

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held in the Parish Hub, Copthorne on 23rd March 2026 commencing at 7.30pm

Present:	Cllr Dorey (Chair)	Cllr Coote (Vice Chair)
	Cllr Casella	Cllr Cruickshank
	Cllr Dymond	Cllr Gibson
	Cllr King	Cllr Kipps
	Cllr Phillips	Cllr Pointer
	Cllr Scott	Cllr Stewart
	Cllr Williams	Cllr Wilson
	Mrs L Bannister (Chief Officer)	1 member of the public

102 Public Question Time

A member of the public invited councillors to attend a meeting on the Copthorne roundabout on 18th April at 11am to hear residents' views on the use of the Copthorne Hotel. The member of the public requested an update on the situation and was advised:

- The Parish Council has no involvement in the management of the hotel or the decisions leading to the use of the hotel, and is generally not kept up to date with information
- The Parish Council has not formed (and is not able to form) a view on the use of the hotel for immigration/asylum seeking as the Parish Council is a non-political body
- The Parish Council has objected to the loss of the hotel as an amenity

103 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hodsdon, Lord and Bingle.

104 Declarations of Interest

None.

105 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 19th January 2026. These were duly signed by the Chair.

106 Chairman's Announcements

Cllr Coote thanked all members for his award.

107 Correspondence, Action List & Updates

The following were NOTED:

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

108 Committees

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

- a. Planning & Highways Committee – 2nd February 2026 and 2nd March 2026. Next meeting 13th April 2026.
- b. Finance & General Purposes Committee – 2nd February 2026 and 2nd March 2026. Next meeting 13th April 2026.
- c. Amenities & Assets Committee – none available. Next meeting 15th June 2026.
- d. HR Committee – 9th March 2026. Next meeting to be set.

109 Working Parties

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

- a. Copthorne Village Working Party – 21st January 2026, 4th February 2026, 18th February 2026 and 4th March 2026. Next meeting 19th March 2026.
- b. Crawley Down Village Working Party – 21st January 2026 and 25th February 2026 (and confidential notes). Next meeting 26th March 2026.
- c. Worth Parish Council Working Party – 26th January 2026. Next meeting date to be set.

110 Reports from other Authorities

It was reported that:

- County Council elections are due in May
- A decision on the Local Government Review is expected this week
- A motion has been made at County to block any assets being passed before the new Unitary Authority is formed
- The District Plan hearings have now finished. The Inspector has taken a positive attitude and it is hoped that the Plan will be in place in August. However, the District Council has been instructed to increase the housing numbers by almost 300 per year.
- Crawley Borough Council has passed a motion to have Crabbet Park designed in accordance with their policies. MSDC does not agree with this.
- All applicants to Imberhorne received a place.
- Cllr Gibson has raised a question about housing sites and primary schools that inevitably don't get built out and the impact that these have on the traffic forecasts for potential sites.

111 Insurance

It was RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to approve insurance arrangements for the next three years, up to a maximum cost of £12,000 per year.

112 Community Emergency Plan

It was RESOLVED to approve the plan, subject to adding a note that rough sleepers will be notified to the District Council.

113 Communications Strategy

It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the Strategy.

114 Representatives attending outside meetings.

It was NOTED that Cllr Hodsdon attended a focus group meeting for Age UK.

115 Internal Auditor

It was RESOLVED to appoint Mulberry & Co as Internal Auditor for the 2026-29 financial years. This will be at a cost of £80 plus VAT per hour, plus travel costs.

116 CCTV

It was RESOLVED to:

- a. Approve phase 2 to proceed.
- b. Confirm locations of the next installations as Copthorne Recreation Ground and Crawley Down Village Green.
- c. Site cameras at these locations permanently.
- d. Approve the quote of £17,193.25 plus VAT, and the plan, from Chroma Vision for the Copthorne location.
- e. Suspend Financial Regulation 5.8 which requires at least 3 fixed quotes for contracts greater than £15,000. Chroma Vision is the only contractor available to install CCTV that Sussex Police are able to access.
- f. Approve the scoping document for the Copthorne Recreation Ground.
- g. Confirm the order of projects in Crawley Down as:
 - Completion of Bowers Place
 - Completion of Operation Watershed
 - Scoping of Crawley Down Play Area
 - CCTV phase 2

117 Policy

It was RESOLVED to approve the following:

- a. AI Powered Wording Services
- b. Long-term Sickness Absence

- c. Short-term Sickness Absence
- d. Modern Slavery
- e. Redundancy
- f. Religious and National Holiday Celebrations
- g. Right to Work
- h. Whistleblowing
- i. Neonatal Care Leave
- j. Maternity & Family Friendly
- k. Appraisal

118 Parish Awards

It was RESOLVED to approve the winners as:

Lifetime achievement – Ken Luttmann, and Kay and Roger Webb
 Copthorne – Paul Eaton, runner up Sandy Ward
 Crawley Down – Molly and Peter Tavani, runner up Coral Lindsay

It was RESOLVED, by more than two thirds of members, that Cllr Phillip Coote be awarded the Freedom of the Parish. This entitles Cllr Coote to use the title 'Honorary Freeman'.

119 Annual Meeting of the Parish

It was NOTED that this will be held on Monday 20th April at the Parish Hub, Copthorne.

120 Bowers Place

It was RESOLVED to approve the signing of the S278 agreement. If further minor amendments are required, authority was delegated to the Chief Officer to authorise these.

121 Copthorne Recreation Ground

It was RESOLVED to approve the reduced quote of £150,000 from Proludic, and the associated playground plan.

122 Personnel

The confidential report was NOTED. Councillors were updated about staff capacity issues and the overtime/locum work that has been created as a result of this.

123 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 18th May 2026, at the Parish Hub, Copthorne.

Meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____