

Worth Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held in the Parish Hub, Copthorne on 21st September 2026 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present:	Cllr Dorey (Chair) Cllr Casella Cllr King Cllr Lord Cllr Stewart	Cllr Coote (Vice Chair) Cllr Dymond Cllr Kipps Cllr Phillips Cllr Wilson
	Mrs L Bannister (Chief Officer)	1 member of the public WSCC Cllr Winn

055 Public Question Time

The following was raised:

- Thank you for the playground.
- Is there an update on the Copthorne Hotel? Cllr Casella updated of various meetings that will be taking place.
- Member of public reported he had knocked on lots of doors in Copthorne to get signatures for a petition. The overwhelming feeling was that residents want to support any action to get the hotel returned to what it was. So, he has asked the Council to put a poster in the notice board supporting a peaceful meeting outside the hotel.
- He struggles with the Council wanting to stay on the 'straight line', especially as Piddington has managed to hold a referendum so quickly.

Councillors understand that the petition has received just under 2000 signatures, and that there is strong feeling in the village. The Council is trying to work with authorities, but has no control or authority over the use of the Hotel.

Member of the public left the meeting

056 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Gibson and Hodsdon.

Absent – Cllrs Bingle, Cruickshank, Pointer, Scott and Williams.

057 Declarations of Interest

None.

058 Minutes

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Full Council meetings held on 20th July 2026. These were duly signed by the Chair.

059 Chairman's Announcements

Cllr Dorey reported that the response to the opening of the Copthorne Recreation Ground was unbelievable with close to 100 children in attendance. Thanks were offered to all involved.

Cllr Coote left the meeting

060 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.

061 Committees

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

- a. Planning & Highways Committee – 7th September 2026. Next meeting 5th October 2026.

- b. Finance & General Purposes Committee – 7th September 2026. Next meeting 5th October 2026.
- c. Amenities & Assets Committee – 14th September 2026. Next meeting 14th December 2026.
- d. HR Committee – 10th July 2026. Next meeting to be confirmed.

062 Working Parties

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

- a. Copthorne Working Party – 23rd July 2026, 6th August 2026, 20th August 2026 and 7th September 2026. Next meeting 24th September 2026.
- b. Crawley Down Working Party – 2nd September 2026. Next meeting 28th September 2026.
- c. Worth Parish Council Working Party – Next meeting date to be confirmed.

063 Reports from other Authorities

The Main Modifications consultation has now closed. Around 7,000 comments were submitted, from around 1,700 people. These responses are now with the Inspector, who is likely to call a further hearing in November.

Cllr Coote returned to the meeting

MSDC councillors have received training on the new National Planning Policy Framework. The changes mean that councillors will not be able to call in planning applications to committee. Instead, councillors will need to try and make their comments known the same way as members of the public. Chairs/vice chairs and officers will need to decide between them what needs to be called in, within the parameters of the Framework.

064 Council Policies

It was RESOLVED to approve the CCTV Policy.

065 Planning and Highways Committee

It was NOTED that Cllr Gibson resigned from the position of Chair of this Committee. It was RESOLVED to appoint Cllr Wilson as Chair.

There are four vacancies on this Committee, but no further Members were appointed.

066 Reports from other Authorities (cont.)

Cllr Winn arrived

WSCC has been discussing lobbying Government for increasing funding for schools in West Sussex as it is the 7th lowest in the country. The issue is with the calculation as it doesn't take into account how much more expensive it is compared to other areas of the country.

A resident has raised concerns about missing railings over a manhole cover in Copthorne. This is being investigated.

067 Complaint

It was NOTED that a Complaints Panel had heard two complaints, and neither of these were upheld. The following recommendations were made by the Panel/Chief Officer, and these will be taken forward in the future:

- To remind all Councillors of the requirements of the Code of Conduct.
- Request that Crawley Down Working Party members are reminded, through their Leader, of the need to maintain appropriate meeting behaviours.
- Undertake a review of the Village Working Party Terms of Reference to provide greater clarity regarding their role.
- Develop and implement a Scheme of Delegation to strengthen governance arrangements and decision-making clarity.
- Review the Complaints Procedure to enable more proportional responses in future.

067 Reports from representatives attending outside meetings

Cllrs Dorey and Coote met with the Police Inspector to discuss community policing. It was confirmed that it is not possible for the Council to fund its own PCSO, but it was suggested that a Community Warden may be a possibility.

The importance of reporting all crimes was stressed.

068 Personnel

The report was NOTED.

069 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 16th November 2026, at the Parish Hub, Copthorne.

Meeting closed at 8 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____