

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the South Room at the Haven, Crawley Down on 20th November 2025 commencing at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Coote (Acting Chairman) Cllr Hodsdon (Acting Vice Chairman)
Cllr Bingle Cllr Cruickshank
Cllr Dymond Cllr Kipps
Cllr Lord Cllr Pointer
Cllr Williams Cllr Wilson

Mrs L Bannister (Chief Officer)

Due to the absence of Cllr Dorey, Cllr Coote took on the role of Chair, and Cllr Hodsdon was appointed as Vice Chair.

059 Public Question Time

No questions were raised.

060 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Casella, Dorey, Phillips, Scott and Stewart.

Absent: Cllr Gibson and Cllr King

061 Declarations of Interest

None.

062 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the full Council meeting held on 15th September 2025 and these were duly signed by the Chair.

063 Chair's Announcements

Councillors were reminded to ensure they have read the papers and checked any queries they have with the office before the meeting.

Thanks were given to Cllr Williams for representing the Parish Council at the District Planning Committee. Thanks were also offered to Cllr Gibson.

064 Correspondence, Action List & Updates

The following were noted:

- a. Correspondence received
- b. Update on resolutions/actions
- c. Update on projects
- d. Latest website data – engagement rate is showing downward trend
- e. The latest crime figures for Copthorne, Crawley Down and Turners Hill
- f. Freedom of Information request
- g. Response from Home Office

065 Committees

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

- a. Planning & Highways Committee – 2nd October 2025 and 3rd November 2025. Next meeting 1st December 2025.
- b. Finance & General Purposes Committee – 2nd October 2025 and 3rd November 2025. Next meeting 1st December 2025.
- c. Assets & Amenities Committee – 22nd September 2025. Next meeting 15th December 2025.
- d. HR Committee – 19th September 2025. Next meeting 28th November 2025.

066 Working Parties

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

- a. Copthorne Village Working Party – 17th September 2025, 1st October 2025, 15th October 2025, 29th October 2025 and 12th November 2025. Next meeting 26th November 2025.
- b. Crawley Down Village Working Party – 16th July 2025, 17th September 2025 and 15th October 2025. Next meeting 19th November 2025.
- c. Local Government Working Party – 29th September 2025. Next meeting to be confirmed.

067 Reports from other Authorities

No reports were received.

068 Art Display

Cllr Coote explained his plans for this event. Many points were raised including:

- How and what to charge
- Reduced rates for children
- Village Working Parties to contribute towards the costs
- Potentially moving back the timeline to later in the year
- Entry fee to event

It was felt that the best venue for the event would be the Haven.

It was RESOLVED to set up a Task Group (Working Party) to consider this in more detail. Cllrs Pointer, Lord and Coote offered to be members and membership will be open to members of the public that are involved in relevant groups/clubs.

069 Representatives attending outside meetings.

It was agreed to NOTE:

- a. MSDC Liaison Group.
- b. Cllr Pointer attended the Shelley Foundation annual meeting to decide the issuing of grants. This organisation issues small grants to students going on to higher education to help with the purchase of books or specialist equipment needed. They had £900 to grant and this was open to anyone under 25 in Worth Parish.
- c. Cllr Hodsdon attended the Copthorne Village Hall Committee which took the decision to remove the services of a manager and trustees have stepped in to manage the hall on behalf of the committee.

070 Copthorne Recreation Ground

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Note the update regarding the S106 application. Since publication of the report, MSDC has since approved the funding of £199,706.49.
- b. Seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for borrowing approval for a loan of £150,000 over the borrowing term of 10 years to part fund the Copthorne Recreation Ground Project. It is intended to increase the Council Tax Precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 4.43%, which is the equivalent of £18,627 a year. This would represent an annual cost to the average Band D household of £3.49. A Precept increase consultation took place in September 2025. Of the 116 responses received, 112 people were supportive of the increase in Precept to pay for the loan, and 4 people were against this. The annual loan repayment would cost the Council £18,756.06 each year over the course of the loan based on an interest rate of 5.24%. It was noted that the loan amount will be reduced if other funding/donations/sponsorship applications and requests are successful.
- c. Confirm that Worth Parish Council is comfortable and confident in being able to meet the loan repayments for this planned project as well as for the two existing Public Works Loans that need to be repaid.
- d. Approve the submission of an application for a National Lottery Awards for All grant of up to the maximum amount of £20,000 for the Copthorne Recreation Ground Playground on the understanding that in doing so it is agreeing to their terms and conditions outlined in Appendix 1.
- e. Approve the continuance of the project with the S278 design and agreement, CDM and discharging planning conditions once the Public Works Loan has been approved.

071 Policy

It was RESOLVED to approve the following:

- a. Emergency On-Call Scheme
- b. Homeworking Policy
- c. London Bridge Procedure – approved subject to adding provision for ensuring there are equal sets of equipment for both villages, flexibility over timelines and flexibility over the procedure to ensure adherence to official information being released.
- d. Lone Working Policy
- e. Menopause Policy
- f. Overtime Policy
- g. Recruitment Policy
- h. Social Media Policy
- i. Wellbeing Policy
- j. Safeguarding Policy

The Drugs & Alcohol Policy will be referred to the HR Committee for further clarification regarding drug testing.

072 CCTV

It was RESOLVED to confirm the increased quotation of £15,795.33 for CCTV to be installed at 2 and 3b Station Road, Crawley Down.

073 Parish Awards

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Approve the Policy.
- b. Approve the plan for the event.

074 IT Policy

It was confirmed that this policy is applicable to councillors as well as staff. Councillors in attendance signed to confirm they have read and understood the policy.

075 Schedule of Meetings

It was RESOLVED to approve the meeting dates and venues from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027.

076 Business & Action Plans

It was RESOLVED to approve the plans in draft form, and to confirm the plan for public consultation.

077 Budget & 3-year forecast

It was NOTED that the budget forecast is underway, and all councillors are invited to attend a Worth Parish Council Working Party meeting on Monday 24th November at 7.30pm to review the budget to date.

078 Personnel

The confidential report was NOTED in relation to the following matters:

- Appraisals – all complete.
- Youth – recruitment for the third youth worker is underway. The amount of hours required is under constant review.
- Staff budget requirement for the upcoming financial years.
- Two minor incidents took place resulting in one insurance claim for a replacement window to a vehicle.
- The Chief Officer will be completing the Community Governance Level 4 qualification.
- Capacity of the office is under close scrutiny and the overtime budget is now in use.
- Process improvements – the office is taking advantage of any process improvements to improve efficiency.

079 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 19th January 2026, at the Parish Hub, Copthorne. An additional meeting will be held on Monday 12th January to decide the contractors for Bowers Place.

Meeting closed at 8.37 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____