copthorne	Crawley Down
Cllr Casella	Cllr Gibson
Cllr Dorey	Cllr Pointer
Cllr Lord	Cllr Williams
Cllr Phillips	Cllr Wilson

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – 12 members (6 councillors, 6 residents)

The membership was agreed as follows:

Councillors	Co-opted members
Cllr Casella	Mr Mike Livesey
Cllr Dorey	Vacancy
Cllr King	Vacancy
Cllr Phillips	Vacancy
Cllr Stewart	Vacancy
Vacancy	Vacancy

The Clerk will contact the non-councillor members to check that they still want to be on this group.

Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee - 12 members (6 councillors, 6 residents)

The membership was agreed as follows:

Councillors	Co-opted members
Cllr Bingle	Mr John Plank
Cllr Kipps	Mr Stephen Plank
Cllr Pointer	Dr J Thring
Cllr Williams	Mr S Hearn
Cllr Wilson	Vacancy
	Vacancy

Both Cllrs Coote and Gibson, not present at the meeting, had expressed an interest to be on this Advisory Committee.

The Clerk will put this Advisory Committee membership on the next Council meeting for a decision as to which Councillor has the final place.

The Clerk will contact the non-councillor members to check that they still want to be on this group.

11 Appointment of Committee Chairman

The following Chairmen were elected.

General Purposes & Finance Committee

The Clerk advised that although not present at the meeting, Cllr Scott had indicated that he was willing to stand again as Chairman of this Committee, should Councillors so wish.

Cllr Scott; proposed by Cllr Hodsdon, seconded by Cllr Bingle, agreed by all Committee members present.

Planning & Highways Committee

Cllr Williams; proposed by Cllr Bingle, seconded by Cllr Pointer agreed by all Committee members present.

HR Committee

Cllr Hodsdon; proposed by Cllr Dorey, seconded by Cllr Casella, agreed by all Committee members present.

Joint Neighbourhood Plan Committee

Cllr Casella; proposed by Cllr Phillips, seconded by Cllr Williams agreed by all Committee members present.

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Dorey; proposed by Cllr King, seconded by Cllr Casella, agreed by all Steering Group members present.

Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee

As the membership of this Committee had not been agreed, the election of Chairman would be deferred to the next meeting.

Allotments Sub-Committee

Cllr Cruickshank, proposed by Cllr Pointer seconded by Cllr Stewart, agreed by all Sub-Committee members present.

12 Working Parties

Community Land Trust Working Party – up to 6 members, including members of the public.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodsdon, seconded by Cllr Bingle and AGREED by all present to disband this Working Party on the understanding that it can be reconvened if required.

Copthorne Environment & Infrastructure Working Party – up to 10 members, including members of the public.

The membership was agreed as follows:

Cllr Casella	Cllr Dorey
Cllr Dymond	Cllr Hodsdon
Mr M Livesey	Cllr Lord
Cllr King	Mr C Mayor
Cllr Phillips	Ms H Reeves
Cllr Stewart	

It was noted that membership exceeded the current remit; this is to be reviewed at the first meeting of this Working Party

The Clerk will contact the non-councillor members to check that they still want to be on this group.

Crawley Down Environment & Infrastructure Working Party – up to 10 members, including members of the public.

The membership was agreed as follows:

Mrs S Baldery	Cllr Coote
Cllr Cruickshank	Mr C. Davis
Cllr Gibson	Cllr Pointer
Cllr Scott	Mr R Webb
Mrs K Webb	Cllr Williams
Cllr Wilson	

The remit for this Working Party will be reviewed at the first meeting.

The Clerk will contact the non-councillor members to check that they still want to be on this group.

Governance Working Party – 4 members, all councillors.

The membership was agreed as follows:

Cllr Dorey	Cllr Hodsdon
Cllr Phillips	Cllr Scott

Gatwick Airport Working Party – up to 6 members, including members of the public.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodsdon, seconded by Cllr Bingle and AGREED by all present that this Working Party be disbanded, and its remit transferred to the Planning Committee.

Governance Review Working Party

It was proposed by Cllr Hodsdon, seconded by Cllr Bingle and AGREED by all present that this Working Party be disbanded on the understanding that it can be reconvened if required.

14 Appointment to Outside Bodies

Councillors considered representation on various outside bodies.

The following appointments were agreed:

Organisation	Representative(s)
CAGNE	Cllr Lord
Central Sussex Rotary	Cllr Dorey
Cluster Group	To be deferred, as not met for some time
Copthorne Sports & Community Association	Cllr Stewart
Copthorne Village Hall Management Committee	Cllr Hodsdon
Copthorne Village Association	Cllr Stewart
Copthorne Community Group	Cllr Pointer
Crawley Down Village Hall Committee	Cllr Scott
Crawley Down Surgery PPG	Cllr Scott
Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign	Cllr Lord
Gatwick Liaison Group	Cllr Lord
Mid Sussex District Association of Local Councils*	Cllrs Bingle and Hodsdon
Shelley Education Foundation	Cllr Coote and Pointer
St Modwen Liaison Group	Cllrs Dorey, Phillips and the Clerk
Sussex Police Focus Group	The Chair and the Clerk
West Sussex ALC Ltd	Cllrs Dorey and Scott as Chair and Vice Chair

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

The Clerk will advise those bodies accordingly.

15 General Power of Competence

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.

As this is the first meeting after a contested election, all Councillors are elected.

Both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk are qualified, in that they both hold the Certificate of Local Council Administration or CiLCA.

Councillors NOTED that the Council still met the criteria under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 in

order to hold the General Power of Competence.

16 Review Authorised Signatories

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

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

These signatories were NOTED and AGREED.

It was further AGREED that when appointed, the Vice Chair of the GP&F Committee would be an additional cheque signatory.

17 Councillor Allowances

The Members Allowance Policy has been circulated. It should be noted for future reference that only elected councillors can apply for the allowance; co-opted councillors are not eligible.

As this is the first meeting after an election, all councillors will be eligible to claim the allowance of £500 a year should they so wish, the RFO will be advising how to apply.

The Members Allowance Policy was NOTED.

18 Meeting Schedule and Committee Terms of Reference

The Chairman proposed that the change in meeting dates should be discussed first.

It was generally felt that having fewer meetings reduced councillors' accountability to residents.

The Chairman asked what frequency would be preferred; it was felt that this should be a matter for the Governance Working Party to discuss, together with committee remits.

It was proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr Dorey that the revised monthly meeting schedule as suggested in the Clerk's report be accepted. However, this motion failed via a majority vote. It was therefore AGREED to keep the current schedule without change.

The Chairman proposed that the meeting venue should now be considered.

The Clerk advised that she had had a reply from Kevin Toogood, MSDC Monitoring Officer, in reply to her querying the legality of meeting in Crawley Down. He states he sees no difficulty having meetings at a different venue, quoting the LGA 1972 Sch. 12 Para. 10 as evidence:

"Meetings of a parish council shall be held at such place, either within or without their area, as they may direct, but shall not be held in [premises which at the time of such a meeting may, by virtue of a premises licence or temporary event notice under the Licensing Act 2003, be used for the supply of alcohol (within the meaning of section 14 of that Act)]¹ unless no other suitable room is available either free of charge or at a reasonable cost."

However, this is the same paragraph that the Clerk has been citing to say that the meetings are not permissible, in that the Haven Centre is licenced premises throughout, and that the South Room is available free of charge. This opinion has been confirmed by WSALC and SLCC legal advisors, both solicitors experienced in council legislation.

It was generally felt that it would be beneficial to have meetings in Crawley Down. The Clerk's advice was formally noted, but she was asked to seek alternative venues that were not licenced, such as Crawley Down School.

It was agreed that the next Full Council meeting would be held in Crawley Down, with this item on the agenda, with additional information to be provided by the Clerk.

19 Council Policies

Standing Orders

As no change to the current meeting schedule was agreed at Item 18, there will be no change to the current Standing Orders.

Councillors NOTED the current Standing Orders.

Financial Regulations

A copy of the current Financial Regulations has been circulated.

These were amended last year; there are no additional amendments.

Councillors NOTED the current Financial Regulations.

Risk Management Plan 2023/2024

A copy of the Risk Management Plan has been circulated; this has been amended in red to show that a tree survey is due in 2023, as agreed at Full Council on 24th April.

Councillors NOTED and AGREED the Risk Management Plan.

Cllr Williams asked about the frequency of tree surveys; they are every three years as per the Tree and Land Management Policy. However, the Clerk will check the latest legal advice.

Grants Payable

The s137 allowance for 2023/24 is £9.93 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 NOTED the current s137 allowance.

20 Confirmation of Internal Auditor

At the Annual Meeting held on 4th May 2021, it was agreed to continue to employ Mark Mulberry & Co on an ongoing basis, to be confirmed at each Annual Meeting.

It was AGREED by all present that Mulberry & Co be confirmed as Internal Auditor for 2023/2024

21 Internal Auditor's Report

Andy Beams of Mulberry & Co carried out the internal audit on 2nd May; his report has been circulated.

Recommendations to note are on page 3 of the report

- That supporting papers are published on the website. This has not been the practice previously, but the Internal Auditor advised this now a requirement.
- That whilst the bank reconciliations and bank statements are being signed by a councillor, this is not being reported to Council. The Clerk will ensure that this is reported to the GP&F Committee quarterly.

The Internal Auditor's report and recommendations therein was formally NOTED.

22 Annual Governance & Accountability Return and Public Inspection of 2021/2022 Accounts

The Clerk referred to the draft Return and accompanying information circulated.

- a) Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 – to agree Section One of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return
AGREED by all present
- b) That the Chairman signs the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023
AGREED by all present
- c) Accounting Statements 2022/2023 – to agree Section Two of the Annual Governance &

Accountability Return
AGREED by all present

- d) That the Chairman and the RFO signs the Annual Accounting Statements 2022/2023
AGREED by all present
- e) To note the additional information to be sent to the External Auditor in support of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2022/2023 by the submission date of 30th June 2023
AGREED by all present
- f) To agree and adopt the public inspection period for the 2022/2023 Annual Governance & Accountability Return, this being Friday, 2nd June to Friday, 14th July 2023
AGREED by all present

23 Accounts & Financial Matters

Receipt of Precept

The first tranche of the precept has been received on 29th April, a sum of £175,000

Councillors formally NOTED receipt.

24 Bowers Place Parking Scheme Advisor

John Hitchcock has advised the Council over the past three years on this project, as part of his role as a Parish Councillor

Mr Hitchcock did not stand at the Parish Council Elections so is no longer a Parish Councillor, although he now represents Crawley Down ward as District Councillor.

He has kindly agreed to continue to assist the Clerk with this project.

It was AGREED by all present that Mr Hitchcock will assist the Clerk in managing the Bowers Place Parking Scheme project. The Clerk will check the insurance implications.

25 Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday, 5th June 2023

Meeting closed at 20.58 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____