

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the South Room at the Glebe Centre, Crawley Down on 21st July 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 Stewart	Cllr Scott
	Cllr Wilson	Cllr Williams
	Mrs L Bannister (Chief Officer)	Insp. D Derrick
		G Kearney (Assistant Clerk – Projects)
		P Budgen – Project Manager for Copthorne Recreation Ground

028 Public Question Time

Inspector Derrick has been in post over two years and is responsible for Mid Sussex. This is a huge area to cover, but has one of the lowest crime areas in Sussex. The main challenges are the scale of the area and resources available to them.

Most of the rural areas are very low in crime.

Statistics were given for the East Grinstead area, which highlighted that most of their emergency calls are related to domestic abuse. They have had a 20% increase in thefts, which is partially related to their new reporting system but it was noted that they do see an increase in thefts in times of austerity.

All councillors are welcome to have Insp Derrick's contact details.

The following issues were raised:

- Anti-social behaviour and criminal damage at Crawley Down Pond. Insp Derrick advised that this should always be reported. The area Sargeant sees all reports and uses them to make decisions on where patrols will be sent. Reports can be made to 101 anonymously if needed.
- Groups of children congregating outside shops which causes concern locally.
- Electric scooters and bikes – it is illegal to use these on any public area (e.g. roads and pavements). Passing Police will not pull over people using these as they won't create a 'chase' situation which could result in injury.
- Hotels housing immigrants/refugees – crime statistics show that crime is higher in Copthorne than in Crawley Down, is this linked to Copthorne Hotel? Insp Derrick reported that there are around 11 hotels in the area housing 1,500-2,000 of the vulnerable people in the world. They receive weekly visits from PCSOs and their contact with them is positive. Statistics do not show a rise in crime linked to these hotels.
- If a child is found with alcohol, the Police do follow up where this is from.
- Morrisons in Copthorne has been burgled four times in the last month. This is common at the moment. Businesses are encouraged to increase their security. Personal burglaries are a priority over business burglaries.

Worth Parish Council is rolling out CCTV and Insp. Derrick was asked his views on this. He stated that CCTV is a really useful deterrent.

Insp Derrick left the meeting

029 Apologies

None.

030 Declarations of Interest

None.

031 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve:

- a. The Minutes of the full Council meeting held on 19th May 2025
- b. The Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee held 20th January 2025

032 Chair's Announcements

The Chairman apologised that he was unable to attend the Chair's dinner, but hoped everyone enjoyed the evening.

033 Correspondence, Action List & Updates

The following were noted:

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

034 Committees

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

- a. Planning & Highways Committee – 12th May 2025, 2nd June 2025, 7th July 2025. Next meeting 1st September 2025.
- b. Finance & General Purposes Committee – 12th May 2025, 2nd June 2025, 7th July 2025. Next meeting 1st September 2025.
- c. Assets & Amenities Committee – 16th June 2025. Next meeting 22nd September 2025.
- d. HR Committee – 11th July 2025 (notes of meeting included in confidential report below). Next meeting date to be confirmed.

035 Working Parties

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

- a. Copthorne Village Working Party – 14th May 2025, 28th May 2025, 11th June 2025, 18th June 2025, 9th July 2025. Next meeting to be held on 23rd July 2025.
- b. Crawley Down Village Working Party – 7th May 2025, 18th June 2025, 9th July 2025. Next meeting to be held on 16th July 2025.
- c. Local Government Working Party – 11th June 2025. Next meeting to be confirmed.

036 Reports from other Authorities

Nothing to report.

037 Vision Document

It was RESOLVED to approve the Vision Document.

038 Council Policies

It was RESOLVED to approve the following policies:

- a. Procurement Policy
- b. Document Retention Policy
- c. Local Government Review Working Party Terms of Reference
- d. Disciplinary Policy
- e. Grievance Policy
- f. Equal Opportunities Policy
- g. Holiday Policy
- h. Flexible Working and Predictable Terms Policy
- i. HR Committee Terms of Reference

039 Representatives attending outside meetings.

The notes of the MSDC Communications and Liaison Group meeting were noted.

040 Copthorne Recreation Ground

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Subject to the approval of the S106 applications submitted, approve the revised budget as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The total budget for the project is £651,633.85 plus VAT and will be funded as set out in the report.
- b. Approve the use of earmarked reserves as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee:
£10,276 from the Copthorne Recreation Ground fund
£5,000 from the Lashmere fund
£20,000 from the CCTV fund
- c. Subject to the approval of the S106 applications submitted, seek approval of the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a Public Works Loan of up to £150,000 over the borrowing term of 10 years to part fund the Copthorne Recreation Ground Rejuvenation Project, as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 2nd September 2024. It is intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 4.43% which is the equivalent of an additional £18,627 a year. This will be subject to a precept increase consultation. It was noted that the loan amount applied for will be reduced if funding/donation/sponsorship applications and requests are successful.

041 S106

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Approve the strategy for maximising use of S106 funds.
- b. Implement the process for determining future needs & communicating this to the Planning Authority.

042 Communications

- a. Parish Awards – it was agreed that the Village Working Parties should consider the best way of getting nominations and deciding on the winner.
- b. It was noted that surgeries are taking place on 22nd July in Copthorne (Olivers) and 27th August in Crawley Down (outside shops) in conjunction with the PCSO and Age UK.

043 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. It was acknowledged that staff are currently working at capacity and the current TOIL/workload level is not sustainable in the long term, and the solution was accepted as a short term issue. It was RESOLVED to vire £8,000 from the Youth Staff budget to set up a new code for overtime. This can be used to pay off the accrued TOIL, and also allow overtime going forward so that work levels can be maintained.

044 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 15th September 2025, at the Parish Hub, Copthorne.

Meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____