

NEWSLETTER - Spring 2016

Letter from the Chairman

One of the aims of the Parish Council is to achieve a greater awareness about the responsibilities and workings of the Council among residents of our 2 villages and see more people attending Council meetings and give their views on matters affecting the area.

On the 11th April we have our Annual Parish Meeting at the new Council office at the Hub in Copthorne at 7.30 p m. This is not like a normal Council meeting. The Chairman of the Council reports on achievements and frustrations of the last year and aspirations for the following year. The meeting is then open to members of the public to have their say on matters affecting the area.

This will be followed by an informal get together when we hope as many people as possible will take the opportunity to meet their Parish Councillors and discuss their concerns on a less formal basis, especially for those people who do not feel comfortable

Chris Phillips Chairman Worth Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plans

The Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan has now become a legal document. In the referendum on 10th December 96% of those voting, voted in favour of the Plan. Over 30% of those eligible to vote did so and this compares very favourably with other votes across the country, as does the percentage voting on favour. The final hurdle was Mid Sussex District Council cabinet adopting the Plan on the 21st January. We would like to thank all of those residents that came out and voted in very unpleasant weather and the overwhelming support that the Plan received. We would also like to thank those people who gave many hours of their time to complete this very onerous and difficult task.

Chris Phillips Chairman, Neighbourhood Plans Committee

addressing a public meeting. Soft drinks and nibbles will help with the informality.

Worth PC assists local organisations with grants for capital projects. We have invited organisations who have received grants in the last year to come along and describe how the grants have been spent.

We will also have information boards showing some of the work that the Parish Council does and things we have achieved in the Parish either with our own (your) money or grants that we have accessed to pay for improvements.

Please come along as we genuinely want your views on the future of our villages which are greatly affected by the efforts of developers whose interest is making money and not sympathy with the village atmosphere which is one of the major reasons we have moved to our villages.

The Copthorne Plan is currently undergoing external review with the intention of getting it to referendum as soon as possible. The legislation relating to Neighbourhood Plans is being updated/amended and work that has been done over the past couple of years is having to be updated before we can publish a final document.

Unfortunately the passing of the Plans is not the end of the matter. We are monitoring the planning applications that MSDC are considering to ensure they are taking into account the provisions of the Plans. We have an incident when we believe MSDC has been selective in applying the Plan to a planning application and we have asked the Secretary of State to intervene and adjudicate.

Planning & Highways

Worth Parish Council is consulted by Mid Sussex on all planning applications in the Parish. The Planning and Highways Committee meets every 4 weeks and all 17 councillors are members. Sometimes an opinion is needed urgently and a sub-committee meets to address these.

Since last May the Council has considered 133 applications, split remarkably evenly between Crawley Down (67) and Copthorne (66). Crawley Down has seen more applications for new homes (23 totalling 196 new homes) but Copthorne attracts developers with bigger ideas (7 totalling 228 new homes) and leads the way on extensions (33 applications compared to 18). Copthorne residents also like to keep their trees trimmed (17 applications), although this may be because Crawley Down has fewer tree protection orders. There has also been a surprisingly large number of retrospective applications for fences.

Every application affects somebody, but few affect us all. The future of the Royal Oak remains uncertain despite the refusal of permission for change of use. In Copthorne support for the extension of the Prince Albert

Dr Ian Gibson Chairman, Planning & Highways Committee

General Purposes & Finance

The Parish Council has entered into a Partnership with the Environment Agency and MSDC, to investigate and recommend improvements the flood defences of Copthorne. The £40,000 grant received from Operation Watershed is earmarked for this work. MSDC will fund the initial Project Appraisal, which will be submitted to the Environment Agency.

The Parish Council supported a proposal from the Copthorne Sports and Community Association for sports facilities funded by the King George V Fund of £45,000. These will include and exercise trail, football, cricket, and table tennis equipment at the King George V playing field in Copthorne.

The Council is reviewing its strategy and methods of communication to ensure that they meet our needs, and take advantage of improvements in technology. A working group has been established to improve the web site as a matter of urgency.

Kerry Scott Deputy Chairman, General Purposes & Finance

to provide the increased income for future viability had to be balanced against the impact of a larger footprint on its neighbours. The proposed development of 172 new homes opposite the Dukes Head was refused but has returned with a slight reduction to 167. In the same area, immediately opposite the petrol station on the other side of the A264, another application for 75 new homes was reduced to 50. Both of these applications have gone to appeal after MSDC failed to reach a decision in the time allowed (16 weeks). This means that a Planning Inspector will decide whether these 217 homes are built. We need to ensure that he or she is made aware of the existing traffic problems at the Dukes Head.

Finally, hopes that 2016 would see the end the developer free-for-all around Crawley Down as the Neighbourhood Plan was made law have been dashed as MSDC have continued to approve applications which are judged to be contrary to the plan. The Parish Council is going to face some hard choices about the lengths it is prepared to go to defend its residents wishes as expressed in the December referendum..

The Parish Council supports the efforts of the "Save the Pub" campaign in Crawley Down to prevent the loss of the only pub in the village. The Campaign will now prepare a business and financial case for the project to present to the MSDC.

Following the approval of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan and subsequent planning decisions by MSDC. Funding has been approved to seek legal opinions and to "challenge" some of these decisions. Other Parish Councils have written supporting our efforts to preserve the nature of the Parish.

The Parish Council Budget for 2016/17 has been approved and a precept of £209,000 requested from Mid Sussex. This is an increase of £14,000(7%) over 2015/2016. The impact on the Council Tax will be much smaller in view of the increase in the number of households. The Council reviewed expenditure for the half year to October 2015 the accounts were accepted.

Allotments & Playgrounds

Following consultation, it was resolved to cancel plans for a youth shelter and play equipment on the CD village Green. This decision was subsequently endorsed by the

full council. At the time of going to press, there are a few allotment plots available on the Crawley Down Allotments contact the Assistant Clerk for more details

Roger Webb Chairman, Allotments & Playgrounds

Miscellaneous

Discounted age related rail passes are available via the Parish Council; contact the Clerk for further details.

We are pleased to announce that

Miss Sophia Vaughan was appointed as our Assistant Clerk. There is currently a vacancy for a councillor to represent Copthorne, anyone interested should contact the Clerk.

Council Meetings

Dates are published on the Council's noticeboards and website, those available at the time of going to press are: 11.4.16 Planning + Annual Parish meeting; 25.4.16 Planning; 9.5.15 Annual Council + Planning; 23.5.16 10:30am Planning subcommittee.

Unless otherwise stated all meetings are open to the public, and are held at 7:30pm at the Parish Council Offices, 1st Floor The Parish Hub, Borers Arms Road, Copthorne.

YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS:

Copthorne and Worth Ward

Mr. J. Allen, Fagus, 65 Newtown 716694
Mr. P. B. Blakemore, 3 Pinetrees Close 715775
Mrs. D. Curzon, 29 Spring Gardens 713886
Mr. A. Dorey, 22 Westway 07802 359123
Mrs. L Field, Hendersyde,
Copthorne Bank 712256
Mr. C. Larkin, 19 Knowle Drive 714350
Mr E. Lord 5 Spring Copse 714905
Crawley Down
Mr. CT. Phillips, 16 Calluna Drive 712668
(Chairman)
Vacancy

Crawley Down Ward

Mrs. E. M. Anscomb, 1 Royal Oak Cottage 715213
Mr. P. A. C. Coote, San Felipe, Lake View Road,
Furnace Wood, Felbridge 713443
Mr. A. Cruickshank 32Tiltwod Drive 714328
Dr. I. P. Gibson, Kiln Wood, Turners Hill Road 716790
Mr. K. J. H Scott, Preferred Lie, Rufwood 712213
Mrs. M. Stein, 18 Larches Way, 716437
Mr. R. Webb, Withywindle, Kiln Close 719029
Mr. G. Williams, 7 Woodlands Close 714554
(Vice-Chairman)

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:

Copthorne & Worth ward

Mr. E. Matthews, 3 Dexter Drive,
East Grinstead 301002
Mr. A. Dorey – see under Parish Council

Crawley Down and Turners Hill ward

Mr. B. Forbes, 5 Turtledove Ave, Turners Hill Park 719866
Mr. P.A.C. Coote – see under Parish Council
Mr. N. Walker, 10 Clays Close, East Grinstead 327330

WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

Worth Forest Division

Mr. W. Acraman, 2 Staplefield Ct., Brantridge Lane
Staplefield, RH17 6EN 01444 400079

Imberdown Division

Mrs. H.A. Brunson, 83 Blount Avenue,
East Grinstead, RH19 1JN 327200

PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS

Clerk to the Council – Mrs. Jennifer Saunders

Assistant Clerk – Miss Sophia Vaughan

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**The Council Offices are open to the public 9:30 am to 12 noon Monday – Friday.
Staff may be contacted there by telephone on 01342 713407 or you can leave
a message on the answering machine or send an e-mail.**