

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held in the South Room at the Parish Hub, Copthorne on 19th May 2025 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Dorey (Chairman) Cllr Coote (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Bingle Cllr Casella
Cllr Cruickshank Cllr Dymond
Cllr Gibson Cllr Hodsdon
Cllr King Cllr Kipps
Cllr Lord Cllr Phillips
Cllr Pointer Cllr Scott
Cllr Stewart Cllr Williams
Cllr Wilson

Mrs L Bannister (Chief Officer)

0 members of the public

001 Election of Chair and Acceptance of Office

It was RESOLVED to elect Cllr Dorey as Chair. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed.

002 Election of Vice Chair

It was RESOLVED to elect Cllr Coote as Vice Chair.

003 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

004 Apologies

None.

005 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Gibson declared an interest in item 23 regarding Operation Watershed as a WSCC councillor.

006 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24th March 2025.

007 Chair's Announcements

The PCSO will be holding a scam talk at the Parish Hub in Copthorne on 24th June 10.30am.

Nominations for the Parish Awards are now closed. There have been several people nominated, and councillors will be asked to vote to select a winner. There have been prizes donated by Tulleys Tea Rooms and Olive Branch Hypnotherapy so far.

Insp Derrick will attend the Full Council meeting on 21st July.

Cllr Dorey made the following speech:

"It had been suggested to me leading up to the election of the new Chair that WPC requires a new approach or direction and needs a new team running WPC. I would like to address both these issues and clarify my position relating to both.

*The **direction** of the council is governed by us – the elected members of the Council. Since the last local elections in 2023 there has been a lot of discussion regarding the Council direction and governance, and I feel this has been both listened to and acted upon resulting in an incredible 100% turnover of Officers and Groundsmen since the last local elections. I do not think anyone sitting around this table can - or would - dispute that the result of this is a stronger than ever team running WPC under the superb guidance of our Chief Officer.*

*And that leads me to the second point – the **running** of WPC. The Council is run by the Officers, led by the Chief Officer. Their role is to ensure that the Council goes in the direction agreed by the Members – or at least by a majority of them as we do work in a democracy which by default*

means that not everyone will be happy with all decisions. The election of the Chair this evening is a great example of this.

To summarise my opinion, we are already moving in a new and exciting direction, and we have the best team in place to run the Council accordingly. As your Chair for the next year – and I stress that is Chair of WPC, not Copthorne – my job is to support Leanne and the Officers to the best of my ability which I feel I have done so far in my tenure as Chair. Our job collectively is to ensure the Council continues to go in the direction that best serves our residents. I feel with all the changes to our governance and representation we have ample opportunities to do this through all the working parties recommending direction to the relevant Committees and Full Council. So if the Council is not moving in the direction that you desire, I suggest this is for one of two reasons:- either your issues have not been discussed by the working parties, or they have been discussed and the majority decision does not support your views. If it is the former, I strongly urge you to raise the issues at the earliest opportunity. If it is the latter I strongly urge you to accept we are working within a democracy and cannot always get what we individually want.

The most important issues for me in the coming year are to progress, and hopefully complete, the major projects we are currently undertaking in the Parish, and to fully engage in the transition process towards a Unitary Authority in whatever guise that may be to ensure we get the best results for our villages futures.

To do the above, we need to work collaboratively as a Council and that means all Members from both villages working together and cohesively and that is the support I urge you all to give.”

Cllr Coote supported Cllr Dorey’s comments, and also thanked members for electing him as Vice Chair.

008 Correspondence, Action List & Updates

The following were noted:

- a. Correspondence received
- b. Update on resolutions/actions
- c. Update on projects
- d. Update on Youth Provision - unavailable
- e. Latest website data
- f. The latest crime figures for Copthorne, Crawley Down and Turners Hill

009 Committees

The Minutes and actions of the following Committees as circulated were noted:

- a. Planning & Highways Committee – 7th April 2025. Next meeting date 12th May 2025.
- b. Finance & General Purposes Committee – 7th April 2025. Next meeting date 12th May 2025.
- c. Assets & Amenities Committee – 17th March 2025. Next meeting date 16th June 2025.
- d. HR Committee – 25th April 2025 (confidential minutes available for Councillors, see relevant item below). Next meeting date to be confirmed.

010 Working Parties

The notes and actions of the following Working Parties as circulated were noted:

- a. Copthorne Village Working Party – 2nd April 2025, 16th April 2025, 30th April 2025. Next meeting to be held on 14th May 2025.
- b. Crawley Down Village Working Party – 9th April 2025, 7th May 2025. Next meeting to be held on 18th June.
- c. Worth Parish Council Working Party – 7th April 2025. Next meeting to be confirmed.

011 Committee Structure

- a. The membership for Standing Committees was confirmed as follows:

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr Casella	Cllr Coote
Cllr Dorey	Cllr Hodsdon
Cllr King	Cllr Kipps

Cllr Lord	Cllr Phillips
Cllr Pointer	Cllr Scott
Cllr Williams	Cllr Wilson

Planning & Highways Committee

Cllr Bingle	Cllr Casella
Cllr Coote	Cllr Dorey
Cllr King	Cllr Kipps
Cllr Pointer	Cllr Williams
Cllr Wilson	

Amenities & Assets Committee

Cllr Bingle	Cllr Casella
Cllr Coote	Cllr Cruickshank
Cllr Dorey	Cllr Dymond
Cllr King	Cllr Phillips
Cllr Scott	Cllr Stewart
Cllr Williams	Cllr Wilson

Human Resources Committee

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

- b. It was RESOLVED to confirm the dissolution of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee; this activity to become the responsibility of the Planning & Highways Committee.

012 Appointment of Committee Chairs

It was RESOLVED to appoint the following Chairs:

Finance & General Purposes Committee	Cllr Phillips
Planning & Highways Committee	Cllr Williams
Amenities & Assets Committee	Cllr Casella
Human Resources Committee	Cllr Hodsdon

013 Working Parties

The membership of the Working Parties was confirmed as follows:

- Copthorne Working Party – all Ward Councillors plus up to 10 additional members, to be appointed by the Working Party.
- Crawley Down Working Party - all Ward Councillors plus up to 10 additional members, to be appointed by the Working Party.
- Worth Parish Council Working Party – all Councillors.
- It was RESOLVED to create a Working Party to consider the Local Government Review. Members will be Cllr Bingle, Cllr Casella, Cllr Coote, Cllr Dorey, Cllr Hodsdon, Cllr Williams, Cllr Wilson. A Terms of Reference will be drafted.

A Working Party to consider S106 was suggested. Instead, Council will attempt to get an expert on S106 to attend the meeting.

014 Appointment to Outside Bodies

It was RESOLVED to appoint the following:

Organisation	Representative(s)
CAGNE	Cllr Lord
Central Sussex Rotary	Cllr Dorey
Copthorne Sports & Community Association	Cllr Stewart
Copthorne Village Hall Management Committee	Cllr Hodsdon
Copthorne Village Association	Cllr Dorey
Crawley Down Village Hall Committee	Cllr Scott
Crawley Down Surgery PPG	Cllr Wilson

Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign	Cllr Lord
Gatwick Liaison Group	Cllr Lord
Mid Sussex District Association of Local Councils	Cllr Coote & Cllr Dorey
Shelley Education Foundation	Cllr Coote & Cllr Dorey
St Modwen Liaison Group	Cllr Dorey & Cllr Phillips
Sussex Police Focus Group	Cllr Dorey
West Sussex Association of Local Councils	Cllr Coote & Cllr Dorey

015 Civility & Respect

It was NOTED that the Council has signed up to the Civility & Respect Pledge.

016 General Power of Competence

It was CONFIRMED that the Council complies with S1 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.

017 Authorised Banking Signatories

The current signatories were confirmed as:

Bank	Signatories
Natwest	Cllrs Dorey, Lord and Scott L Bannister, H Smith and D Showell
Barclays current	Cllrs Coote, Dorey, Scott and Phillips L Bannister, H Smith and D Showell
Barclays savings	Cllrs Coote, Dorey, Scott and Phillips L Bannister, H Smith and D Showell
Unity Bank Trust	Cllrs Dorey, Lord and Scott L Bannister, H Smith and D Showell
CCLA	Cllrs Lord and Scott L Bannister and D Showell
Cambridge Building Society	Cllrs Dorey and Scott L Bannister and D Showell

Note that where office staff are appointed as signatories, this is for administrative purposes only.

018 Council Policies

It was RESOLVED to approve the following policies:

- a. Risk Management Plan 2025/2026
- b. Standing Orders
- c. Financial Regulations
- d. Worth Parish Council Working Party Terms of Reference
- e. Planning & Highways Committee Terms of Reference
- f. Amenities & Assets Committee Terms of Reference
- g. Finance & General Purpose Committee Terms of Reference
- h. Absence Management Policy
- i. Appraisal Policy
- j. Data Protection Policy
- k. Data Protection Policy (staff)
- l. IT Policy
- m. Training & Development Policy
- n. Members Allowance Policy for 2025/2026
- o. Complaints Procedure
- p. Council Representation on Outside Bodies
- q. Internal Privacy Policy
- r. Vehicle Policy

019 Confirmation of Internal Auditor

It was RESOLVED to appoint Mulberry & Co as Internal Auditor for the 2025/2026 financial year.

020 Annual Governance & Accountability Return & Public Inspection of 2025/2025 Accounts

It was RESOLVED to approve the following:

- a. Annual Governance Statement 2024/2025. This was duly signed by the Chair and Chief Officer.
- b. Accounting Statements 2024/2025. This was duly signed by the Chair.
- c. The public inspection period for the 2024/2025 Annual Governance & Accountability Return, this being 3rd June to 14th July 2024.

021 Reports from other Authorities

Cllr Gibson reported on the Local Government Review, in particular that:

- The Minister has said that whatever structure is delivered must be more cost effective than the current structure.
- Local Government Review will not deliver changes according to the leader of WSCC.

Cllr Gibson also reported that the Crawley Down Village Hall was not considered at the most recent MSDC Cabinet meeting as they had not received all of the information that they needed from the Village Hall's legal advisors.

Cllr Hodsdon left the meeting

022 Consultations

It was RESOLVED to respond to the West Sussex County Council's Relevant Area for Admissions 26-27 consultation. Councillors to send their views to the Chief Officer so that a response can be submitted.

Cllr Gibson left the meeting

023 Operation Watershed

It was RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Chief Officer to make the grant application based on the contractor that scores the highest, and the Council can formally agree the appointment of the contractor if the funding is awarded.

024 Representatives attending outside meetings.

- a. The report from the meeting with S106 officers was noted.

025 Personnel

It was RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting for this item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 due to the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed.

The report from the Chief Officer was noted.

026 Projects

It was RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to award 'Contract E: Civils Package 2' for the Copthorne Recreation Ground.

027 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 21st July 2025, at the Glebe Centre, Crawley Down.

Meeting closed at 8.26 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____