

Worth Parish Council  
Community Governance Review  
Consultation 1 Responses

## Local Residents Submissions

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I believe this would be to the benefit of both communities. It would give both communities their own identity. Both villages have grown considerably in the recent past and deserve to be treated separately plus the use of the name Worth is now outdated.

It will be very beneficial for the residents of Crawley Down to be able to have their own representation on what happens in the Village and our surrounding area. Many recent decisions have been made without any idea of the impact of our small village and the infra structure.

The village is expanding at an alarming rate and the decisions made are not by local people for us.

The residents know what we need to make our village viable and not just planners who keep adding homes without any regard or the impact it is having.

Having local representation would benefit us all greatly.

I have lived in Copthorne for 45years and have kept myself well informed of local politics.

It is interesting to note that the majority of Crawley Down Parish Councillors do not support the petition.

I am against the splitting of Worth Parish Council into two parishes for the following reasons.

1. Economy of scale. Historically Worth Parish Council (WPC) has set a precept which has always been at the low end of the rest of Sussex's parish councils' precepts. This is, to a large part, due to the size of the parish (only one mower is required to mow two villages etc.) Individual resident's annual precept will undoubtedly increase if two parishes are formed.

2. Each villages individual characteristics are catered for. For many years the majority of WPC meetings were held in Crawley Down. At no time was there any evidence that Copthorne residents felt isolated and not represented.

3. Larger Influence. As the largest parish council in the Mid Sussex District it allows WPC greater influence at District level.

4. Cost of Separation. The civic parish of Worth was formed at the end of the nineteenth century, but the WPC has been in existence for nearly 1000 years. The complexity of untangling the assets into two equable parishes will be very expensive and time consuming and not in the interests of the residents.

5. I have found that there is no evidence that local issues peculiar to one village or the other are disadvantaged by being in one large parish.

Separating into two parishes will be detrimental to needs of individual residents of both parishes and should be rejected.

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To

Democratic Services, Mid Sussex District Council

Ref REDACTED. Dated 16/02/22

In response to the Community Governance Review relating to the Worth Parish Council I would like to contribute my views as follows:-

I have been resident of Crawley Down since 1973 and have witnessed the rapid growth of Crawley Down from a small village to a mini town.

The amenities, safety and facilities in this "village" have failed to keep pace with the rapid growth and need a Village Council to attend specifically to the requirements of Crawley Down.

The unimpeded developments in and around this village have resulted in much increased traffic and accident hazards with the junction of Sandy Lane and the main Turners Hill Road being one where lights or a mini roundabout are badly needed. Another issue which needs attention is the vacant Royal Oak pub in an area crying out for more and improved shopping facilities. The state of the potholed roads in and around Crawley Down also need attention though, of late, some remedial work has improved the situation. Foot patrols by the police would certainly be welcomed as there has been some vandalism recently.

All these and many other requirements would benefit from a Crawley Down council which could focus solely on local interests. I am therefore in favour of a new parish for Crawley Down.

Finally, I would welcome feedback on this subject as and when appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Dear Sir / Madam, Reference REDACTED

I write with concern, having read through the documents that you have sent Re the Community Governance Review considering the setting up of a new local parish council for Crawley Down I agree in principle this may benefit Crawley Down Residents, however I am 72 and finding it very difficult to meet the escalating costs of living being retired. In forming a new local parish council my Mid Sussex council tax is likely to increase proportionally to cover additional costs and I will probably not have sufficient income to sustain my daily living. The current economic climate is having a devastating effect on my personal budget, my council tax together with my energy bills and my food is now becoming very close to a deficit month on month, I believe other residents in my age group are probably in a similar situation and I therefore request that careful consideration is given to this proposal purely on a financial basis, before any formal decision is finally made. Kind Regards

I am totally opposed to the split of Crawley Down away from Copthorne due to the desires of a small minority of Worth Parish Councillors who are more interested in pampering their personal egos than the costs to local residents from so doing.

Personally I cannot see any meaningful benefits to either village community as I would contend that Worth PC is currently adequately supporting both communities equally despite being domiciled in Copthorne.

This request should not be supported by Mid Sussex DC. Local residents are currently facing unprecedented (in recent times) increases in costs and taxes which are far outstripping income growth. Local Government should be looking to streamline costs rather than increase them by adding additional, unnecessary cost centres which will add little or no benefit to local residents. Indeed, it could be argued that we should completely dispense with local Parish Councils as an irrelevant and outmoded cost in today's world.

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I believe that creating Crawley Down village Council would better serve the needs of the ever growing population of the "village". There has been a significant increase in housing over the last decade which affects the availability of school places and certainly impacts on the speed of service provided by the local health centre.

The situation with the Royal Oak pub needs to be resolved as the building is showing strong signs of neglect which is rapidly making it unprofitable for any future purpose.

Dear Sir or Madame,

As a resident of Worth Parish Council (WPC), I am writing concerning the Community Governance Review which you are to conduct relating to WPC.

I believe that if the proposed split to WPC were to go ahead, then a significant financial cost would fall upon WPC residents (particularly Copthorne Residents) in the form of increased council tax.

At a time when the cost of living is already rising dramatically and we are seeing inflation at the highest level for thirty years, an increase in council tax would only cause the poorer households in the parish to undergo further financial suffering and perhaps cause them to plunge below the poverty line.

I do not therefore believe that the advantages of such a split to WPC (if indeed there are any) will justify this cost.

I therefore urge you not to allow the WPC to be split and not to allow a separate Crawley Down Parish Council to be established.

Yours Sincerely

Please would you consider my views when determining the Worth Parish Council Community Governance Review.

Worth Parish Council, at present, appears to adequately represent both Copthorne and Crawley Down.

In spite of the assurances of the proposers to the contrary, it is just not feasible to expect such a split to not cause greater administration costs, resulting in either a decline in services, a greater precept, or exhaustion of reserves. As we are experiencing rising fuel costs and rising inflation, I would not wish to pay more council tax at the present time, nor would I want a reduction in services.

I am therefore opposed to the creation of a Crawley Down Parish Council.

Having only moved to this area recently, I can see no clear reason why Worth P.C. should not remain as it is. It would appear to work effectively for all residents and I believe that the proposed change would devalue the strength of the council. I do believe there are benefits for all the villages to stay together, maintaining a stronger and larger council with the proven economies of scale. I firmly believe in the mantra 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. The costs both financially and time wise have not been fully considered by the petitioners. I am concerned that this matter was not discussed openly within the parish council, so there is clearly a grievance held by a few, which should be addressed.

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Given the small number of elected Councillors on Worth PC who fully support the petition I am against the proposal to split.

Although there could be local arguments in favour I think they are outweighed by the fact that it will inevitably cost more overall and the fact that Worth (both Crawley Down and Copthorne) is being pressed by larger authorities on either side which makes togetherness important because there is a danger that both may be swallowed up and lose the independence that they already have..

Worth is an umbrella name and both parishes operate independently but amicably together so why change.

The argument that a Crawley Down Council based in the village would be more accessible is only true in part. Local Councillors already live locally anyway and I would guess that much of the WPC business is conducted by telephone or online rather than personal visit which negates this argument.

There is nothing to stop current Councillors from Crawley Down concentrating on local issues now and they should be doing this.

I object to this proposal on the basis that it will only add additional cost to my council tax bill for no benefit.

Government should be looking to reduce the costs for its residents not increase by adding additional layers of duplicated and unnecessary expense.

I would like to inform the community governance review board that I do not support the creation of a Crawley Down parish council. I am very concerned that such change will not deliver any benefits to Copthorne or the rest of the council. In fact I believe that such undertaking would increase complexity and costs for all involved.

Kind regards and many thanks for the opportunity to briefly share my views.

I do not agree with the proposal to give Crawley Down their own Council.

All the items Crawley Down council say they might achieve could be achieved by the existing Worth Parish Councillors, as it includes councillors representing Crawley Down (or the same issues would be encountered).

I do not believe the split will be cost neutral, I think Copthorne residents will end up with an increase in their council tax as a result of the split.

I can see no advantage to have 2 small parish councils and so I am against the proposal.

I cannot support the split of Worth Parish Council if the split would produce an increase in total running costs for the two councils. With the current pressures on public spending and the severe cost pressures on Council Tax payers any increase in Council Tax for the intangible "benefits" as listed in your covering letter is completely unacceptable.

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I know very little about local governance and how it comes about but on the face of it, and I have read the various comments, the split achieves nothing and the comments dont add up.

two instead of one has to increase costs

why would there be less meeting when there are two units ? Strange statement. Normally there are set monthly/quarterly pre booked meeting with this type of organisation regardless of what the then agenda might be.

I can hear why CD wants their own ever more local decision making but it appears to me more of an ego / power issue rather than any obvious need.

Personally I have no obvious interest apart from COSTS and this sounds expensive.

and less than half the CD /WPC councillors agree and so why is it a starter and then only 4 out of 17 in the total group agree . Doesnt make any sense to me.

I do not think Worth Parish Council should be split. As a resident of Crawley Down I feel that the village already has a strong identity. There is already strong community engagement within the village.

I understand that Worth Parish Council have councillors that represent Crawley Down and Copthorne already and each village has it's own working party to prioritise improvements and actions for each village.

Therefore I do not understand the need for a split.

There would be huge cost implications if the Parish Council were to split and this would mean less funding being available for each village having a detrimental effect on village life and planned improvements.

I do not see any benefits to the split.

I am in favour of a separate Crawley Down Village Council. With the size of Crawley Down now, with all the new houses, I think it should have its own parish council concentrating solely on the key issues the village faces. I think the improved community engagement would benefit the village greatly and would give a greater voice to matters in the village that residents feel need to be discussed.

I am in favour of a separate Crawley Down Village Council. With the growth of the village in recent years, with the number of new houses, I feel the village should have its own parish council and could focus solely on key issues facing the village. A greater community involvement would mean matters of interest to the residents could be discussed more readily.

I am in favour of a separate Crawley Down Village Council. With the growth of the village in recent years, with the number of new houses, I believe the village deserves to have its own parish council where more focus could be given to key issues facing the village.

I am in favour of the change to Worth Parish Council to make a new parish council for Crawley Down.

In my opinion both Crawley Down and Copthorne have significantly grown in recent years, this change in size is enough to warrant two separate councils that will represent the community in their own areas.

Crawley Down and Copthorne are also easily distinguishable as two different geographic areas.

I am firmly against this proposal. It will increase administrative costs for no benefit.

Splitting the budget will also reduce flexibility and potentially weaken the governance of both areas.

Crawley Down and Copthorne both have adequate representation on the Parish Council and increasing the number of councillors for Crawley Down will not necessarily improve representation. It is the skills and commitments of the councillors which matters.

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Dear Tom Clark,

With reference to the recent correspondence received in regard to the community governance review relating to Worth Parish Council.

My feelings are of that if there are job losses with the potential split of local council and each village be able to focus on the more local residents and businesses I am in favour of the proposals to see Copthorne, be a stand alone village council.

I feel the Copthorne community and already built councils offices are in a very stable place to progress without focus on another area. The focus will allow Copthorne to flourish, and in turn allow Crawley Down to also do similar as a standalone, I feel that a large part of the Copthorne community will minimal interests in the neighbouring village of Crawley Down.

Reading through the leaflets that arrived with the notification, i am curious why Copthorne Residents council tax will rise as mentioned in the page from Clerk Jennifer Nagy, when Copthorne has the infrastructure already in place so no further CAP EX will be required for Copthorne to proceed to a stand alone council.

I look forward to how this progresses in the not to distant months.

1. I believe that the division of Worth Parish Council into separate entities for Crawley Down and Copthorne will definitely improve community engagement.
2. I believe that having our own Crawley Down Village Council will encourage community cohesion.
3. I agree that having our own Crawley Down Village Council will definitely offer better democracy.
4. Absolutely agree that having a Crawley Down Village Council will ensure much better delivery of services and local government.
5. The reason I have agreed and endorse all of the above is due to the fact that both Crawley Down and Copthorne having grown exponentially and each, in my opinion, now require their own Village Council to deal with the essential services as required by each individual village.

I am therefore in favour for the case FOR a Crawley Down Village Council.



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1. Yes - the division of Worth Parish Council into separate entities for Crawley Down and Copthorne will definitely improve community engagement.
2. I agree that having our own Crawley Down Village Council will encourage community cohesion.
3. and I agree that having our own Crawley Down Village Council will definitely offer better democracy.
4. Having our own Crawley Down Village Council will definitely ensure much better delivery of services and local government.
5. The reason I have agreed and endorse all of the above is due to the fact that both Crawley Down and Copthorne having grown exponentially and each, in my opinion, now require their own Village Council to deal with the essential services as required by each individual village.

I am therefore in favour for the case FOR a Crawley Down Village Council.

I would support the proposal to create a new Crawley Down parish. I have lived in the village for over 40 years and recently witnessed a housing explosion. This has impacted badly on the village. For too long planning permission has been granted to developers bringing little or no benefit. Walking around the village you can see areas which have been neglected over time or suffered through over development. WSCC and MSDC appear to have a policy of not investing developers financial contributions in the village but instead crediting their reserves or using them for other means. An example is the latest development at Hazel Rise which has had an environmental impact on the nearby pond. Although the developer has made a large financial contribution to the above authorities, as far as I am aware, none of it is earmarked for improving the pond I believe by Crawley Down having its own parish council it would speak for the village and create a greater challenge to the current decision makers

I would welcome the creation of a Crawley Down parish council. The village has been badly impacted by over developed and apparent lack of investment in recent years. Planned and proposed development will only add to this. It is important for the local villagers to have the means to voice their views and opinions on its future well being and growth. I believe this would be best served by a council presenting its own parishioners and not those of other villages

I support the split from Worth Parish Council as Crawley Down village has become so large with the additional housing I feel that the village should be in control of matters relating to the village and then Copthorne have control over their own.

The proposal sounds sensible to me and I would agree that the different needs of Copthorne and Crawley now necessitate separate Parish Councils. I also think it would encourage more local residents, including me, to take a more active role in Council activity.

I am in favour of retaining the current joint council with Copthorne. As a village we should be mindful of our neighbours and Worth Parish Council has the power to support both individual and joint services.

I am not convinced that it would be of benefit to either village to split.

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In your letter dated 14th February, you stated that it could cost the residents of WPC £150,000 for Crawley Down to have their own parish. Surely, if they want to go alone, then they should foot all costs and future costs for the change. I do not expect my rates to increase for the change that Crawley Down want.

Secondly, if MSDC approve such a change, then you could argue that ALL residents of the District should contribute to the change not just those of WPC.

In these worrying times of increase costs to food, petrol, heating, mortgages etc, etc, I can think of a lot better things to spend my money on rather than petty bureaucratic changes.

I believe a new parish and parish council would benefit the residents of Crawley Down. I've lived on Hazel way for 3 years now with the new build on Hazel rise currently ongoing id hope that that would be it for new builds in this area. Id also be extremely happy with an outcome to the Royal Oak pub. It would be fantastic if a new pub opened but something needs to be done with it. I'd also hope that a new parish council would bring speed restrictions (possibly a speed camera or two) around the village. (Hophurst lane). I think it would benefit the village immensely.

I am concerned that if it goes through that they will be costs for the voter to pickup in the guise of increased council tax .They may not be many benefits to the proposal which isn't backed up by any evidence.

As a community if we stay together in a larger organisation we will be more effective. Therefore I am against the proposal.

I understand that with a separate Crawley Down Village Council the specific issues relating to Crawley Down might be better served. 80% of parish councils represent populations of less than 2500 whereas Worth Parish Council represents a population of about 10000 so a division would seem reasonable.

I can imagine that there might be frustrations for councillors representing either Crawley Down or Copthorne during meetings when topics for discussion only relate to one of the villages. Separate councils might have more time to discuss their own village concerns.

I feel that my community is Crawley Down, not Copthorne. Perhaps if others feel the same way they may be more inclined to engage with a separate council with its own village base.

I have no information about the costs that a division of Worth Parish Council would incur so am unable to say one way or another whether financially it would be of detriment to residents.

In principle I would welcome a CrawleyDown Village Parish Council if it would improve community matters e.g.

Resist housing development without any improvement of facilities

Sort out the eyesore that The Royal Oak has become

Provide much needed facilities for youth groups

Car parking

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

I am writing because I believe that a parish and a new parish council should be created in Crawley Down.

This will:

1. Improve Community engagement
2. Enhance Community Cohesion
3. Better Local Democracy
4. More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government

My proposition:

- Reflects the identities and interests of the community.

Yours Sincerely

My family have lived in Crawley Down since before 1900 at one time there were 5 houses of us here today there are still 3 houses. I have live here 65 years in my early days I literally almost knew everybody and any issues could be resolved very quickly by the locals now CD is almost the size of a small town and this is not the case therefore a dedicated council is required.

Worth Parish Council is a hangover from those past days and is not longer fit for purpose. You have to live here to fully understand the issues and have input to the correct decisions.

Some of the recent decisions on building and infrastructure show out touch those making them are. Walking around the village whilst recuperating from a recent hip surgery gives a real insight into how busy it really is and yet nothing is done. The B2028 is a rat run for vehicles avoiding Felbridge and East Grinstead, Vicarage Road feels like part of a Grandprix circuit especially at school drop off/collection times. Adding houses onto the Burleigh and Kiln Road estates has caused increased congestion around the central stores. All this despite a Neighbourhood plan which seems to be completely ignored by those in power. Even before Covid trying to see a doctor was nigh impossible the village is literally at breaking point. We need to bring back more control.

Its certainly time for a council who has a real vested interest in the community, staffed with people who can be approached. The response to the recent tragic deaths of two residents in terrible circumstances shows there is still some community spirit and I feel a dedicated council will add to that. It will never be the same place as I grew up in and I dont expect it to be but we have to provide future generations with the best environment possible in terms of facilities and leisure.

Having a Crawley Down council will give residents a sense of hope rather than feeling hopeless under the current regime which is widely criticised in conversations.

Finally I personally hope this Review will achieve something new and positive for the village and that the decision has not been made already to ignore it and this process is just to placate us all villagers!

Having read both the submissions by the 4 councillors who support the split and the views of WPC I fail to see any benefit from splitting the council. At the present WPC seems to have very little say in what happens with regard to housing - the school is too small for the needs of the expanded village and appointments at the health centre are like gold dust. How would having an even smaller voice provide us with any noticeable benefits and the cost of setting up the new council would diminish funds which could be better spent elsewhere. It is interesting that only 4 of the 9 Crawley Down councillors support the split which I think speaks volumes of itself.

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I am a Crawley Down resident and initially I thought it sounded like a good idea to split the Parish but upon reading both sides I would not want to see the parish split as I think the against points are very valid and the for points from the petitioners are nice but at the moment wishful thinking and idealism. There is probably no real evidence that a split would bring the benefits suggested. They also mention that a split will give Crawley Down a clearer identity but why do we need a separate identity from Copthorne? Community and togetherness is important and being territorial and a them and us attitude isn't very cohesive for community development. Not to mention the potential financial implications. So therefore I would not be in favour of a split.

I feel that Crawley Down village is somewhat neglected and is becoming a worse place to live. I believe a CD council would better address the needs of local residents. The traffic is dangerous and noisy and there is speeding with no crossings on the road for pedestrians. Trucks frequently drive at high speed. Additionally the village centre Needs to be improved and the derelict pub improved, it is ruining the village. A CD concil could also help us to reduce the amount of new building that is going on. There are more and more residents with no facilities for them, no decent shops or supermarket. There is currently very little cohesion and community, a local council will help i address our needs, which the current setup is doing a very poor job of.

We would like to approve the submission of a newly created Crawley Down Village Council as we really need the outlook of our village Crawley Down to be improved. It looks so sad with that awful Royal Oak pub still sitting there empty, it either needs to be knocked down or turned into a larger supermarket. The current supermarket is too small, and you can't even get a pushchair pram in there. If you insist on building new developments in Crawley Down, e.g. on Hazel Way, then you must increase everything else to accommodate. We need to encourage new business into the village. At the moment its do depressing to walk down there and see. We have a wonderful community where people have lived in this area for a long-time, and if everyone is willing to invest in their properties (which a lot of people are) then yes please we need a supportive Village Council that will look after what's best for us as a community and surely a better investment for everyone in the end.

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I have read carefully the information you have published on this proposal, to provide a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down, so that Worth Parish Council contains Copthorne only.

My first reaction is that the country, as a whole, is undergoing an economic crisis, with massive debts from the covid expenses and rising inflation. To exacerbate this, China and Russia are sabre-rattling demanding an increase in expenditure on UK's defence and arms. All this means a much higher cost of living for all.

The estimate included in your details (£150,000) seems modest when one considers the cost of National Devolution.

The advantages of scale with Worth P.C. servicing both Crawley Down and Copthorne will be lost if the separation is allowed; e.g. a single Council clerk and support staff, and single venue for P.C. meetings, one maintenance organisation, including equipment and staff.

In negotiations with adjoining local authorities and Central Government size matters; the larger land area and population of an Authority is important.

The existing system functions well, when shared activities take place - for example:-

Speed Watch: Speeding traffic through both, and surrounding, villages is a constant problem. There are two separate organisations that function well under the remote management of the police and with local residents in both villages as co-ordinators and operatives. The aim of both is to slow speeds of passing traffic.

Open Gardens: There are two separate organisations arranging these in Crawley Down and Copthorne. The funds raised are donated to various charities and the dates for Open Gardens in each area do not co-incide, by negotiation.

The above two examples illustrate that there is no reason why the two villages should not continue to operate independently, without conflict, whilst retaining their individuality under the umbrella of Worth Parish Council alone.

We the undersigned, residents of Crawley Down, request Mid Sussex District Council to undertake a Community Governance Review to consider the creation of a Crawley Down Parish Council based on the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Area and, in the event of a positive outcome to the Review, complete the establishment of such a council by May 2023

Priorities include, solving the Royal Oak pub situation and resist development other than local needs  
Traffic calming especially Vicarage Road.

At present I feel that Worth parish council do a good job and that there is no need to change this arrangement.

I certainly cannot see how it would improve community engagement and enhance cohesion within the community.

In the present circumstances of continual rising prices, I most definitely cannot afford further increases in council tax and would therefore vote to leave things as they are at present.

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As a Copthorne resident I am concerned about the financial implications of a split in Worth Council. Obviously there would be set-up costs and thereafter a doubling up of administrative costs.

A village council would be able to concentrate on issues directly affecting Crawley Down, thereby strengthening the link between the councillor's and the village they represent, further enhancing the identity of the Crawley Down community.

I have read the arguments presented by the petitioners and those of the Council. From these I do not believe there are any advantages to the proposed split.

No substantive financial case has been presented to support the case that there would be no effects on costs and consequent impact on Tax. The Worth Parish Council points out the petitioners assertions are inaccurate on this point with a likely impact on Copthorne Residents. It is not the position of Crawley Down to impose such an impact in order to achieve a vague list of advantages that do not seem to be different from those currently in place.

The petition seems to stem more from personal aggrandisement than to the benefit of residents.

I oppose the change and support the current WPC in their stance.

I have considered the proposals for creating a separate village council for Crawley Down and the proposals against.

I support the proposals for a separate council for the following reasons, Crawley Down and Copthorne are both large villages and as such both have separate identities and communities, it follows that residents of both villages are involved in the various activities and organisations within their village.

It makes sense that a Crawley Down council would be able to focus on the issues affecting the village and the same would apply to the councillors of Copthorne. Also a village council located in Crawley Down would enable more accessibility to the residents than having to travel to Copthorne, particularly the more elderly and infirm who may find it difficult.

Crawley Down and Copthorne both have their own Neighbourhood Plans and it would seem right that the separate councils would be making decisions that only affected their particular village therefore avoiding any conflict of interests.

Based on these reasons I believe separate councils would benefit both Crawley Down and Copthorne.

I support the petition for the creation of a distinct Crawley Down Parish Council.

Having lived in both Copthorne and in Crawley Down, it is clear to me that they are different communities with separate and distinct identities.

The concept of the Worth Parish Council has always been ephemeral, with no community or local identity.

The combined geographical Crawley Down/Copthorne area therefore the size of the combined populations is becoming so large that it seems inevitable that local issues will be overlooked as the current council struggles with more strategic issues.

A Crawley Down Parish Council will be more accessible and is likely to attract more participation by Crawley Down residents in local affairs and decisions.

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I support the petition to provide a separate Crawley Down Village Council.

Crawley Down has an identity distinct from that of Copthorne, and that can only be preserved by a council specific to the village.

A Crawley Down Village Council will be more accessible to local residents, and will attract a sense of ownership and will encourage greater participation in village affairs.

Copthorne and Crawley Down each have their own church. The idea of a Worth Parish therefore seems to be an abstract concept which contradicts the idea of local participation.

I believe that Crawley Down would be better represented by its own Village Council for the following reasons:

- Crawley Down has a different Identity to Copthorne.
- Residents are members of Crawley Down not Worth Parish
- A Council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to residents
- A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the Issues facing Crawley Down - It takes being a resident to properly understand the needs of the village.

As a local resident, I think Worth parish council do an excellent job. I do not think that having a separate council for Crawley Down will either improve the communiy engagement or enhance cohesion

I also do not see how we'll get a better local democracy and for that reason I prefer for the present Worth council to remain as it is.

Also I do not want an increase in my council tax!

I believe Crawley would be better served if it have its own Parish Council and Councillors, living in our village they would have a far better understating of what the village and its residents need.

I would like to see more detail about the funding of joint operations e.g. will it affect the cost of refuse collection services etc.? Although I understand the advantages of having two councils, I'm not sure enough of the cost implications to support it at this stage.

Good morning,

I would like to put forward my confirmation to support Crawley Down in having its own Parish Council and separate identity of our village community.

My reasons for doing so is that I want CD to have its own representation to aspects that concern our village and issues that it faces.

I have seen no action taken in resolving the village pub that is rotting where it stands and the owner of the property is allowing this to happen as holding out for too much money for those that were interested in returning the pub to its former glory or wanting to develop the property into flats which would add to existing parking issues (definatly don't support this!).

Stronger monitoring over developments of rural land and access that causes traffic mayhem or damage to local roads.

I would also like the council based in CD so it is more accessible to the older village residents.

Yours sincerely

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Crawley Down has as far as I see no common connections with Copthorne, I have lived in both communities for considerable periods of time ( Copthorne from 1985 - 1992 , Crawley Down from 1993 - now ). In fact I don't ever remember visiting Crawley Down when I lived in Copthorne.

The Worth Parish name is outdated and does in no way reflect the two communities or their cultures. Nobody I have spoken to in any way recognises what Worth Parish is or its boundaries

Clearly, an office in Crawley Down would enhance access to the local community and allow focus on issues relevant to the local community.

The fact that both villages have established Neighbourhood plans clearly identifies that they are independent and have different needs.

Both villages have grown enormously in population since I moved into the area in 1977 ( to Crawley town actually ) and this has obviously contributed to their need for separate representation.

I feel that that the Worth Parish council as is, presents itself very poorly in arguing against change - this is typical of governmental organisations who are naturally self interested in preserving current structures to the cost of their constituents.

On balance I support the establishment of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down. It is increasingly difficult to justify having three tiers of local government but if the concept of a parish council and a district council is to continue, there should be some differentiation beyond the division of responsibilities.

We have lived in Crawley Down for over 20 years and I don't believe I have ever stepped foot in Copthorne. Our family has far stronger ties with other nearby places and I suspect that is probably true for the majority of people in Crawley Down. I wouldn't put Copthorne in the top 5 of potential partners. In terms of democracy being genuinely local, I see little distinction between decisions regarding Crawley Down being taken by residents of Copthorne than by residents of any other part of Mid-Sussex. A separate Parish Council would be different.

I agree strongly that it is likely that representation and involvement would increase with a separate council.

I doubt if a separate council is going to resolve matters such as the Royal Oak or the delivery of affordable housing. It won't stop people speeding although it is noticeable that other nearby villages have more deterrent measures than Crawley Down.

It is difficult to comment on efficiency and service delivery but separate councils shouldn't necessarily mean having two of everything as there may be potential for the two councils (and/or other nearby parish councils) to share resources. It is local democracy that should be distinct.



## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

I am in support of the proposal that Crawley Down be represented by its own Village Council the basis of the following:-

- \* Crawley Down and Copthorne are both large villages with separate identities and local needs.
- \* Residents are members of their village community, not a Worth Parish community and as such should have their opinions and wishes dealt with locally.
- \* A Council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents.
- \* A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces such over development of the village, lack of facilities and the village pub.
- \* Crawley Down and Copthorne already have separate Neighbourhood Plans.

As a resident of Crawley Down village for over thirty years, I have seen many changes to the local area. The village population has steadily increased in size, so too the number of houses and cars on the roads. Some of our local services have not changed to accommodate our village's specific growing needs.

The village has a strong sense of community in its own right. People are friendly, welcoming and supportive of each other which is one of the reasons many have lived happily in Crawley Down for a long time.

When important decisions have to be made concerning the village it would be far easier to attract local people to attend meetings if the venue was in the immediate accessible locality.

A Crawley Down Council would be able to focus on key issues relative to our own developing village needs.

Crawley Down already has its own comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan.

I believe that Worth Parish Council should remain unchanged. Setting up new structures and disbanding the current Parish Council will create needless expense with no benefit for local residents. Extra lawyers and professional fees, new letterheads, new sign posts etc should not be a priority at a time of increasing inflation, fuel costs. Such monies and councillors time would be better spent helping the two villages support residents affected by the reduction in the operation at Gatwick Airport due to covid.

Worth Parish Council is unusual in that it represents rural villages but covers a sizeable population. This gives it more influence when rural/urban rivalries are debated than most village parish councils receive, particularly important with two larger towns on its boundaries. The current national move is towards larger unitary authorities combining current district and county councils into one. This makes it more important to keep the current structure. To replace it with two smaller village parish councils would be a move in the wrong direction.

The boundaries between the two villages are not distinct as they run into each other. Little has been put forward to explain how services which cross village boundaries will be maintained. Footpaths, for example, run between the two. It is difficult to see how there would be continuance in maintenance if each village had a different priority.

The arguments being put forward in favour of dividing the parish council are flawed and confused. A second office in Crawley Down means a second set of expenses. The other pledges being put forward can just as easily be delivered under the current structure. Perhaps this would be happening if local councillors were not being diverted by this campaign!

Less than 500 people signed the petition asking for the parish council to be divided. This is a very small % of the parish as a whole. I urge the District to seek the opinions of the other 8,500 residents before forcing on residents the whim of a noisy but unrepresentative minority.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

We have read the information provided and cannot see many benefits from splitting the two villages from the current Worth Parish. Being in Worth Parish has obviously worked for the past 125 years and unless there is some major reason to need to split, we believe its a case of if its not broke don't fix it. The suggestion of a council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents, for many many years Copthorne residents had to go up to Crawley Down for Parish Council matters, as far as we are aware this was never a problem.

We also cannot see that this will end up without a cost somewhere along the line.

You recently asked my opinion whether to stay with worth parish council or be represented by Crawley down village council.  
Crawley down and Copthorne are overgrown and over developed large villages and cannot be managed under one umbrella.  
I strongly support a Crawley down village council that can make decisions that will influence and protect the future of the village.  
Since mass development seen in past years has seen the village to lack community spirit. We lost our village pub to a developer. It is sad to watch it deteriorate.  
We must thank the speed watch team for their work. With the 2 pedestrian crossings to assist the public to cross the road safely should make Turners hill road safer. I suspect it will also increase road rage.  
Turners hill road is very congested at times, are we monitoring air pollution?  
Reluctantly, I support small scale housing development for the needs of Crawley down, affordable, social and bungalows for the elderly or disabled.  
With talk of development on green belt land at Huntsland farm is tragic not only for the deer and the bats that live on the land but for the people that live around it. Do we need to wipe out green belt land to provide housing for local needs.  
Any exit roads accessing Turners hill road will cause more congestion and pollution.  
We will have to watch this space and hope common sense prevails and watch that no mature healthy trees fall over to allow access routes.  
I am aware that developments around the country offer sweeteners like a Doctor surgery. What would be the point of providing a building unless the the community council has the funding to fit it out, maintain the upkeep and pay the staff to run it. Not practical when the NHS has thousands of staff vacancies. Another sweetener is providing sports facilities, again where does the ongoing funding come from for the grounds people and changing facilities.  
So we need a strong and enthusiastic council to represent the residents of Crawley down.

I do not feel there is any need to alter the current arrangements and that dividing the local parish council into two, one covering Copthorne and one covering Crawley Down, will only lead to unnecessary additional costs.  
The current arrangement works perfectly well and the current local council is quite able to deal with matters for both towns.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute.

In my opinion, Worth Parish Council simply covers too large an area, or rather too many residents. It has shrunk in size over the years, no longer even holding on to its original Worth geography, and it needs to divide again now.

Copthorne and Crawley Down are both sizeable villages, and operate independently. Living in Rowfant, we always visit Crawley Down for the doctor, post office, and shops. The only time we ever go to Copthorne is to the vet. We are loyal to and feel part of Crawley Down. Copthorne is local, but we feel no closer to it in any way, when compared to Turners Hill, Ardingly or Felbridge.

As such, I am not persuaded that there is anything to tie the two villages together these days. They even have separate Neighbourhood Plans.

Unless a larger Parish Council is better armed to fight the No 1 local battle against new housing on green fields, then I sincerely believe Crawley Down should be represented entirely with its own Parish Council.

I have lived in Crawley Down for ten years and since moving here have experienced a large expansion in the size of the village. In my opinion it seems a sensible decision to separate from Copthorne (partly in West Sussex and partly in Surrey) to administer our own village affairs in Crawley Down as does Turner's Hill and Ardingly. We have our own community centre and sports clubs and would be better placed to serve the local residents without having to travel to Copthorne. I am sure that the residents of Copthorne are not interested in the flagrant disregard of the speed limits of Turners Hill Road, for example. We also have separate neighbourhood plans anyway.

I support the creation of a Crawley Down Village Council.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

You recently asked my opinion whether to stay with worth parish council or be represented by Crawley down village council.  
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So we need a strong and enthusiastic council to represent the residents of Crawley down.

Worth Parish Council has in my opinion always provided a satisfactory service to both the Crawley Down and Copthorne Communities. I have had a number of interactions over the years and they have been helpful and tried to resolve community issues as best they can within their limited powers.

The four local councillors who are for splitting, have written their very simplistic case and appear to have rose coloured spectacles. They seem to believe they can make significant changes which they couldn't under WPC. I don't believe that. Im all for change when it's needed. It's not needed in this scenario. It seems like a small minority power grabbing.  
There is no way you can make one organisation in to two without very significant implications, which equals significant cost. Two set of staff, renting of new premises, two sets of basic equipment, established contracts being re written, everything from telephone contact info and stationary, anything with WPC sign writing will need to be changed and then duplicated. The precept will surely be affected despite their claims it will not. I am very much against any change.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I believe that the proposal would be detrimental to both Copthorne and Crawley Down. Crawley Down and Copthorne have more in common than either has with East Grinstead, nearest to Crawley Down, or Crawley, closest to Copthorne. These larger towns would be able to exert more influence at County level than the smaller councils could. Individually, I do not believe the two parish councils would be able to represent their residents as effectively as they can as a singular entity.

I have not seen any evidence to support the proposers' position that there would be no cost to the separation of the parish council nor that there would be no increase in the costs to individual residents, even though the same number of residents would now have to support the staff of two councils instead of one.

I would like the review to allow Crawley Down to have its own parish council so the village is independent and works for the local residents. The village has grown in numbers and with the chance of more development likely to happen in the future years.

Both Crawley Down and Copthorne should be able to decide what is important to each village.

There are a number of issues that give cause for concern regarding the case for a separate Crawley Down Village Council.

1. It is inevitable that additional bureaucracy and cost will be the outcome of a change, if not now, in the future.
2. It will not improve local democracy for either village. Indeed it could lead to conflict at the boundaries of areas as already is the case with Tandridge.
3. It offers no benefits to the residents of Copthorne. Given that the existing set up has been in place for over 100 years with no problems it seems ridiculous that this should even be considered at the whim of very few agitators.

This would appear to be individuals trying to achieve control over local affairs that has nothing to do with the community at large and would not be in the best interests of either village.

I would like to see a Crawley Down Village or Parish Council, if they are going to have any 'say' in anything. The local residents are very keen to have a pedestrian crossing in Turners Hill Road, near the Sandy Lane entrance. Crossing Turners Hill Road from Wychwood or The Pheasantry or anywhere else along Turners Hill Road for that matter, is dangerous. Coming from the Wychwood estate, just to get to the fish & chip shop (an excellent asset to Crawley Down), you have to look 3 ways and the traffic is coming along Turners Hill quite fast, with Sandy Lane traffic coming into Turners Hill Road, turning left and right - it is difficult to cross the road, especially if you are a pensioner, like me. It's just a matter of time before someone gets knocked down. With more houses being built at the back of Wychwood, this is even more vital. Young mothers with buggies will want to cross the road in order to walk down to the shops. The government is always harping on about people getting more exercise - how are you meant to walk when there is no safe way to cross main roads?

This matter is more important than anything else and I would support anyone or any council who makes this a priority.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Crawley Down Split from Worth Parish Council

I strongly diss agree that a new Crawley Down Village council should be Created

1) Being a part of Worth Parish council, I feel gives us more power when dealing with Mid-Sussex District Council.

2) I cannot see being split giving us better protections.

Plus, separating council increase cost on council tax and increase bureaucracy. With no advantages and give Mid-Sussex more power to overrule Local decision making

3) I agree that each village has own identities, but having common goals when dealing with Mid-Sussex District council

I am against and oppose the current petition to create a new Parish Council for Crawley Down.

I believe this is only supported by a small minority who have been underhand with the submission of the petition. What would come with a new council would be vast increased costs at a detriment to villagers. More bodies with different opinions will only mean a divide between the worth area and parish councils.

It is not supported by the majority of parish councillors who have been elected by the residents.

The petition was signed by less than 5% of the households and does not represent the entire parish of over 11000 residents. There is no evidence that a split will improve services and will ultimately cost us the tax payer.

I care as a resident of the village for over 30 years.

I believe that the residents of Crawley Down would be better served by having our own council, for the following reasons.

Although Crawley Down and Copthorne are close neighbours, we do have quite different neighbourhood plans and very different identities, which would be better served with a locally based council group who could look much more closely at the important issues that we face in our village.

There is already a strong and thriving Crawley Down Residents Association which works very well to promote activities within the village, so a more local council which would represent just our village community would be something we can all relate to and would clearly be more accessible to everyone who lives in Crawley Down.

Having lived here for over 40 years my impression is that that local residents are clearly proud of their village and wish it to prosper, so a new, more focused and local council for Crawley Down can only be progress in my view.

I feel the creation of a Crawley Down Village Council will be an unnecessary expense and will create more bureaucracy. The current arrangement is perfectly satisfactory, and we do not need local government wasting money at this time when all resources are strained.

I am in favour of a new parish council being created for Crawley Down.

I think decisions to be made for the Village of Crawley Down are best made by Councillors who live in the Village. They are more aware of the everyday problems in the Village - the lack of places in the school, the inability to get an appointment at the doctors, speeding, parking and anti-social behaviour.

Council meetings being held in the Village would be more accessible to the residents, should they wish to attend, and would only be dealing with local matters as opposed to a neighbouring village.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I strongly object to the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down, the existing WPC has always done a great job for both villages and separation will only dilute the influence and resources,

The proposals put forward as reasons to split are spurious as they won't have any control over the pub, speed limits or local planning as these have been tried before and overruled. Furthermore the way this issue has been handled is extremely undemocratic when the councillors in favour aren't even a majority!

The villagers they supposedly represent were not canvassed before putting this to MSDC so beyond their remit in my view.

Regards

As a resident of Crawley Down for many years I have watched Crawley Down grow from a small village with 90 residents to the size it is today.

For all this period it has been under the umbrella of Worth Parish Council. Although in theory a separate council seems a good idea, having read the notice regarding its split from WPC I am not entirely sure. The notice does not give enough detail to make an informed opinion. It is the views of a few councillors who dearly wish it to happen and those that don't. I would like to have seen more detail of the expense involved in both cases. I am of the opinion on what I have read that there is no benefit that I can see to breaking away from WPC. WPC have on the whole done a good job for Crawley Down and I don't think a separate council will be able to achieve any more as a separate unit, especially as united under WPC must hold more sway than 2 separate councils. We have numerous Dog Bins and litter bins and several well supported shops and a café. To the best of my knowledge the Royal Oak (pub) is still an ongoing issue and I would like to see WPC pushing harder to get it resolved. It is becoming an eyesore. The only downside to the split is the loss, some years ago, of the council offices in Crawley Down which were so convenient and a God send to those who cannot drive.

The land being developed for housing is unfortunately, not under the WPC remit but I understand it is in their plan to go before Mid Sussex. I would dearly like to see an end to all this development as there is no infrastructure in place to support it and the roads are appalling especially near the schools.

The playground in Crawley Down is well cared for and updated regularly and the verges are cut in line with ecology issues. The parking in Bowers Place needs to be reviewed and that is something that could be achieved by WPC as they have the necessary contacts in MSDC. Speeding and parking have been an issue for a number of years and I imagine Copthorne have the same problems so I don't think a split would benefit either village .I am therefore, against a split and in favour of staying with WPC.

Good morning,

In response to the notice of Community Government Review relating to Worth Parish Council.

In view of all the new housing in and around Crawley Down and the problems that brings to the local community it is my opinion that Crawley Down should have its own Parish Council who will be aware of how much the new housing is affecting the local residents with the local infrastructure, particularly the Doctors, unable to cope with all the new families moving into the village.

Sincerely,

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

As a resident of Copthorne, there will be no benefit to the separation of Worth Parish. Worth Parish currently operates effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of its residents. Worth Parish serves the needs of both villages effectively.

The split of the parish into two does not represent an efficient use of tax payers money. There will be additional costs for example, the need for two Parish Clerks. This money would be better spent delivering services and facilities to the residents of the whole Parish. The split would not achieve more effective and convenient delivery of local services and local Government, given the existing Parish already does this.

It is concerning that reserves will be used to fund the set-up when this money should be used to provide local services and facilities.

In view of all the building of new homes in Crawley Down that has happened and will be happening in the years to come Crawley Down need their very own parish council. They can then decide how best to go forward with decisions that will affect Crawley Down.

Sirs

I wish to register my objection to the break up between Crawley Down and Copthorne as Worth Parish Council.

This will cause unnecessary increase in the financial aspects of such a move.

It is also the work of one or more Councillors who appear to have their own grandiose interests at heart rather than that of the majority of our democratically elected members. I would like to add that I feel the need to retain the historic name of Worth in the parish council. My forebears have lived in Crawley Down for over a hundred years and would have walked the path to the Saxon church in Worth before building the 19th century church in Crawley Down.

I do not support the WPC split into two councils. Only 3/9 support the proposal and is being driven by the ego of one of the three Crawley Down Councillors. I have not heard a strong argument for the setting up of a Parish Council for Crawley Down and do not believe it to be for the benefit of the Village. For the past 8 years the cry has been " save the Royal Oak", this is still one of the promoters ploys to garner support with the notion that the District Council will purchase a distressed eyesore in the vague hope that an additional 2 million pounds can be found elsewhere. It is simply an underhand action to support one individual's manifesto without any regard to the concerns raised by many. The petition was set up and carried out without any mention to WPC, it was rejected by WPC unanimously in 2019 but the promoter still manages to secretly complete a petition whilst there were no council meetings.

I support WPC being retained, by all means change the name to reflect both villages but no splitting.

I would like to OPPOSE the proposed split of WPC into Copthorne and Crawley Down. I have read the relevant Information and do not think there is enough of a benefit to make the split viable. There will be a cost involved and it is not worth a potential increase in council tax when the WPC already manage both villages. I would like to see WPC review some of the CD issues like the nightmare that is the Royal Oak, but overall I believe the best way forward is to stick with WPC. Thanks



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

**OBJECT**

This seems to have been very quiet – who are these partitioners and what is their real agenda? Personal gain I suspect. Is Crawley down being hard done by? Not that I can see.

It is very naïve to think this would not cost much – or there would be less bureaucracy. Splitting the council in two would surely double it.

At such a time of increased hardship it would be ludicrous to inflict increased council tax to residents just to satisfy this minority.

My main worry is that there will be no referendum, MSDC making the decision. Hardly transparent or democratic.

I do hope MSDC see that this is a proposal that does not benefit anyone, causing unnecessary cost, and upheaval which will set back Worth Parish for many years to come.

Firstly I would like to say that I am strongly opposed to a new parish and parish council being created for Crawley Down. A small minority of households appear to be in support of the proposal as do a very small number of current Councillors. There appears to be no evidence to support this change but it goes without saying that the cost will be enormous.

We now have an office in the Parish Hub in Copthorne and I understand that some meetings are held there. Is this too far from Crawley Down?

Instead of spending thousands of pounds on setting up a new office, not to mention the related costs, this money could be better spent on planned projects.

One comment made was 'to address speeding on local roads and issues with local services'. As our villages are very close and interlinked this is something which has to be addressed for both, why should Crawley Down be an exception. This is something which would be better considered by both villages.

I object to my our Council Tax being used/wasted on this unnecessary change which will do nothing but satisfy a few power crazy people.

**OBJECT**

Surely it is these partitioners who should be having to concisely explain how dividing the parish would improve community engagement, enhanced community cohesion etc etc. Not those of us who this has been thrust upon. They show no back up to their claims, what their draft budget is or demonstrate how there will be no increase to council tax, which will be needed to finance this.

If Crawley Down want to go on their own then Crawley Down must pay all costs involved. Why do this now at such a time of economic increases? It's the last thing anyone wants at this time.

There well may be some advantages to splitting but its hard to see what; our villages are much better served by a large parish then two smaller ones.

Cynical maybe but these people have their own personal objectives in mind.

It is alarming that there will be no referendum the matter being decided by MSDC. Not very transparent or democratic.

Creating a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down seems an unnecessary and expensive exercise particularly as residents will be paying for it at a time of high inflation, due to rising food prices, the cost of gas, electricity, petrol and diesel at an all time high. The current Worth Parish Council has been in existence since and before we moved in 22 years ago. It has always been effective and efficient so why change what works well? The anticipated cost of £100,000 would be better spent on filling pot holes in he roads, cutting back hedges so road signs are visible and providing litter bins on the footpaths to the local shops. Footpaths are becoming overgrown so another use of the money would be to have hedges trimmed and if down to the owner of the property timely reminders of their responsibility to the village community. There is at least one very large hedge we are aware of that is a potential danger to pedestrians and vehicle drivers.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I and my wife do NOT support this proposal.

Dear Sirs

Re: Community Governance Review – Worth Parish Council

I object to the petition to split Worth Parish Council.

In particular I object to the suggestion that Worth Parish consists only of Copthorne and Crawley Down. The two villages form a small part of Worth Parish area and I object strongly to Mid Sussex District Council stating my address as Copthorne. The Old Hollow is in Worth and the Land Registry can confirm this. To suggest that Crawley Down should have their own Parish Council and the rest can then be called Copthorne is unfair and historically incorrect. Crawley Borough Council has done its best to remove the name of Worth, trying unsuccessfully to merge Worth into Pound Hill and Maidenbower. Worth still exists and should not be diluted by breaking up the area. There is still Worth Lodge Farm, Worth Church (now in Crawley), Worth Forest, Worth Abbey and Worth Way in particular.

In any event I feel that there is strength in numbers and to split Worth Parish Council would be counter-productive and a waste of money. We already suffer as Mid Sussex District Council appear to favour the towns of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill and the villages on the borders are left out as a result. Making Worth Parish smaller would make it still weaker. I feel that Worth Parish should remain as it is.

I would favour a split.

When I was a Worth Parish Councillor for Copthorne, I stood for re-election (around 1996) on the basis that I thought the Council should be split. At that time the Council Offices were in Crawley Down, which seemed very remote from Copthorne. Now the situation is reversed, we in Copthorne have the Council Offices and Crawley Down Councillors are asking for the split, albeit in a more effective way than I could manage.

I was heavily defeated in that I got very few votes at the election. The biggest argument against was that the rates will go up followed by complacency. But WPC rates were then about second lowest in the County and the poor state of some facilities was a reflection of this.

Not much has changed. I feel a split would benefit Copthorne because we would not have to consider Crawley Down when trying to get things like extremely ragged sidewalks (they are not Pavements just 40-50 year old tarmac) and some streetlights replaced that have been there since just after we moved to Copthorne in 1968 (e.g. Knowle Drive).

In particular I would campaign for the walking route from Lashmere to the centre of the village to be improved by adding missing footpaths on Borer's Arms Road and laying new tarmac on the rest of the walking route. It will be easier to make a convincing case to a smaller Copthorne-only council.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Thank you and my apologies

A difficult decision ,but I favour a split for the following reasons.

As both villages get larger, it is more obvious that they have different pulls.

Whilst Crawley Down looks East towards East Grinstead, dot it's secondary schooling, for its health, as the surgery now in a group with those from E. Grinstead, and more and more for its entertainment and shopping.

Copthorne on other hand looks West towards Crawley, helped by the large housing and industrial site adjacent to the Motorway,

It's health needs come increasingly from Pound Hill, it's shopping and secondary schooling from Crawley.

So the various council representatives will have different priorities.

Thank you

My wife and I feel that the creation of a new Council in Crawley Down would involve extra expense for Copthorne as well.

We believe that the existing Council has served us well and should continue to do so.

We also believe that it is quite difficult to get suitably qualified people to act in official capacity such as the Clerk.

We therefore wish things to stay as they are.

I do not support the split of Worth parish council into 2 entities, namely Copthorne and Crawley Down. It would need extra funding to find and run separate premises, a complete waste of ratepayer money when the current premises are available, modern and serve their purpose well.

It would prove detrimental to local cohesion by splitting up the councillors, possibly losjng simeccpertise and will not improve the decision making process especially when considering common issues.

As a resident of Rowfant I am in favour of the creation of an independent Pariish Council just for the Crawley Down area as separate from Copthorne and Worth because Crawley Down is very different in character to Copthorne and Worth that is more aligned to Crawley.

I believe it will benefit the residents of Crawley Down and surrounding areas to have a say in what is to happen in our neighbourhood and to keep our community life and activities in our interests which will undoubtedly strengthen our community.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I do not agree with the split.

I have lived in Crawley Down for approx 8 years and I feel Crawley Down already has a clear identity. We have great events in the village and great community cohesion. I cannot see how splitting Worth Parish Council and having a separate Crawley Down Village Council will improve this.

I believe that the cost of the split will completely outweigh any benefits of the split. At the moment I cannot find any benefits. Residents will have to pay more council tax, a split would mean that each village council would have less money to benefit each village. Staffing costs alone is a huge cost - just the impact of having to pay for two clerks would mean less money available for community projects.

The petitioners who want the split are Worth Parish Council councillors. There are 17 councillors and originally only 4 supported the split. Now one of these councillors has resigned. So such a minority supporting the split where other councillors representing Crawley Down are not part of this.

The petitioners are saying they will 'make solving the Royal Oak a priority' and have been posting on Facebook that Mid Sussex District Council will have to pay for this. I strongly believe this to be untrue otherwise it would have happened by now. Especially when Worth Parish Council have been working on this plus there is a Save the Royal Oak team in the village. Plus this is now very short sighted as there is now a well established bar and restaurant in the heart of the village.

I understand Worth Parish Council have working parties for each village which include councillors, members of the public and other stakeholders which look at each village and take on projects that benefit each village. So this is already in place.

Therefore I am not in favour of the split. I would like Worth Parish Council to remain as Worth Parish Council and to continue to serve both villages of Crawley Down and Copthorne.

No to a new separate parish

1. More cost
2. More likely to get mid sussex co-operation with Joint copthorne and Crawley down parish.
3. Mid Sussex takes little notice of Worth parish, a Smaller parish will even have less of a voice.
4. Parish has to fight for better infrastructure before more house building, mid sussex completely ignores this need, the present parish is more likely to influence decision than a small Crawley Down parish.

I do not see what the advantages will be by splitting the two villages.

One of the reasons put forward is the Office will be located in Crawley Down making it easier for residents to pop in. Considering Copthorne is a few minutes drive from Crawley Down I cannot see how that will be an improvement considering all the costs involved (premises plus extra staff). Also Council meetings will be held in Crawley Down.

Worth Parish Council incorporating both villages as at present has more chance of getting things done i.e. planning decisions/objections and road maintenance.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

I am absolutely amazed that 4 WPC Councillors, backed by sufficient local residents, have unilaterally raised this petition without even consulting WPC themselves. Considering the history of problems faced by Crawley Down residents when MSDC has overturned or ignored WPC decisions, I am further amazed that residents would place a decision such as this in the very council they have so heavily criticised in the past.

Moving meetings and hub from a purpose-built facility back to a tired old building whose future is limited is a backward step. Providing new buildings for the purpose within Crawley Down will cause massive unnecessary expenditure. Therefore the 4th perceived benefit in the proposition is blown right out of the water.

Community engagement will only ever be with those who can be bothered...you can take a horse to water etc. This proposition will make no difference.

Enhanced community cohesion? What does that even mean? MSDC and WSCC make all the real decisions. A parish council is only advisory and the proposition will not change this.

Better local democracy. WPC has struggled for years to recruit councillors, often co-opting to fill it's ranks. The proposition will not change this.

I believe that the identities and interests of the communities of Crawley Down and Copthorne are best served by the existing Worth Parish Council.

I support a separate Crawley Down Village Council because, having watched closely from the sideline with a family member being on the Parish council for seven years and lived and worked in the village for 40 years, I do not believe that in several instances Worth Parish council is able to follow through the wishes of local people. There are too many issues where local bias of councilors get in the way, especially in recent years. The two villages although similar in many respects have their own identity and community feel.

A Crawley Down Village Council will be able to focus its energy and finances on its own village issues, and where it would be helpful to pool energy on issues that affect both villages will have more voting power as separate councils.

It is a no brainer!

Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council

Comments on disadvantages relating to the splitting of Worth Parish Council and creating a new Crawley Down Parish Council

The residents of Crawley Down are being told that there will be no financial impact on them if a new council is created. This is completely misguided information as:

New premises will have to be found and funded

A qualified Parish Clerk will need to be recruited

The Parish Clerk will require an assistant (quite possibly part time)

Manual Operatives will have to be employed to carry out every day maintenance tasks and checks on children's play equipment and public spaces etc.

In order to fund all these requirements, an individual precept will have to be applied for despite the fact that Worth PC will be providing the Crawley Down share of the current precept. This will increase every resident's council tax bill.

In today's environment, it is very difficult to get volunteers for any organisation, leave alone trying to recruit new councillors. A task not acknowledged by those who wish to split the current Parish Council.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Dear Sirs

I am against this proposal made by a minority of the Crawley Down councillors.

Worth Parish Council (WPC) have served the communities of Crawley Down and Copthorne very well in the past. It has enhanced the facilities of both neighbourhoods and the residents have enjoyed the benefits of scale WPC provides over many years.

If you were starting from scratch I could understand each community wishing to have its own Council. But the time and money of changing the current council far out ways any benefit. Instead of the economies of scale, we would have two councils fighting each other for the benefits which Mid Sussex Council can provide rather than sharing them.

Please register my NO vote.

Having considered the information provided, alongside the Mid Sussex District Council letter, I can see no case to split Worth Parish Council. The creation of a new Parish Council for Crawley Down, alongside the existing Worth Parish Council purely for Copthorne, makes no sense financially nore administratively, as far as I can see.

Additionally the costs of this split would, it appears, fall on the existing Worth Parish Council, thus reducing the funds available to support both Crawley Down & Copthorne immediately, as well as potentially reducing funds for the reduced Worth Parish Council from the time of the split.

The future charges on Copthorne residents would, I expect, inevitability rise, which is a very unfair position for the Copthorne residents.

I ask that my views are taken into account by those considering this review.

Yours sincerely

The proposal to separate Crawley Down from Copthorne would only increase local cost. The problems of both villages are very similar and together it helps to fight the district council over

Planning and communal facilities.

It is in the interest of all to keep cost to a minimum for the maximum benefit of all.

I agree that Crawley Down should have a new parish council. Worth Council is far too big an area with the massive developments that have happened in the past 20 years.

As a resident of Copthorne for 38 years it's pains me the thought of Copthorne and Crawley Down council spitting. One of my 2 children live with their child in Crawley Down we all consider ourselves part of one community. These proposals do not have the support of the majority of Crawley Down councillors at best the cost involved could be in excess of £100,000 which in these economic times could be better spent Therefore I object to these proposals other than to satisfy a small minority of individuals

I do not support the application for a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down. Budgets are already hugely stretched due to Government cuts so additional overheads are not welcome in these challenging times

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I am supporting the case for Creating a Crawley Down Village Council. I believe that having a Crawley Down Village Council will give Crawley Down a clearer sense of identity. The issues and priorities facing Crawley Down are very different to those facing Copthorne. For example: the Worth Way runs through Crawley Down and is a significant local resource in terms of providing leisure value, mental health benefits and customers for local businesses. The maintenance of this resource is key to our identity. Copthorne is slowly connecting to Crawley whereas Crawley Down is connecting with East Grinstead. Both situations create different issues and priorities and I would prefer local councillors to be focus on our specific issues. Crawley Down has a main road running through it (the Turners Hill Road) which brings particular problems which Copthorne Councillors will not appreciate/understand. We have a far more rural identity than Copthorne and therefore different interests, priorities and concerns. Crawley Down has a very specific issue relating to the pub. Hopefully having a local council focused specifically on our needs and accountable only to the residents of Crawley Down will lead to better local democracy, local services and local government.

Personally I am more likely to attend a meeting being held in Crawley Down rather than traipsing off to the Hub. This will be come more of an issue as I get older. Having meetings in Crawley Down, will lead to increased use of our facilities and lead to better community engagement and cohesion.

Currently I do not use any facilities in Copthorne. Interestingly, I do use many facilities in Turners Hill (The Ark, Crown, Red Lion and Bike Shop). I do not feel connected with Copthorne in anyway and therefore cannot see the benefits or value in their councillors representing us. My vote is for improved local engagement, cohesion and democracy by creating a Crawley Down Village Council.

To me this is another total waste of money. What was the cost just to post out all of the forms. Then the estimated cost of £150,000.to set up this additional layer of bureaucracy my experience of councils is pretty poor. They are basically controlled by central government. Take house building, residents can object as much as they like but all and everything is passed. Not so sure councillors are not in the pockets of developers. One or two of our current councillors work hard for the thoughts and aspirations of residents under current rules.

So basically for me a total waste of money.

Dear Sirs,

Please find my submission in favour of a separate Crawley Down Village Council. I write to confirm that I believe my village will benefit from less bureaucracy by being a separate entity from Copthorne/ Worth parish council, as we are a different village, not adjacent to the M23 to Crawley and being distinctly different by being part of the countryside.

We will then get to set out own agendas, typically in development, maintenance, quality of the roads, infrastructure and services.

We already have a village hall, with offices that were previously used by Worth parish council, that could easily be transformed back into a hub for the village within the existing village hall at very little additional cost.

Monies received can then be best spent directly on our own requirements for facilities, sports and community groups.

I do not believe that this would affect Copthorne negatively.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

To Whom It May Concerns

I am writing to support for Crawley Down to have a separate village Council. My reasons for being in favour of having a Crawley Down Village Council separate from Worth and Copthorne parish councils is because I believe that this village has different needs from the other two villages, especially since we are part of the countryside and not adjacent to the M23 nor Crawley.

I also believe that Crawley Down will benefit from less bureaucracy and we will be able to set out our own agendas, typically in development, maintenance, quality of the roads, infrastructure and services, and the money can be best spent directly on our own requirement as a village.

I also believe that we already have offices available for our own council in the Crawley Down Village Hall so there will be a minimal spent in setting up an office.

I do not believe that this separation would affect Copthorne negatively.

Your sincerely

We have read with interest the arguments, both for and against the proposal for a Crawley Down Village Council, and are more convinced than ever that it is in the interests of both villages for this should happen. Until now, a combined council worked reasonably well, but with the massive house building taking place and the growth in the numbers of residents in Crawley Down over the past few years, we believe it is essential that the views and needs of the Crawley Down residents be dealt with separately from those of Copthorne.

Each village is unique and their needs and views will differ so it makes sense that they be dealt with in different ways. Having an office in the village too will greatly benefit the residents as it will make the workings of the council more accessible and approachable.

The Neighbourhood Plans for Crawley Down and Copthorne are different and should be dealt with differently and this could happen if they are assessed and dealt with by local councillors who live in the village.

In view of the above therefore, we therefore vote FOR the proposal for a Crawley Down Village Council.

I have read the cases for both for and against the proposed exclusive Crawley Down Village Council and have to say that I am not in favour of such a move.

My reasons are:

- The proposal is not supported by the vast majority of local councillors.
- It is my view that such a split would be an additional expense for residents via the rates bill.
- I am suspicious why one of the priorities listed in support of the move is “solving the Royal Oak” situation. This establishment is a pub and should only be allowed to continue as such or an establishment that serves the community (e.g. shop).
- A separate village council will mean a smaller voice within MSC. This cannot be a good idea.

Regards,



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I was born and raised in Crawley Down and lived here for nearly 67 years so I have experienced much of the work Worth Parish Council have undertaken for the local community over that period of time. I sincerely believe that on the whole the current arrangements work well and the service delivered by WPC is excellent and therefore conclude that there is no good reason to change it. I have carefully reviewed the arguments for but I have serious concerns about personal agendas being pursued that may offer little benefit to either villages. The case assuming residents are more likely to attend meetings in Crawley Down rather than Copthorne is frankly absurd, Copthorne is not exactly a distant outpost. Another level of administration rarely affords the benefits stated in the plans.

A further issue of serious concern is that although that some of the instigators have now put their names forward I am aware that there others who have not.

Lastly my wife is also a long term resident here of 43 years and shares the same concerns with this proposal as myself. We hope that the proposal for a separate council for Crawley Down is rejected.

Yours Sincerely

I am in support of a new Parish Council for Crawley Down.

I believe this would improve community engagement as meetings would be held within the village with our own Councillors elected to represent only Crawley Down.

There would be enhanced community cohesion with a clearer identity provided from community groups and in wider local government, which would support better local democracy.

A more effective delivery of local services could be provided as everything would be concentrated on the local community needs and issues.

I believe there would be both economic and community benefits. Funds could be allocated and overseen solely for Crawley Down projects and improvements. Social issues and concerns which are important to us could be addressed in a responsive coordinated way rather than split between ourselves and Copthorne.

Our community here is unique and our own parish council would reflect our identity and interests in a clearer manner.

I strongly support Crawley Down (CD) having its own Council. The main reason is the Worth parish council in Copthorne is so remote, it difficult to approach the council on specific issues. There are issues arising from the split in services in Crawley down which need to be resolved on a local basis. For example, No Public House in the centre (Turners Hill have two), the shopping area needs more diverse shops, as we get older we cannot travel due to age getting us disabled. The central area is crowded with traffic and not 100% safe for us older generation. The impact of any proposed development must have the views of local people directly given to local councillors to generate the case for and against. Crawley Down is a healthy community and we could do more by bringing it closer together with local democracy.

I strongly support the setting up of a Crawley Down Council. The offices in Copthorne are too remote to provide a convenient access to Worth Parish council. The community in Crawley Down deserves an efficient means of developing community views on any proposed development. A developed community view would have more impact on new developments. A community that works together comes up with good ideas to help provide excellent facilities. The village centre deserves a better range of shops and the Royal Oak is an eyesore that needs a sympathetic development, possibly a rebuild.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I am writing as a Crawley Down resident who has lived in the village with my wife for 20 years.

It is my considered opinion that Crawley Down should have its own Parish Council and should therefore cease to be part of Worth PC.

Crawley Down is a large but very beautiful village which has its own character. It is several miles from Cophorne, the only other village covered by Worth PC. The two villages are separated by fields and woods and this dividing zone must be maintained at all costs. I do not feel that a PC which has responsibility for both villages will have the drive to hold that in focus.

The needs of both villages are distinct and very individual. The unwise development of housing on the fringe of Crawley Down has been poorly handled by Worth PC. None of the amenities or infrastructure have been improved to cope with the increase in population. I am convinced that had Crawley Down had its own PC this unsustainable increase in size would have been dealt with in a much more positive way to the benefit of the village.

Dividing limited Government Finance funds between the two villages in the past has not resulted in real benefits to either village. All of the income to the PC needs to be spent for the benefit of Crawley Down alone.

We have lived in Crawley Down for 20 years, it's a great village, and a lovely place to live. I feel that Crawley Down needs its own Village Council. It seems very very likely that the village will continue to expand, this is ok (not ideal, but it is ok) as long as local facilities and infrastructure improve. A separate council would better represent the village on these matters.

I have not seen or heard any good reasons that exceeds the time, money and effort required to separate Worth Parish Council into two parishes. It appears to be more of a 'nice to do' rather than for any substantial reason. There are no benefits to Cophorne in doing this, it solely benefits Crawley Down.

Worth Parish Council works hard at recognising and respecting the village's unique features and similarities.

Why change something so drastically that doesn't need to be changed?

I also haven't seen any evidence of what the honest cost will be to us and at a time when so much is uncertain already with electric, gas and fuel costs. The very thought of this adding to that, frightens me!

It seems Crawley Down are the only winners out of this proposal. The argument for us to support this petition is based on very little understanding of what the real implications are of separating Worth Parish Council. Just saying 'we believe it won't' or 'you shouldn't be worried' isn't enough to convince me that us residents will come out with little to no impact.

This is a waste of time and resources when there are far more worrying things going in the world that have unknown financial implications that are out of our control!

Worth Parish Council have done and do a great job respecting both of the village's unique features and similarities.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I wish to propose that Crawley Down has its own Parish Council.

For too long CD has been left defenceless by Mid Sussex and Worth with regarding to planning applications.

No money for these builds come back into the village. I feel with need to be have our own voice.

I wish to support the case for a new Council for the following reason...

- Crawley Down is a real village surrounded by open land at the moment and has a different character and issues to those of its neighbours
- A Crawley Down Village Council mould better represent the village on important local issues such as plans for more development, quality of services and the condition of local roads and other infrastructure
- Residents would be more likely to attend Parish Council meetings held in their own village
- A Crawley Down Village Council would spend all the money it received on supporting the community groups, facilities and sports club in the village

Hello,

I'd like to support the case for a new Parish Council to be created for Crawley Down.

It would better represent the village on key local issues and likely result in more investment into supporting local community groups, facilities and sports clubs.

I support the case for a separate Crawley Down village council as I believe we will be better supported and represented on important local issues, these include plans for more development, quality of services and other infrastructure.

I would definitely attend meetings in our village and become more involved knowing it was our own Parish Council Yours sincerely

I feel that Crawley Down would significantly benefit from a Council separated from Copthorne. I would like to feel that decisions are made in the interests of our locality and with our needs only to be considered.

The pace of development is such that we need to have a Council that considers Crawley Down issues without having to take into consideration the needs of another, large, village. I am strongly in favour of a local Council for local people that is based in the village and only concerned with matters of local importance

I would ask you to decide in favour of the proposal for Crawley Down to be self-governing.

I do not believe it to be necessary or of benefit to either Copthorne or Crawley Down to split into two Parish Councils.

Elected Councillors time should be better used discussing and putting into practice initiatives for the benefits of their communities, not discussing how to break them up.

I am concerned that as a payer of Council Tax that my money will be wasted on this exercise and there will be no discernible benefits to either residents of Copthorne or Crawley Down. The Council Tax could be better spent elsewhere in both villages.

I have not heard of anybody expressing their desire to be governed autonomously from either village.

Therefore I am against the proposal.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Good morning. My name is REDACTED. I live in Crawley Down at REDACTED

I am in support of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down for the following reasons:

1. A Crawley Down village council would better represent the village on important local issues. These issues would include; plans on further development, condition of local roads, quality of services and other infrastructure.
  2. The new council would spend all money received on supporting our village community groups, facilities and sports clubs in the village.
  3. Crawley Down is a large rural village surrounded by fields and has a different character and issues to other nearby communities.
  4. I would be more likely to get involved in a parish council that just represents my village and holds its meetings in Crawley Down
  5. I, and I am sure other Crawley Down residents would be more likely to attend Parish Council meetings held in the village rather than meetings held in Copthorne.
- I hope that my comments will be taken in to consideration when MSDC make their decision on the future of Crawley Down and Copthorne councils.

Please kindly acknowledge receipt of my communication. Thank you.

Good afternoon. My name is REDACTED. I live in Crawley Down at REDACTED

I am in support of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down for the following reasons:

1. A Crawley Down village council would better represent the village on important local issues. These issues would include; plans on further development, condition of local roads, quality of services and other infrastructure.
  2. The new council would spend all money received on supporting our village community groups, facilities and sports clubs in the village.
  3. Crawley Down is a large rural village surrounded by fields and has a different character and issues to other nearby communities.
  4. I would be more likely to get involved in a parish council that just represents my village and holds its meetings in Crawley Down
  5. I, and I am sure other Crawley Down residents would be more likely to attend Parish Council meetings held in the village rather than meetings held in Copthorne.
- I hope that my comments will be taken in to consideration when MSDC make their decision on the future of Crawley Down and Copthorne councils.

Please kindly acknowledge receipt of my communication. Thank you.

I support the proposal for setting up a new independent parish council for Crawley Down. Crawley Down has a unique village identity and is self contained as such. Certain aspects of the village need to be addressed by the community such as the future of the use of the building that was the public house in the centre. Other villages have taken community ownership of their village pubs. One notable example is Trawden in Lancashire where the pub is now central to the village being used for community events as the hub of the village.

Residents, such as myself, would feel more invested in a village run by a separate Parish Council based in the village, run by the village for the village.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Dear Sirs

I am in support of a new parish council for Crawley Down.

I believe this would improve community engagement as meetings would be held within the village with our own Councillors elected to represent only Crawley Down.

There would be enhanced community cohesion with a clearer identity provided from community groups and in wider local government, which would support better local democracy.

A more effective delivery of local services could be provided as everything would be concentrated on the local community needs and issues.

I believe there would be both economic and community benefits. Funds could be allocated and overseen solely for Crawley Down projects and improvements. Social issues and concerns which are important to us could be addressed in a responsive coordinated way rather than split between ourselves and Copthorne.

Our community here is unique and our own parish council would reflect our identity and interests in a clearer manner.

It is clear both Copthorne and Crawley Down are expanding and my husband and I believe a single Parish Council cannot possibly deal adequately with all the issues this expansion creates.

Crawley Down is remote from Copthorne and it should continue to be so, looked after by it's own Parish Council.

Although separated by the M23, Copthorne is clearly merging with the outskirts of Crawley and all this brings.

Everything seems to revolve around Copthorne. Parish meetings, Councilors who dictate what happens in Crawley Down, and a Parish Magazine that, in the last 2 editions, provided hardly any mention of Crawley Down at all.

We need local Councilors to be making decisions, having local meetings and engaging with people who live locally and not allowing those remote from the village to make decisions on their behalf. Why, for example, should residents of Crawley Down have to travel to Copthorne to attend meetings about their own village. Having local village representation would make everyone feel their village was important and not becoming part of an urban sprawl.

We believe local representation can and should be more involved in protecting development ruining it's village status. Even current new development in the village is creating more traffic on the Turners Hill Road. Increased traffic is a real issue particularly between The Dukes Head roundabout and Vicarage Road with the much of this increase coming from current new development.

This increased traffic also leads to speeding and an accident will occur soon. No wonder the funeral directors set up shop at the end of Sandy Lane!

We have lived in Crawley Down for 40 years and, although still a lovely place to live with easy access to walks, parks and the Worth Way, it is rapidly losing its tranquility and a split from Copthorne will go some way to restore that.

I would like to support the proposal for Crawley Down to have it's own Parish Council. Our community is sufficiently large to warrant such a move which i believe would benefit our village and it's resident's as a whole by enabling people to server the community and take dcisions solely for the benefit of the local council tax payers and wider resident community.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I attended the meeting held in Copthorne on 16 March and heard the representations made by Worth Council and the Crawley Down Group looking to form their own council. Having heard those statements I cannot see a good reason why Mid Sussex Council should proceed with the creation of separate councils. A small minority of Crawley Down residents raised a petition for this to happen (11%) claiming Worth does not represent their identity and focus enough on their priorities. And yet they have the majority of councillors on Worth Parish Council (53%), which I understand has also now created sub-committees which look at the individual priorities of each village. How would a separate Council achieve more than this? The costs to create the new council will be borne by the Worth Parish Council reserves, surely those funds should be utilised on matters directly affecting residents, not being spent on administrative set-up costs. It is irrelevant where the Council Offices are located, both sides agreed that residents rarely visit anyway, preferring to phone or email. If the existing Crawley Down Parish Councillors did a better job of representing their village, this perceived issue would not exist. If they feel like "Worth" does not represent them then please consider changing the name to Crawley Down and Copthorne Parish Council as a compromise, and let that be the quick and easy solution to this matter. Kind regards

I strongly object to the proposal to split Worth Parish Council into two separate councils - Crawley Down and Copthorne. My reasons are -

- there is no evidence that a separate council will provide a better service for the residents of either Crawley Down or Copthorne
- the villages are similar in size, population and demographic and hence our elected councillors should be able to ensure a fair and equitable balance between the villages
- it is completely unacceptable in these times of high inflation to increase council taxes, even by a small percentage, for a project that has no clear business case
- whether the increased costs are £50k or £100k the money can be better spent on services that benefit both communities.

Please note I strongly support the proposal to create a new Crawley Down Parish Council. The two villages currently comprising the existing Worth Parish Council (WPC) have both geographical and cultural identity differences, indeed part of Copthorne sits in Surrey. Splitting WPC into two separate more local parish councils representing Copthorne and Crawley Down will enable the newly created parish councils to better focus on and represent their village needs.

A newly created Crawley PC would have its PC offices located in Crawley Down, which would encourage more lay people to attend council meetings, rather than travel to Copthorne, which is a car or bus journey rather than a walk or bicycle trip. And splitting the PC would also mean that Parish Council tax would be clearly identified for local use.

So just like Turners Hill has its own PC, so should Crawley Down.

In my opinion, the two villages are very closely linked and many families have members in both. They have shared values and have functioned well together for many years. WPC have changed over the years to reflect changes in interests, and have ensured that both villages are fairly treated and represented. This suggestion is clearly divisive and actually goes against all the things you are looking at.

Having attended a public meeting the promoters made it very clear that the people of Copthorne would suffer both financially and in services offered which hardly promotes goodwill.

Also, having looked at the petition, the wish to split the assets of WPC as at 6th April 2021 again clearly disadvantages Copthorne as it does not take into account new residents in The Hawthorns or Heathy Wood. If a split were to happen it should be based on numbers at the time of the split. It is very clear that the promoters are only following their own biased views and leaving Copthorne hung out to dry.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I have been a resident of Crawley Down for twelve years, previously living in Pound Hill, Crawley. In all this time, I have never felt any attachment to Copthorne in terms of its locality and community. It is an entirely separate village. My interest and affiliation is with what happens in Crawley Down.

Secondly if I were to attend the Parish Council meetings it would be of great advantage to me if they were in the village, as I could easily walk to the venue. I cannot drive at night which makes many evening events impossible for me to attend.

A Crawley Down Council would better meet the challenges of local need, by not having to consider those of a larger parish. Councillors for the current parish have only so much time to devote to both villages which must limit delivery of local services. Turners Hill has successfully established their own Parish Council so should Crawley Down.

I feel it would be best for Copthorne & Crawley Down to have their own representation. Both villages are too large now with all the new developments to be represented together. Separately, the communities will be more engaged & interested in their local councillors. I also believe that the villages will be better represented individually

I believe that the two villages although only distanced by a few miles have different viewpoints and thus priorities. Separate village councils could represent their village in a way that benefited their village, rather than have to take note of matters relating to the other village. This could speed the the responses to their village problems, and make the ownership identifiable.

Copthorne and Crawley Down are both large villages and I would like them to become separate parishes, as they are now too big to be one. I also feel that the Parishes need different things.

Residents are members of their village community, not a Worth Parish community.

A Council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents and would hopefully bring the community together and for people to take more interest . I for one would probably attend more council meetings if they just dealt with local issues and the meetings would not be so long.

A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces.

Crawley Down and Copthorne already have separate Neighbourhood Plans.

Totally support the Case for a separate Crawley Down Parish Council.

Hi.

Apologies we have mislaid the letter with the unique reference in.  
REDACTED

We both feel that putting the councils will have a financial detriment to both villages. Whilst splitting will see the villages looked after by the interests of those living in the village we struggle to find councillors already to fill places and this would continue. Additionally, funding and spending/ buying power would be reduced as budgets would be split

There is no concrete evidence presented to the public on his the pose strings will work. Both sides seem to be doing what's good for them rather than stating the facts for the constituents to make up their own minds.

Many thanks.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Good morning

I am a resident in Crawley Down. The format of the present Parish Council located in Copthorne is, in my view, satisfactory and I do not see the need to have a separate Council in Crawley Down.

I am happy that we can work together with other villages in the area rather than being isolated.

In conclusion, I do not agree with the proposed breaking away of Crawley Down from Worth Parish Council.

Hello. I am for a separate Crawley Down Parish Council. I do not feel connected with Copthorne in any way (you can't even easily walk between the two villages!). To have a council just for the Crawley Down community then I think people are much more likely to take an interest and get involved. I have personally never bothered paying much attention to what the council do because it seems quite removed from me and my life. However, to be able to work on ideas and improvements just for our village would be much more engaging and would bring the community together and encourage people to get involved. I would be much more interested in the council if it were local and I felt connected with their purpose and aims.

There are many arguments put forward by Worth Parish Council against the split which seem insubstantial e.g. 'splitting is counterintuitive to the anticipated direction of changes to local authority'.

Doing things the 'normal' way is not always suitable in all situations!

I have read the cases for and against the review and attended an open meeting in Copthorne. I believe that the parish council should stay as it is, however a change of name may improve engagement and cohesion.

I listened to the case made for splitting, and don't believe that the upheaval and costs involved would achieve anything more than can be achieved by good governance and the engagement of the existing council.

Any parish will contain a range of challenges and circumstances, it is for those elected and local residents to ensure the identity and interests are best served. I have never seen any problem with the 2 villages being dealt with together as I believe they both have common interests and similarities.

I write in favour of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down, as Crawley Down has a separate identity to Copthorne. Council Offices here in Crawley Down would be better for the local community, being more accessible to us residents. The Council could then only focus on issues affecting Crawley Down, such as speeding on local roads and roads through the estate, and the future of the Royal Oak pub building.



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
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I am writing to object most strongly to the proposal to split Worth Parish Council to create separate Councils for Copthorne and Crawley Down.  
Splitting the council would incur significant costs, both in the process of splitting and in ongoing operating costs, all of which would have to be financed by us the local residents. The claim that costs would be met out of reserves may be true, but the reserves would then be unavailable for projects that would actually provide benefit to the communities. The existing council has the balance of a 15 year lease, taken out in 2015, at peppercorn annual rent on its modern suite of three offices which are perfectly adequate for the current council and would be excessive if the council were to be split. The office staff costs of two separate councils would undoubtedly increase significantly from the current level. The supporters of the petition suggest that it will be easier to resist Copthorne losing its identity and being drawn into Crawley, and for Crawley Down to do likewise in respect of East Grinstead if the councils were to split. I believe that this would not be the case, and that a larger, combined Parish Council would have greater bargaining power than two smaller entities.  
I do not believe that any of the benefits claimed for Crawley Down residents will be any more achievable with separate councils.  
In summary, I believe that the proposal would be an outrageous waste of residents' money and should be rejected.

I really hope that MidSussex District Council will refuse the proposed application to split and separate Worth Parish Council.  
The existing Parish Council works very effectively and does not need the costly process of separation particularly in such a harsh and current brutal financial climate.  
Not all the Crawley Down councillors are in agreement with this proposal. Surely we cannot pander to the egos of such a small minority and the huge upheaval it would cause? There isn't a single valid reason for separation. To quote a resolution to a vacant public house issue for a reason to separate is plainly absurd.  
All the other reasons quoted are efficiently dealt with under the current arrangements. Stronger together, no separation, keep costs to a minimum and let's have a council and councillors who really are committed to the local community and not their poi advancement.

I attended a rather contentious council meeting and was impressed by the variety of opinions and rational arguments. Unfortunately some Cllrs, i.e. Cllr Gibson and Hitchcock find this irksome and it came as no surprise when they started to canvass that we should break away. They are garnering support by suggesting that we are the poor relationship in the present arrangement, ( I do not believe that the facts bear this out) and that somehow they will 'save the pub'. Cllr Gibson began this campaign in an underhand way and his now proposed meeting at the Haven Centre, (when it had been agreed that due to poor attendance the meeting would be cancelled), suggests he is continuing in the same manner. That he and a small cabal of his friends wish to 'manage' our village is frightening and unacceptable in equal measure.  
I have heard nothing that makes me believe that a new parish council for Crawley Down would be beneficial and any changes would be costly and time consuming. I believe that the present system works affectively and efficiently, there is strength in this larger group, and should continue.

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Regarding the above proposal to create a new Parish Council for Crawley Down Village, I fully support this proposal.

I feel that having a separate Crawley Down Village Council would directly benefit the village, making decisions directly related to Crawley Down and not being absorbed in wider issues affecting other local villages.

I would be more inclined to participate in the forward planning of Crawley Down if this were the case.

Crawley Down needs more targeted decision making on what directly affects this village for future development given the need to review the local infrastructure and services for village residents, doctor surgeries, schools, local community groups, shops etc.

Please include my supportive views on the decisions that will be made regarding this proposal.

I believe the two Villages are stronger together. Crawley Down is not the poor relation. it is bigger than Copthorne.

The Council offices in Copthorne are perfectly fine and the short drive to them from Crawley Down is nothing in this day and age. The cost of new Council Offices within Crawley Down would be a waste of money as would be wages for a Clerk to the Council and I believe that this is the whim of a minority of egotistical Councillors.

If it is felt that there should be a name change i think it perfectly reasonable to be either Crawley Down and Copthorne or Copthorne and Crawley Down.

As for the aspiration of saving the Royal Oak Pub, it is not within the remit of Councillor Gibson but he believes he know better than Mid Sussex District Council. It was not supported when it was open and would probably have less support now.

Surely there are more important things to spend Council money on than this nonsense.

Im in favour of a new parish council for Crawley down alone. I think it would better represent local views and needs including the village centre the disused pub and too small shops. The village has been overdeveloped with respect to housing and more resistance to further development is necessary. I think a more local council would be more responsive to these and other issues. Im sure residents would be much more likely to take part in the parish councils activities if it was local to the village.

As to costs, even if it did cost more to have a council for Crawley Down on its own I would be happy to pay the extra tax.

As a local resident I would like to suport a Crawley Down village council. A council that will be more responsive with offices in the village again.A council that will understand and address local issues Defending local countryside from further development improving sports and social facilities such as ensuring the future of the Royal Oak All the Parish Council Tax will be spent on the village I think initial set up costs will be more than covered over time Yours sincerely

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To whom it may concern

I have lived in Crawley Down for almost 40 years and have seen an immense amount of change and development, not all of which has been positive. In my opinion the village would have been better served if it had previously had its own council so I welcome proposals for this now.

- I am optimistic that Crawley Down having it's own Parish Council will push forward and look to remedy the dire situation and eyesore of the village pub. It is absolutely unforgivable the ever-growing village is being held to ransom by a property developer and is without such an English institution.

- Crawley Down is a rural village, surrounded by fields, with a different character and issues to those of it's neighbours

- A Crawley Down Village Council would better represent the village on important local issues such as plans for (even!!) more development, quality of services and the condition of local roads and other infrastructure.

- I, and fellow residents, would be more likely to attend Parish Council meetings held in the village than meetings held in Copthorne.

- A Crawley Down Village Council would spend all the money it received on supporting the community groups, facilities and sports clubs in the village.

- I would be more likely to get involved in a Parish Council that is clearly linked with and holds it's meetings in the village.

Let's hope common sense prevails and Crawley Down achieves it's own dedicated Parish Council.

Dear Sirs,

I would like to support the split and have a Crqwley Down council separate from Copthorne.

These are two entirely different village with different outlooks and aspirations for the future.

WPC is at present too unwieldy and the methods of decision reaching is too time consuming and I feel that separate councils for each village would be a great improvement for both villages.

Yours Faithfully,

Dear Sirs,

I live in Crawley Down, and as such, I do not understand why we have a council which tries to represent two villages.

Crawley Down and Copthorne are large enough to have separte councils which would represent their own village without trying to please residents of another village which may have their own ideas of how to plan for both current and future events.

I therefore support a complete split from Worth Parish Council and that a separate Crawley Down Council be formed.

Yours Sincerely,

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

I am strongly opposed to the petition to split the current Worth Parish Council into two separate councils for Copthorne and Crawley Down villages.

The legal costs would be significant and would inevitably be born by the residents and divert funds from necessary local use.

The statement that Crawley Down can use existing reserves to cover the set up costs for their own office needs rethinking, once reserves are gone they are very difficult to rebuild. Logically, running two separate offices and duplicating meetings must increase costs.

Only 4 of the current 17 councillors support the proposal, and less than half of those representing Crawley Down support it. I feel that the current council maintains the distinctiveness of each village. I do not agree that the proposed benefits outlined in the petition 'The Case for a Crawley Down Village Council' can only be achieved by splitting the council; investing in sports & community facilities, speeding problems on the roads and resisting development for local needs can be best addressed by a larger council with a stronger voice.

Dear Sirs

I have lived in the village of Crawley Down for 49yrs and have seen a good deal of change and in all that time the village has done nothing but expand and get a great deal bigger with new housing popping up wherever there is an empty space.

I write to say I believe that the future of Crawley Down will still only expand even more and I feel it would prove to be beneficial for the village to have its own council. Local councillors would be better placed to resolve issues such as conditions of the local roads and planning as well as other local issues. I also feel that if Crawley Down had its own council then more residents would take an interest and maybe even an active part. With the rate that Copthorne and Crawley Down village are expanding I feel that in the long run it would be more beneficial for both villages to have their own councils.

Regards

Initially I felt that a split would not be beneficial due to economies of scale from combining a bigger residential area, but having attended the meeting held in the village it is apparent that Crawley Down would benefit more from having its own parish council, from the discussion and information provided for the following reasons:

- smaller number of councillors with inherent understanding of Crawley Down issues would make it simpler to make decisions and take action
- the future cost impact on council tax would not be greater than it is currently, and potentially funds available for use in village would be greater as overheads will be reduced by not having dedicated office building
- the haven centre or other alternative site in Crawley down would once again be used for local council matters, currently it has not been utilised which impacts the viability of the facility
- advised that the worth parish council structure already operates under separate committees/working groups for each village so unlikely to impact future projects
- better representation for Crawley Down in other council/government led initiatives if represented as one village
- with the challenges of the pandemic and now future energy issues it is important that Crawley Down Residents are able to elect people who will act as caretakers for future generations of our unique village, which is distinctly different to the issues faced in Copthorne
- with the expansion of both villages in recent times I feel the existing with parish is too large and is in danger of being consolidated into neighbouring towns if their identities can't be maintained

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Additionally as an aside I would like to add that the representatives against this proposal did not present a reasonable or objective basis for their resistance to the proposals, but it was clear they are more concerned for the Copthorne residents issues and in some cases raised wholly inaccurate information to dissuade people and launch personal attacks on the representatives for the proposals

We agree with the creation of a new parish Council for Crawley Down.  
This is a growing village which is simply best represented as a separate entity and by those with a direct interest in the people and its well being.

All of this in expectation of the four benefits listed on the letter from yourselves and improved facilities in a sensible time frame. Eg, mini supermarket/ grocer, considerate facilities for the youth,

Kind regards

My husband and I moved to Copthorne 25 years ago having both been born and lived our lives in Crawley. At the time, two of my closest friends had purchased houses in Crawley Down, so in some ways it would have made sense for us to move there instead. However, there were things about Copthorne we found more attractive, and it was our decision to set up our future in Copthorne by preference.

In those last 25 years, my husband and I have very much become part of Copthorne and intend to stay here for the rest of our lives as far as we can foresee. Similarly, our friends have become very much a part of Crawley Down and also intend to stay there. We now have several close friends that live in both villages, and I can honestly say that I have never had a conversation with any of them that relate to a lack of identity for either village in any aspect, but especially in relation to how each village is governed! Indeed, until about 7 years ago when my husband joined Worth Parish Council as a Councillor, I had very little idea on who or what the Council was. I can say for sure this was the same for all my friends in both villages.

The point I am trying to make here is that I feel – and have always felt – that Copthorne and Crawley Down are two separate, distinct villages and I have never felt that there was any question over the identity of either village. Therefore, when I heard about the CGR being conducted, I was confused about the need for such a review.

I still take very little interest in local Council despite my husband's involvement, but the CGR has made me want to look at this more closely to understand the issues and the implications of such a review.

What I conclude after looking at all the information I have seen is that there will be a cost associated with any divide of the existing Council, although I am still unclear just how significant any cost will be. What is clearer is that there will be ongoing cost increases to me in relation to our Council Tax that do appear to be significant, and surely dividing the Council can only result in less service provision without additional increases in the same costs? I also do not relate to the claimed benefits of such a split as I feel that the existing Council represents the needs of both villages very well at present and that the claimed benefits of a divide are tenuous at best. Surely having a larger Council representing us at higher levels of governance is a benefit? That just seems to make sense to me. So why fix something that is not broken? Why spend our taxpayer's money to change something that is clearly working at present?

The only thing I can see in the Terms of Reference for the CGR that makes any sense is to change the name of the existing Council to include the names of both villages as I do believe Worth Parish Council causes confusion. Copthorne & Crawley Down Parish Council makes things a lot clearer in my opinion.

I trust that Mid Sussex District Council will do what is right for Copthorne, Crawley Down and all our residents. As someone who does not get involved in governance or politics, I can only have this faith. Therefore, I also trust that unless you can see anything wrong

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with the current setup and feel that the cost and disruption of dividing the existing model will provide justifiable benefits, then you will use our money wisely. I hope this trust is not misplaced.

I agree that Worth Parish Council should be split in to two separate bodies, one to represent Crawley Down and the other Copthorne. This will better reflect the identities and interests of both villages, as they are growing too big to be represented by one Council. I understand there are costs involved, although believe these have been inflated, but believe it will be worth the work involved and expense as our village will have elected Councillors working for the good of Crawley Down residents. I will be able to attend meetings as they will be in our village and there should be fewer meetings and less council people involved as there will be fewer decisions to make for just one village. All Parish Council Tax will benefit our own village. Our village needs to be Represented by our own Council as currently I do not feel my voice is being heard or my opinion taken in to account. I vote for the split if Worth Council.

I attended the Meeting on the 1 April about the splitting of Worth Parish Council in to two separate Councils Crawley Down and Copthorne and I am supporting the split. The two growing villages are very different and have very different needs and identities, which will be better represented with their own individual councils. We need our own Council in Crawley Down as they will better represent important local needs and wishes, which currently are not being listened to. Crawley Down Village Council (understanding the needs of the residents) can best decide where the money is needed and spent, in order to aid development, quality of services, improve roads, introduce traffic control and speeding restrictions etc. We understand and care passionately about what infrastructure and housing our village needs, but we aren't being heard, the parish has got too large. And more importantly resist development not required for local needs, as that is certainly not being taken in to account currently. Our own Crawley Down Council would be better focused at bringing back our village pub, the hub of the village community, which is really of no interest to the villages in Copthorne and vice versa the issues Copthorne residents have do not directly affect us.

I believe that it would be more beneficial in todays society to have more localised Parish Council representation. In other words the people from the local community being the representatives of the local community. Crawley Down Village council would better represent the village on important local issues such as plans for development, quality of services and the condition of local roads and other infrastructure. A Crawley Down Village Council would spend all the money it received on supporting the community groups, facilities an sports clubs in the village. As one of the villagers I would be more likely to get involved in a Parish Council that is clearly linked with and holds it's meetings within the village.

I am not in favour of a split between Copthorne and Crawley Down.

In my opinion the two villages together can have a greater chance of improving facilities. Separate villages may not have the necessary finances to keep up with future village requirements.

The cost of the split if it happened would cost a lot of rate payers money which would be better spent to enhance facilities, such as updating the play areas that are in need of improvements. Money could be spent on improving facilities for young teenagers. This could stop vandalism by giving meaningful things to do. Many other things could be improved if the split did not happen.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

My wife and I support the proposal for a separate Crawley Down village council on the grounds that the planning proposals for housing adjacent Turners Hill road go far beyond that we had envisaged when we moved here five years ago.  
We wish to maximise efforts to restrain the developers and the proposal for a separate council as proposed in particular by Dr Ian Gibson at least offers a means however limited of doing so.

Mid Sussex, please do not allow Worth Parish Council to be split.  
There are no good economic or local reasons why this should go ahead. We are stronger together, more united and the current system has worked effectively for many years.  
Not all CrawleyDown councillors or residents want this. Please do not pander to four egos.  
In such stringent economic times I shudder to think of the cost of this public consultation.  
Please keep things as they are because it works!

A Crawley Down Parish Council will focus purely on Crawley Down business & projects, being held responsible to only Crawley Down residents.

They will have the time to focus on aspects that the village hold dearly, such as lighting, allotments, pond etc.

This will allow the newly formed Parish Council to fulfil its role in serving the village and enhancing the area for the benefit of all.

I have been a member of the Crawley Down Pond Group since moving to the village, building a Kingfisher nest box on the south side of the pond. But over the last few years this pond has become silted up due to building work in the village and now desperately needs dredging (even if partially) to improve visitors experience and wellbeing of nature in our village.

I was extremely disappointed with the case put forward by Worth Parish Council who had no backing to their figures ( scarring tactics and hugely inflated figures ) and arrogant approach ( there would unlikely be any redundancy's and running costs over inflated).

I don't believe that by splitting the parish Council into Crawley Down and Copthorne that we will reap any benefits. We will become 2 small insignificant councils and I do not believe that we will achieve more for our villages this way.

The financial cost of this split is also very large and in these times of huge rises in our cost of living is not money well spent. Most councils have reduced funds and they are struggling to maintain basic services. This money should be used for the benefit of maintaining the villages. Our pavements are dangerous to walk on in the daylight and with street lights being so dim a bigger hazard at night.

It will mean two lots of office rent, heating, and two parish clerks.

In these times of austerity I do believe that a split is not utilising Council funds appropriately.

I think a new Crawley Down Village Council should be created ,because we are a large village ,and residents are members of their village community. We would have more access to its members as we all live in the same village.

A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces.

Crawley down already has separate Neighbourhood Plans.

The issues concerning us in the village would be better understood, rather than from people outside the village with less understanding of our wishes.

The parish meeting, would then be able to organise an agenda for discussion on our concerns, and thus given more time to them.

With the meetings being held in the village more people would attend as we have a great community spirit.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

We set out below our views for objecting to the setting up of a parish council for Crawley Down.

1. Councillors are entitled to an allowance and expenses. Possibly the total number of councillors might remain the same but there would be two clerks, two deputy clerks, two finance officers and probably two IT officers.
2. At the moment Worth PC rent The Hub in Copthorne for offices for just £1pa.plus rent for an additional area and a proportion of the running costs. They will still have to cover this expenditure from a reduced income and will a new Crawley Down council obtain offices at such an attractive rate.
4. It is doubtful if the current supply contracts will be able to be carried on to include the new council. It is also possible that the quantities involved for just the reduced Worth PC would attract the same advantageous rates.
5. Equipment, e.g. furniture, computers, printers, phone systems will have to be divided between the two councils. This will inevitably mean one or both councils having to purchase new equipment. More unnecessary expense.
6. The pro Crawley Down campaigners state that they will be able to do things better for the village. As the split of members on the existing council is equal were Crawley Downs objectives always completely overridden?
7. Crawley Down state that the set up costs will come from existing reserves but this is surely a retrograde step as reserves are for one off unexpected events which we do not consider this to be one.
8. Crawley Down state that the number of meetings will be reduced. This might be the case for each individual council but as there could be two councils then the total number of meetings will probably remain the same.
9. We might have taken this proposal more seriously if more than just half the Crawley Down councillors had put their name to the original request to Mid Sussex D.C.
10. Therefore as stated we are against this expensive and retrograde step.
11. Finally of course the following does not include for the costs in running this, in our view, completely unnecessary and costly review.

I have not lived in Copthorne long enough to know the history of the Neighbourhood plans for both Crawley Down and Copthorne but I have been given to understand that both villages responded and worked well together on the said plans.

As it is, I think it would make stronger representation to higher Authorities, whenever that may be needed, for both villages to continue to work together and remain as country villages and not be swallowed up by East Grinstead or Crawley.

I agree a change of name from Worth to either Copthorne and Crawley Down , or Crawley Down and Copthorne, possibly in alphabetical order, would help keep that bond between the villages so that they work together to maintain a 'country feel' in both villages.

If Crawley Down residents feel that local meetings would be a great benefit to them then could not meetings be held in alternate villages? although I suspect this would involve having to pay more rent whilst remaining in a Contract at Copthorne .

Financially, I see no benefit in spending such a huge sum of money to satisfy the whim of what would seem to be a minority of Councillors from one village, and I believe this is a particularly valid point at such a critical financial time in our country. Residents are facing huge increases in the cost of living to which, if this plan goes ahead will only add more hardship for many residents as it is almost inevitable that there would have to be Council Tax increases in both parishes.

I am therefore against the Proposal.



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I am against the splitting of Worth PC into two parish councils for the following reasons.

1. The claimed benefits of splitting are already being realised by the existing council.
2. The economies of scale enjoyed by WPC would be lost.
3. With two councils there would inevitably be some duplication of running costs.
4. Less than half of the present Crawley Down councillors support the petition which is totally undemocratic.
5. There seems to be no doubt that council tax will have to increase in both of the potential parishes if the split occurred.
6. No one, it seems, can provide a reasonably reliable estimate of the cost to WPC residents of the split. Upto £150,000 has been indicated and if this is to be believed then it would be an outrageous waste of public funds.
7. We are living in difficult times financially i.e. high inflation, home energy costs spiralling etc. As a pensioner on a fixed income I cannot support this petition which has no visible benefits but certainly very visible additional costs.

The objections listed below were filled into REDACTED being my husband's form. I would like to reiterate all of these but would like to add the following -

Having worked for Worth Parish Council for over 30 years in the past, I was always of the opinion that a large Parish Council would carry more weight in discussions on all matters and policy making. I also feel that Crawley Down have a very fair representation on Worth Parish Council.

I am against the splitting of Worth PC into two parish councils for the following reasons.

1. The claimed benefits of splitting are already being realised by the existing council.
2. The economies of scale enjoyed by WPC would be lost.
3. With two councils there would inevitably be some duplication of running costs.
4. Less than half of the present Crawley Down councillors support the petition which is totally undemocratic.
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7. We are living in difficult times financially i.e. high inflation, home energy costs spiralling etc. As a pensioner on a fixed income I cannot support this petition which has no visible benefits but certainly very visible additional costs.

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I wish to support the proposal to have a separate Crawley Down Parish Council. Crawley Down and Copthorne are geographically close but very different villages. I feel it would be beneficial for local residents to make decisions about their own village. This is more democratic as local residents and local councillors know more about the needs of their village.

Meetings held solely in Crawley Down would attract greater community participation. Myself, friends and neighbours are more inclined to attend meetings close by rather than having to travel to the next village. We would also know that all matters discussed would be relevant to Crawley Down.

Any village problems or matters of interest could be addressed far quicker and decisions made by truly local representatives.

Residents of Crawley Down are very proud of our village and this would bring them even closer together.

I have lived in Crawley Down for over thirty nine years and know a considerable amount of what activities and amenities we have. I have little knowledge of what goes on in Copthorne and quite frankly that is likely to continue. Crawley Down is my village and that is where my interest lies.

I wish to support the proposal to have a separate Crawley Down Parish Council. Although geographically close, Crawley Down and Copthorne are very different villages. I feel that decisions that affect myself and my village would be better met by having a separate Crawley Down Council. It is far more democratic for local residents to make decisions about their village.

I would be far more likely to attend Crawley Down Council meetings if they are held in the village. I do not attend them now as they are all held in Copthorne.

Local village interests and any problems occurring could be addressed far quicker with a local office or drop-in centre. Communication and resolutions to problems could also be addressed much faster by actual local village representatives.

Residents of Crawley Down are likely to be drawn even closer together by having their own truly dedicated local representatives.

I have lived in Crawley Down for a considerable time, raising my family here. I know a lot what goes on here but nothing about Copthorne.

Being a resident of Copthorne for 47years I am OPPOSED to the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council for the following reasons :-

1. The existing combination of Crawley Down, Copthorne, and Worth has worked well for 125years so why change it? If split into 2 or 3 separate Councils each would have fewer Councillors and hence less 'clout' with MSDC matters, but working and voting together supporting each other as one Parish Council is more likely to get positive outcomes with MSDC.
2. What are the benefits of the proposed change? None as far as I can see. All three Wards share the same main challenges as each other driven by the expansion of Crawley town and Gatwick Airport, housing, parking, services etc. The existing WPC needs to continue to support each other's individual needs as in the past.
3. Inevitably, despite denials, I believe if the split happens costs will rise for meeting venues and admin etc which will be added on to the Council Tax bills.

I am opposed to the separation of Crawley Down from Worth Parish Council because it will not be cost effective. It will mean additional costs to use separate buildings, less local services and local government. It will also mean poorer representation at MSDC on shared issues. I note that Only 4 of the 17 current WPC Councillors are in favour of separating Crawley Down.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

We are against this expensive and retrograde step for the following reasons.

Why only four Crawley Down councillors applying for this review. We would take this application more seriously if a majority of councillors had requested it.

Costs are bound to go up. Another office to pay for and maintain, equipment to purchase, supply contracts to be negotiated for lesser amounts so probably at not such favourable rates as at present, not forgetting the cost of this review by MSDC.

It is stated that as a separate council they will be able to do things better for the community. Are they not doing this at present?

Existing reserves should be kept for one off unexpected events, not paying for unnecessary events such as this.

I would like Crawley Down to have its own separate council to Cophorne. The reasons are:

1. It will best serve the interests of the now much larger village by having its own council.
2. The issues affecting Crawley Down and Cophorne are very different and as such are best served via separate councils who can focus on truly local issues. This is the premise of local government and so is the driving factor behind this decision.
3. Planning issues could be addressed more readily with greater local knowledge with a Crawley Down council.
4. It is for the best of the village.

Kind regards

REDACTED

I totally support Crawley Down having its own Village Council.

The Councillors can address issues that are relevant to our village ie. the pub that has been empty for years !

The council meetings would be held locally and more people would attend to discuss the issues we feel strongly about.

Crawley Down is unique in that it is a rural village with a strong community bond so who better to manage it other than your own council.

I am strongly in favour of a Crawley Down Council be formed by splitting Worth Parish Council (WPC) to give Crawley Down their own Village Council. Having been a resident in Crawley Down village since 1969, I have seen Crawley Down grow in size and population, and acquire its own distinctive character which is very different from the historic parish of Worth. It will be only fair to the residents of Crawley Down if they can fully manage their own village affairs, and develop their own community including services. Sincerely

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Not before time with both communities growing at such a rate that must make it difficult for the current council to spend the appropriate amount of time on all aspects of council business covering both villages. Crawley Down and Copthorne requires it's own local people making decisions that meet the needs of their own villages and not be bogged down in discussions which have little relevance outside of their own locality.

By making two smaller councils they would be more accessible to their respective communities and with easier access to a Council Office based in Crawley Down I am sure that more residents and their representatives would be able to engage better and feel more affinity with each other.

With Copthorne seemingly becoming much more connected to Crawley for a lot of the services in particular education, health and even being included in the Crawley Area Bus Fare Zone (which does seem to stray into Crawley Down by including The Dukes Head). Crawley Down has much more connection with East Grinstead, certainly for secondary education and the Health Centre Modality Partnership.

My main concerns are the disparity with the figures that have been published by the current council and the petitioners concerning the costs of splitting into two and no suggestions of where the Crawley Down office would be set up.

Crawley Down is an ever expanding village with its own requirements which are not the same as those of the surrounding villages and should therefore have its own parish council to decide what is best for it and for the residents and selfish though it may seem not for others. They should decide for themselves their own needs.

I do not believe a new parish and parish council should be created for Crawley Down. I do not see how this would be better for the community and it would undoubtable cost more money at a time when everybody is struggling with rising costs.

I object to splitting WPC into Crawley Down and Copthorne Councils. I do not believe it protects Copthorne's identity nor reduce bureaucracy or improve services. I do not believe it provides any benefit over the current system.

I understand that the cost to split the two Villages is expected to be in excess of £100,000 (some of which is mine and my wife's money) which will seriously affect the Council's planned investment for facilities, infrastructure, neighbourhood security, youth and sports facilities much of which we desperately need.

I also believe it will cause upheaval on current Council employees causing an extremely complex, time-consuming and very expensive exercise and for which my wife and I and others will be paying.

By maintaining the status quo the Councils benefit from economies of scale, having shared resources and a voice that can and will be heard as opposed to if it were two smaller, local councils.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I am responding to your request for my opinion on the viability and desirability of a separate Crawley Down Village Council. Unfortunately, I cannot find my unique reference number to answer this online.

My opinion is that there should be a separate Crawley Down Village Council as Crawley Down and Copthorne are two distinct and separate communities and each is easily large enough to have their own council.

My wife and I have lived in Crawley Down for 35 years and in that time we have had little contact with Copthorne. I imagine that this pattern is true of many people in both communities.

I see no reason why there should be excessive extra costs for this split and have found no reason for the communities to have only one council. If there are genuine reasons for the communities to come together then, surely, that could still be achieved by contact and discussion.

After reading both sides of the case for a Crawley Down Village Council, I am firmly of the opinion that it would be in the best interests of my village to have a separate council for each village. The new Crawley Down Council would be best placed to make decisions which would entirely benefit the village and its residents as it would be totally focused on local affairs. In these changing times, we need a Council which can respond quickly, for example, to changes in government funding. In recent years, both Copthorne and Crawley Down have grown tremendously and, therefore, it is likely to have different priorities. The new council could plan and then prioritise projects which would save both time and money.

It would serve our village to a far greater extent if offices were located in the village itself as well as being afforded the facility to hold meetings locally.

I am in favour of the creation of a Crawley Down Parish Council based on the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Area and, in the event of a positive outcome to the Review, complete the establishment of such a Council by May 2023. Having been a resident in the village since 1969, the village has grown and now has its own identity, features and needs to develop and create its own services. Sincerely,

I object to the proposal to create a new Parish Council for Crawley Down. There is no evidence that such a move will improve the workings of the Parish Council. It will cost the taxpayers of both villages a lot of money for no appreciable gain. The money which will be spent on this proposal would be better used to improve facilities, neighbourhood security and infrastructure in both villages. Only a very small percentage of the Crawley Down population have signed the petition. Most residents contact the council by phone or email if they require advice, so setting up new council offices would not make any difference to accessibility of the council.

There are plenty of examples in this country of Parish Council representing more than one village and a large council can have more impact on district issues than 2 smaller ones.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I object to the proposal for the establishment of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down.

The cost of establishing a separate council will use funds which can be used to maintain or improve current facilities for both villages. It will unnecessarily eat into parish reserves and inevitably require parishioners to pay more in the long term to maintain facilities. The separation into two councils for the area will result in a loss of the benefit of scale that currently exists.

Most communications between the Parish and residents is conducted remotely so accessibility is not a significant issue. The current offices are on a bus route with a stop outside the office and there is a convenient car park.

The villages currently enjoy separate identities while maintaining good cooperation in the provision of services for the area via the joint Worth Parish Council.

There are many examples of Parish Councils successfully representing more than one village and in which the villages benefit from economy of scale and the significance of representation at District level.

Finally the petitioners have not shown that there is a need within the villages for separate councils nor presented evidence of significant benefits to either village for the separation.

A separate Crawley Down Parish Council would offer residents an improvement in local services directly affecting the village and surrounding Crawley Down area. Outstanding issues would be taken and given more serious consideration and probably addressed more promptly by a local C.D. Parish Council. Long outstanding issues such as speeding vehicles in the village and on the main rat runs, the state of the local roads, defective street lighting, the need for traffic lights at the junction of Sandy Lane and Turners Hill Road, overgrown hedges, parking problems caused by the football field in Sandy Lane, the need to improve social facilities and to address the Royal Oak Pub fiasco. It would allow a greater input to local development plans, hopefully restricting the numerous housing developments that are blighting the area and having a detrimental effect on the village, its residents and its overtaxed infrastructure, particularly the doctors, dentists and schools. Greater direct influence could be applied for the protection of the Crawley Down countryside. CD Parish Council meetings will directly discuss & decide local issues rather than being overshadowed by the needs of Copthorne. CD has a separate identity & needs to have a direct say in resolving local key issues & priorities.

Residents are more likely to attend meetings knowing they do not have to wade through Copthorne agenda matters first, as the discussions will only focus on CD items. Overall a CD Parish Council would provide a more effective and localised delivery of local government services to the residents of the village, while also offering the residents a greater say on issues that directly affect their daily village life.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

I believe to be most effective a Parish or Village Council needs to be able to respond directly to the issues affecting, and relevant for, the immediate locality as it has a clearer identity to the local community. The local parish office which was accessible to Crawley Down Village closed some years ago and as a result severed links with the Parish Council. It follows that meetings affecting the village should be held here in the village attended by locally elected Councillors. Such meetings should primarily consider matters relevant to the local community as well as broader issues.

Crawley Down has seen a number of developments within the immediate locality over recent years. It is of course important for new development to be planned to meet the demand for housing. However it appears that little consideration has been given to the needs of the community particularly low cost (affordable) or shared equity housing (once erroneously called 'social housing'). Young people are often forced to move away from where they grew up due to inadequate opportunities to access new housing development. It is also apparent that new developments are often approved with insufficient provision made to provide new, or improve existing, local services and infrastructure. The provision of new housing though clearly important puts immense pressure on local facilities (education, medical services and recreation) without commensurate significant local community benefits secured.

Economically Crawley Down would be better placed if Parish Council Taxes were to be spent on the needs of the village and, following on from the my point above about benefits secured from new housing, such benefits were to address immediate local Community needs.

I believe that local residents would be more like to attend Parish Council meetings held in the village and at the same time would probably would get more involved with a local Parish Council.

Though not completely different from surrounding villages, Crawley Down has its own identity and has different priorities to those of its neighbours, which would be better served by its own Parish Council.

I am not in favour of this review being agreed. I feel that obvious economies of scale will be lost, and WPC staff made redundant adding further more expense to the proposed split.

This would increase future rises in precept at a time when residents are feeling the pinch from fuel cost, NI payment increases.

If residents feel they need to associate more with a Parish council, a simple renaming of Worth Parish Council to, for example Copthorne & Crawley Down Parish Council, would be a simpler and cheaper method.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter, although a referendum with a vote would have been a better option.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1

### Local Residents – General Submissions

Crawley Down residents would benefit from an improvement in the local government services directly affecting the village and surrounding area, with a separate Crawley Down Parish Council to represent their needs & to address their local issues. Greater emphasis could be applied to resolve some of the long standing unresolved problems like enforcing the speed limit on major cut throughs like Sandy Lane, defective street lighting, the poor condition of the roads, traffic congestion caused by the Sandy Lane football ground, the dilapidated Royal Oak Pub. A CD Parish Council would give local residents a greater say in reducing the number of housing developments that are detrimentally affecting the local infrastructure and village life. CD residents are more likely to attend Parish council meetings if they are held in the village and will only be discussing matters that directly impact on CD, rather than having to sit through the concerns of Copthorne, which unfortunately seem to often take priority. It would improve engagement of the community in local matters by giving them control of their local amenities via their own Parish Council. Involvement and action through their own Parish Council enhances local democracy, providing a more effective way to deliver local services to the people of Crawley Down. The needs and concerns of Crawley Down are different from those of Copthorne and should be discussed, prioritised and hopefully resolved by true representatives of the village, those with a direct understanding of CD life, who have a personal interest and will take pride in doing what is best for the village as a whole. Both CD and Copthorne in particular have grown in size considerably over the past few years, making their needs vastly different and more difficult to prioritise, decisions may often resolve one village's needs at the expense of the other, which would not occur with a separate CD Parish.

Worth Parish Council currently represents the interests of Copthorne and Crawley Down taking into account the needs and requirements of both communities.

I do not see how dividing this council into two will benefit the communities.

There seems to be a financial implications for the villages as the number of staff, premises, contracts and other expenses would be duplicated and the costs to those living in the communities would increase significantly. The councils contracts would be smaller and therefore more expensive, losing any economies of scale currently available to Worth Council.

The pubs and retailers available in the villages are not the responsibility of the parish council. Pubs and restaurants often close due to a lack of custom and costs of staying open. If Crawley Down decide as a village to try and rescue businesses which have failed in the past, this is likely to be an expensive experiment. The Royal Oak probably needs to become a community asset and a committee of villagers to get it up and running for the benefit of the village.

I struggle to find any benefits to either village including representation of the communities in the Mid Sussex Council and beyond. Worth Council has managed to represent both communities over the last 125 years. I am unconvinced splitting the councils will have any benefit, but likely to bring further challenges and issues to both villages.



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

Worth Parish Council is working very well to ensure that all parishioners are considered in any decisions that are made. There are two villages that make up Worth Parish Council and if that remains more can be done to improve the whole area and much more cheaply that if Worth Paris Council is split in two.

If the split does happen, surely there would be a duplication of costs in running the separate councils. I cannot imagine the real cost of the split. Approximations of cost have been provided but legal fees on there own would be enormous. Assets would need to be split, that could mean that additional assets would need to be purchased, thereby spending more money. This needless expenditure is a waste of taxpayers money and would be better spent to enhance amenities in the two villages.

My preference is for Worth Parish Council to stay as it.

Having considered the arguments both for an against I cannot see any material or financial benefit to either the residents of Crawley Down nor Cophthorne

The petitioners proposal has been poorly constructed and absent many of the costs that are almost certain to be incurred and I question whether ANY cost for re-organisation can be justified in the present economic climate.

Worth Parish Council has functioned admirably for decades and there is no reason to change from the present format.

I therefore wish to register my opposition to the proposal and ask that MSDC vote for WPC to remain as at present

Hi

I'm responding to the proposed new Parish Council for Crawley Down. I'm strongly in favour of this change for the following reasons:-

- (1) Both "villages" have grown significantly over recent years
- (2) Crawley Down and Cophthorne have there own identities which are best served by a locally managed parish council
- (3) Both would benefit from a more focused parish council dealing with specific village issues
- (4) Residents are much more likely to get involved in how their local council is run
- (5) I believe benefits would significantly outway the initial realistic cost to set up and any minor increase in future to manage.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Comments to MSDC re: Division of Worth Parish Council & creation of a CD Parish Council

Firstly, I am not making a proposition, I am only contributing my views as requested in the Notice of Community Governance letter sent to me by Mid Sussex District Council on the proposed division of the existing Worth Parish Council and creation of a new parish and parish council for Crawley Down.

The Councillors who currently sit on the existing Worth Parish Council are the proposers and opposers of the division of WPC, not me.

I am a resident of Crawley Down and my comments on the proposed division of WPC and creation of a CDPC are:

There currently seems to be great enmity and, possibly, vested interests between the proposers and the opposers of the division.

Without a detailed cost analysis of the division for both Crawley Down and Copthorne Villages, it is difficult to form a considered opinion. Some costs have been provided by both sides but they are based on past estimates that do not reflect the current local situation in both Copthorne and Crawley Down.

Likewise, without the provision of a proper analysis from both the proposers and opposers on the existing WPC, of the benefits for both the Crawley Down and Copthorne communities, it is difficult to form a considered view either way.

If the formation of a separate Crawley Down parish and CD council 'shakes things up' and encourages fresh thinking by Parish Councillors, and Mid Sussex District Council itself, then I would support the proposal. Too often things are done the traditional way as 'things have always been done this way', maybe it is time for a change?

Likewise, if the division encourages Parish Councillors and Mid Sussex District Council to listen more and take on board the local population's views, then the creation of a CDPC would be worthwhile.

It would be beneficial to have a local parish council to truly reflect the identities and interests of the Crawley Down community. I think, all too often, local Crawley Down views and interests seem to be disregarded by local authorities. For example, the scale of building development in Crawley Down Village over the past five years or so. If a new CDPC was able to help ensure that not all development is 'dumped' on Crawley Down that would be a great step forward as far as I am concerned. I am sure the Copthorne Villagers would appreciate that too.

I cannot see any benefit in this costly exercise. Copthorne and worth combined is a small community with quite similar attributes. It is likely that these two settlements will become even closer as the pressure to expand each of the villages. Dividing these two communities will add to the administrative costs, and reduce the available assets for larger projects.

We have been privileged to have some excellent councillors from each of the villages serving in the existing framework and these two communities have benefitted from the strengths of individual members from each community. It seems to me therefore that taking away the sharing of expertise will diminish local democracy rather than enhance it.

Reducing the budget to each of the two parishes will make it more difficult to engage in significant projects which will make the delivery of significant local services more difficult. As an example, it could be argued that employing a traffic/parking enforcement person, even on a part time basis would be a benefit. At the present time it is difficult to afford this. With a reduced budget it will be unattainable.

I am opposed to the creation of a new parish and or parish council. This seems to me to be a costly vanity project that we don't need.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I fully support the proposal to create a Crawley Down Village Council. Worth Parish Council has not properly represented our interests in the past. Much more money has been spent in Copthorne, out of proportion to the local populations.

The 2 villages have different character and issues and we need a proper focus upon our own interests and needs.

The current Worth Parish Council is too large, too dysfunctional and has too many co-opted councillors who are Copthorne residents. Crawley Down residents are deterred from standing as councillors due to the lack of local focus and also the acrimonious nature of some meetings. I would be more involved if we had a Crawley Down Village Council actually meeting in the Village.

The way that this Community Governance Review has come about will not improve community engagement. People are busy and you will receive a poor response.

Crawley Down will not become a unified Parish Council due to the divisions when all its existing members are not in agreement with the proposals.

How will it be cost effective to pay for duplicate services in both villages especially in the current economic climate.

Worth Parish Council is run well and already represents the unique identities of both villages

Why not change the name to Copthorne @ Crawley Down Parish Council.

Having read the document submitted to MSDC by those in favour of the creation of a separate parish council for Crawley Down, together with information circulated by Worth Parish Council, I agree with the points raised in the petitioners' document and would support the case for a Crawley Down Village Council.

I have been a Crawley Down resident for 55years, during which time the character and identity of the village has changed dramatically, as has that of Copthorne.

I think that a village council which represents and serves the needs of its own ever growing community is a positive step forward into the future.

I do NOT support the case for a separate Crawley Down Village Council for the following reasons

1) I understand that this petition does not have the support of WPC and that it isn't even supported by the majority of Crawley Down Councillors

2) The estimated cost of £100,000 to split the WPC is a complete waste of Council Tax payers money.

3) Each village will have additional ongoing expenses for their own individual offices, running expenses and staffing costs.

Please reject this unnecessary proposal to split WPC.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I do not support the case for a separate Crawley Down Village Council for the following reasons

1) This petition does not have the support of WPC, isn't supported by the majority of the Crawley Down Councillors and less than 10% of the population of Crawley Down are in support of it.

2) The estimate cost of the proposed split is likely to be between £100,000 -£150,000 which is a complete waste of Council Tax payers money.

3) If the split were to go ahead each village will have additional ongoing expenses for premises, staffing costs and running expenses.

4) In my opinion there is no benefit to either village by splitting WPC into two separate councils.

I do not agree that splitting the council and creating a new parish for Crawley Down will be of benefit for either Copthorne or Crawley Down.

**Better Local Democracy**

The parish of Worth is well served with a near even split of both Crawley Down and Copthorne Ward Councillors. Only 4 of the 17 Councillors serving Worth Parish Council (WPC) at the time the petition was submitted were in favour of dividing the council. In fact one of the 4 has since resigned from WPC.

**Improved Community Engagement**

In the last year WPC has made tremendous progress in improving Community Engagement in the form of its new Facebook page and setting up Working Parties for each village, these Working Parties are made up of both resident's and Councillors. The two villages have separate identities which are being identified in the WPC vision document.

**Cost of dividing the council**

I do not believe two separate smaller councils will be able to 'afford' large projects such as the CCTV project in the WPC vision document, this project has been long awaited and is much needed in both villages.

I believe the potential cost of dividing WPC, although still unclear, will be substantial and much of the reserves built up for projects such as CCTV, a youth worker and better parking provisions will no longer be available.

I hope that WPC is given the chance to implement the positive changes it has started and hope MSDC will come to the decision that dividing the council will be a very bad idea for the residents of the parish.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1**  
**Local Residents – General Submissions**

I do not agree with the proposal to split Worth Parish into two separate councils for Crawley Down and Copthorne. I fail to see any advantages. All I see is that it will cost the residents of both villages more. During this inflationary period it is most unwelcome. Worth Parish Council is engaging with the community and have employed a communications and IT administrator. This means that the council will be more accessible to the residents. I believe that smaller parish councils will have less political weight when it comes to dealing with Mid-Sussex council. I think that it is of no advantage given that Mid-Sussex Council seem to ignore most things that a large parish council request and advise for our local area. So how would two smaller councils get their views heard. I also think the costs of setting up the council in Crawley Down given that their is no local office space have been underestimated by the proposers. The proposed budget only allows for very basic setup costs. I do not see the future costs in the proposal for staff or offices being in the least bit realistic. So once these costs have been realised the stipend per person will increase for both Crawley Down and Copthorne.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I live in Crawley Down and I support the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down because it will give the village a voice on important local issues such as plans for more development, quality of services and the condition of local roads and other infrastructure. I believe issues that solely affect those in Crawley Down should be decided by those that are local to Crawley Down.

Further, a parish Council that is clearly linked with and holds its meetings in the village will introduce a greater sense of community and increase the likelihood of residents getting involved.

I would urge you to strongly consider this separation and the multiple benefits it will bring to Crawley Down.

Many thanks,

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

The proposers have not set out a convincing and specific case that supports their idea of splitting Worth Parish Council. This consultation is a waste of taxpayers' money without it.

The proposed split to form a separate council for Crawley Down will increase costs and inefficiency, reduce the cohesion of local village communities and the effectiveness of democracy, and is unnecessary for convenient delivery of services. Just the way it has been proposed without any prior consultation or gauging of support in the community says it all. If the proposers are or have been councillors as they say but have failed to move their priorities on, there might be a case for training the whole Worth group to work effectively, removing people or cliques who are blocking progress unreasonably, or they may need to accept that democracy means you do not always get your way.

The proposers list five points to support a split. They would

#### 1. 'Open an office and hold meetings in the village'

There is nothing stopping the council holding some meetings in Crawley Down now, with a huge community centre renting out rooms. I cannot see a need for it unless the public are to attend, as councillors claim transport expenses. The argument about meetings is particularly weak when meetings have been online in the pandemic, so available to all. To open a second office will immediately increase running costs with two lots of rent, maintenance, utilities, staffing to cover phone and queries, HR etc. It might reduce councillor expense claims, though I doubt it as they would then claim to liaise with colleagues in Copthorne to further common interests and would continue to use their homes as offices, as all councillors do.

It is disingenuous to propose a new office when everyone has been working from home during the pandemic and will need to continue to do so to meet zero carbon targets.

A new office will dilute the existing expertise of staff and increase lone working, which is dangerous. Even MPs get killed by distressed constituents. Sickness cover is a particular issue at the moment. Having two offices more likely to be shut is not an improvement in accessibility. No figures are given but I doubt most constituents call at the office for help, particularly during a pandemic. It seems more likely people would ring or e mail.

#### 2. 'Invest in new sports and community facilities'

These are not explained but there is no reason why the existing council could not do the same. However, as a taxpayer, I would like the need explained when there are already sports facilities in Crawley Down and no evidence is provided of unmet need or why it is a priority over, say, the very poor facilities in villages for some people with disabilities or those going hungry. If there is a fitness demand, why is the commercial sector not meeting it or, say, lottery funding not being considered? The community facilities need to be specified and consulted on to have any credibility, as most such needs are met by other overarching organisations and not parish councils.

#### 3. 'Make solving the Royal Oak a priority'

This is a parallel universe proposal. Apart from the fact that the proposers are or have been councillors, so could have already addressed this, Brexit, climate change, development and Covid are causing significant local difficulties that should be more urgently addressed. Crawley Down has a bar in the social club, local shops sell alcohol and food, and the Royal Oak is one empty property amongst many. Perhaps we should look at where the proposers live as this could just reflect that people leaving the social club drunk are near their homes or those of powerful constituents whereas the Royal Oak's position caused problems for others.

#### 4. 'Address speeding on local roads and issues with local services'

Speeding needs to be addressed with the police and the Highways Department of West Sussex County Council for calming measures. There is no reason the existing council and councillors cannot do this at least as well.

'Issues with local services' could mean anything or, more likely, nothing. A larger council representing more people will have more clout and probably more expertise amongst the

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

councillors to deal with issues.

5. 'Resist development other than for local needs'

We would all like to live in peaceful villages with all the facilities of towns but none of the downsides, such as industrial estates to employ people, secure hospitals or the noise of railways. We have to contribute our share to the nation's wealth and take our share of the knocks. Currently a third of the population live in London and the South East. Houses have to go somewhere until Levelling Up moves more work further north and population goes with it. Crawley and East Grinstead would not need as big hospitals with all associated traffic, Tesco warehouses, sports centres, cinemas, such busy stations or lots of other things for just the needs of their own residents. If villages want to use the benefits of gas pipelines, nuclear power stations, ports, prisons and all the other infrastructure, we have to recognise that the communities that house all of that do not meet only local needs and probably did not want to do so. The two villages and outlying areas need to work together to maintain the rural space or it will be divide and rule with no one's voice heard.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

Thank you for sending me the Notice relating to the creation of a Crawley Down Parish Council.

I am not in favour of the proposition for the following reasons;

While I understand that the local electors evidently submitted the proposal, as an elector myself in Crawley Down, I cannot say that I was aware of the proposal nor was I canvassed in advance with the change-information or provided a copy of the budget mentioned in the proposal. This chimes with the WPC and MSDC's commentary.

I believe that the current WPC setup serves both parishes sufficiently well; I do agree that the name of the parish is confusing and that it ought to be changed to include the names Crawley Down and Copthorne specifically and drop any reference to 'Worth'.

I note the guidance document regarding the numbers of recommended councillors for parish councils and I also note the information which shows the average numbers of councillors provided by the NALCC. Based upon the data within that document it would suggest that there is a minimum of 5 councillors, Crawley Down through population size would fall in to the recommendation of around 12 councillors - on this basis it is my opinion that the proposals would result in a more costly local council service than is the current arrangements, I have seen no data to demonstrate that adopting the proposal would produce any additional benefit for the Crawley Down community.

Proponents of the idea state in their case for a change that, "Crawley Down and Copthorne are both large villages with separate identities" - that is a fact and would not be any different if the proposal were to be adopted, what it does do is to highlight the fact that the current name of Worth parish council is at best misleading which would cover the second consideration we are asked to consider regarding residents 'feeling' that they are represented by the name of their village community respectively.

On the point that "A council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents", that is a somewhat mute argument in that the current parish council is very accessible where it is.

On the point that "A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces" - Crawley Down residents are free to attend parish council meetings  
In addition (TEXT CUT OFF ON SUBMISSION)



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

I would like to say that Turners Hill have their own council and also Felbridge. Also that Copthorne and Crawley Down villages have each grown into large villages.

1/ Improve community engagement.

Having a CDVC would mean the offices would actually be in the village so much more easily accessible for meetings or for villagers to visit. And I believe it would encourage more community involvement with a village council.

2/ Enhance Community Spirit

It would be a much more personal service for people with village councillors, part of the reason people like living in villages is for community spirit. And more local villagers involved in the local council would also add to more community spirit - people meeting others in the village. And taking an active part in caring for the village and it's residents.

3/Better local democracy

With WPC there has been clashes between the interests of Copthorne Village and Crawley Down Village, with Copthorne being unfairly favoured. For example that's where the new WPC offices are.

It isn't easy apparently to get things sorted and actually done, it would be much more straight forward overseeing the village's concerns than the larger WPC. I do think having the CDVC in the village would encourage more community involvement.

4/ More effective and convenient delivery of local services and government

It would be a simpler governing body over seeing the one village and it's interests. And won't have conflicting concerns, such as where money is going to be spent, which can be at the expense of the other village, which has happened quite a bit. The councillors being from the village would be aware of villagers concerns themselves. Things would be seen and accessed a lot quicker. And would get attention rather than getting just left. I believe the CDVC would be a lot more efficient.

How would this affect the identity and Interest of the community

It would mean looking after the villages interests would be a lot easier and lot more straight forward. There wouldn't be a clash of interests between the villages, such as where money is going to be spent. It would give the village a much more personal service and much easier to access. With things getting accessed and done a lot quicker. It would make any public consultations for the village more direct and straight forward. It would be much more personal service for the village. I believe it would create a better community spirit for the village, especially as Copthorne and Crawley Down are now large villages.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

My wife and I have lived in Crawley Down since 1979 and have raised our family here. We are both 76 years young. There are now three generations of our family living in the village.

I remember Turners Hill breaking away from Worth Parish Council many years ago and envied them. I have never understood why our parish council has the name Worth. Crawley Down and Copthorne are two completely different large villages with a combined population of nearly 11,000 residents. With devolvement this would be reduced to 6,000 for Crawley Down and 5,000 for Copthorne. However, these figures will grow very quickly with all the planned housing developments in each village.

One of the major reasons that I am in favour of devolvement into two village councils is geography. The maximum distance across the existing Worth Parish is 5.5 kilometres. To travel to the existing WPC offices in Copthorne requires a 15 minute car journey. In my mind, you should be able to walk to your parish office. There is the A264 which cuts right through the middle of the current parish dividing it into Crawley Down and Copthorne. Despite having lived in Crawley Down for 43 years, our family feels no connection to Copthorne.

The only doubt in my mind is the potential financial costs to the two devolved village councils. Those advocating the split project a cost of up to £25,000. Those against suggest it could be as high as £150,000. Until the two opposing sides can prove their forecasts it will remain impossible to make a balanced judgment.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

14-03-2022

The case for a separate Crawley Down parish council

I support the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down, because Crawley Down has become too big for Worth Parish to govern, issues and ambitions that are distinct from those of its neighbours.

The new Parish Council would better represent and speak for the village on local issues such as housing developments than a council that represents more than one village.

A Crawley Down Village council would also be able to focus exclusively on issues set out in the neighbourhood plan, such as the future of the Royal Oak and a new village Hall.

A Crawley Down Village council would be better placed to direct all its financial resources to supporting community groups and facilities in the village.

I would be likely to report more problems or seek advice from a Parish Council that has offices within are village and not in the next village.

I have lived for nearly 40 years and fill that we need a new direction with a separate Parish Council.

Regards

REDACTED

REDACTED

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council

Comments on disadvantages relating to the splitting of Worth Parish Council and creating a new Crawley Down Parish Council

The residents of Crawley Down are being told that there will be no financial impact on them if a new council is created. This is completely misguided information as:

New premises will have to be found and funded

A qualified Parish Clerk will need to be recruited

The Parish Clerk will require an assistant (quite possibly part time)

Manual Operatives will have to be employed to carry out every day maintenance tasks and checks on children's play equipment and public spaces etc.

In order to fund all these requirements, an individual precept will have to be applied for despite the fact that Worth PC will be providing the Crawley Down share of the current precept. This will increase every resident's council tax bill.

In today's environment, it is very difficult to get volunteers for any organisation, leave alone trying to recruit new councillors. A task not acknowledged by those who wish to split the current Parish Council.

Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council

In response to the request for views regarding the split of Worth PC, my comments are as follows.

I am of the belief that one councillor, along with three supporters, has decided that creating a separate Crawley Down parish council and splitting from Worth PC is a beneficial step for Crawley Down residents.

The impact on Crawley Down residents will be quite considerable despite receiving some of the Worth PC funds which at present are used to support the tasks undertaken within Crawley Down.

1. New premises will have to be found and paid for
2. A qualified Parish Clerk will need to be recruited at a salary proportionate to the number of hours worked.
3. The Parish Clerk will require an assistant, quite possibly part times.
4. Operatives to carry out daily or regular maintenance of various areas and checks on playground equipment will have to be employed.
5. The precept will need to be increased.

The salaries of those three/four personelle will not come cheap. Therefore the precept for which the new proposed council will be applying, will impact the Crawley Down residents significantly and will add more to the Council Tax for their area.

On the other hand, the residents of Copthorne will also have an increased annual cost to pay for Worth PC, as the Council will have to claim an increased precept to cover a proportion of the sum passed over to Crawley Down for their new parish council.

At present it is an increasingly difficult task to recruit new councillors. Therefore for a new Crawley Down parish council to find more residents to stand for councillor will not be an easy task.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

Community Governance Review: Crawley Down/Copthorne Parish Council  
REDACTED – resident of Crawley Down since 2000

One of the main geographical divisions between Copthorne and Crawley Down is the very busy A264. This significantly impacts community engagement and cohesion.

Access to Parish Council meetings is not possible on foot from Crawley Down, stressful by car (A264 Dukes Head roundabout) and parking is inadequate. Similarly, as an allotment holder of approx. 10 years, I have not met anyone from Copthorne with an allotment. It's too far and too inconvenient.

Ironically, my only experience of attending Parish Council meetings in Copthorne has been in relation to the allotment. Attendance at these meetings could be significantly improved by making them more accessible to the residents of Crawley Down. A single Crawley Down Parish Council could achieve this – all likely locations are accessible on foot for Crawley Down residents and plenty of parking is available (e.g. at the Haven Centre, where there is accessibility for disabled residents).

Unlike Copthorne, Crawley Down is very much dependent on the Worth Way for access on foot and by cycle to Imberhorne School and East Grinstead railway station. The Worth Way also has significant leisure value (running/walking/cycling for fitness, dog walking).

Residents of Copthorne are unlikely to use the Worth Way for these purposes and therefore are less invested in the maintenance of this facility. Discussion relating to the Worth Way is important to Crawley Down residents as it reflects our community identity.

Time spent on very specific local issues like this (Worth Way, allotments, loss of pub, village centre development, health centre etc), along with improved accessibility by having meetings within the village, would have the advantage of improved community engagement.

Having lost our only pub in Crawley Down village, residents are inclined to use the pubs in Turners Hill. We do not use the pubs in Copthorne – again, impractical because of busy traffic on the A264. Turners Hill is closer and walkable via Sandhill Lane footpaths. Other facilities in Turners Hill – laundry, bike shop and badminton club are easily accessible and used regularly. There are no facilities in Copthorne

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Please accept my comments on the Governance Review that Mid Sussex DC are undertaking following a Petition to create a new Parish Council for Crawley Down. If Crawley Down did not have a Parish Council, I would be in favour of such as I believe strongly in the need for local representation in providing public services. However, the Village has a perfectly satisfactory Parish Council in Worth Parish Council. I would change the name to reflect the Villages involved as some residents seem concerned about confusion over the location of Worth. I cannot see how a separate Council with all the extra costs and staff concerned would improve engagement, indeed it might make it worse if to save costs that meant that the Parish Offices weren't open as much.

In terms of Community cohesion, I can't see what difference a separate Parish Council would provide and perhaps it might reduce the existing cooperation between the Villages which many of us take advantage of. Its easy to get to Copthorne by private or public transport and many children living here travel there for school and adults work there too. The Villages are separate but have lots in common.

Local democracy depends on the willingness of residents to get involved , make their views known and see action taken at local level. This seems to be working well with the existing Parish arrangement as they work closely with the Crawley Down Residents Association and the Haven Centre on the Local Council Working Party that deals with specific issues that affect Crawley Down. There are no problems getting Councillors to fill vacancies. The last time this happened three candidates came forward for the one vacancy and subsequently one of the unsuccessful candidates joined the Working Party. I am concerned about the one-off costs of setting up a new Council and then the running costs. The setup costs are just money wasted as these facilities are already in place at the Worth Parish Council. I fear that the running costs for a new Council would have to be at least as high as those incurred at Worth, unless of course, it offers a poorer level of service. Over time, this duplication of costs, about £50,000 according to the outline budget provided by the Promoters, could equate to about to a net present cost of over £1 million. If this could be spent now on services in the Village it would make an enormous difference.

The costs of a single Parish Council for both Villages can be spread over a larger number of residents so providing good economies of scale. A larger Council would also have better access to the varied background and experience of more Councillors and be able to influence affairs at Mid Sussex and West Sussex more effectively.

In short, it seems a complete waste of money and effort to divide Crawley Down from Worth PC when there seem to be no complaints about the way Worth PC is handling its responsibilities. Having an Office and Meetings more often in Crawley Down would be fine if visits to the Office were necessary (which they are not for me anyway) and I attended any Meetings as a resident. Maybe it would be more convenient for some Councillors but they probably drive anyway so I can't see how that would make much difference.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

#### Support for a Crawley Down Village Council

##### Identity

The villages of Crawley Down and Copthorne are separated geographically by the busy A264. They each have their own unique identities with schools, churches, sports, social and many other interest clubs run from within their community halls and hubs. They have their own shops enabling villagers to be self sufficient in all basic needs (and more) and Crawley Down boasts two successful farm shops. Crawley Down has a funeral director, dentist and dental care surgery. Both villages have their own health centre and pharmacy and good eating outlets, both for dining in and take-away. They run their own annual carnivals/village fairs (covid permitting). The church in Crawley Down is linked with that at Turners Hill, giving further separation from Copthorne. There are two memorials in Crawley Down remembering those locally who lost their lives in conflict. The main memorial at the end of Sandy Lane is an annual focus on Remembrance Sunday as well as at other times in the calendar of remembrance. Crawley Down has a village green, near the shops which is central to the village and several key events held annually: it also provides the main play equipment for young children.

The Crawley Down Village Website Association was set up more than 15 years ago and works to benefit the village. It is funded by local businesses and provides grants to the local community as well as hosting many useful webpages of local interest.

There is a strong Crawley Down Residents Association which also works for the good of the village. It lays on several major events each year for the village using mostly local expertise as well as provides community grants to help local organisations.

Failure to recognise the differences in the needs of both villages has led to a feeling of apathy and impression that others from outside the village are making decisions for the village. It is noteworthy that Turners Hill left Worth Parish Council in the 1990's for many of the same reasons that Crawley Down now wishes to set up its own village council.

##### Neighbourhood plan

Each village successfully submitted its own neighbourhood plan. These have formed the basis for identifying and developing solutions for local key issues and MSDC approved this split in their development. Crawley Down is a rural village. As Copthorne grows new housing is being built closer to Crawley, though remains separated from Crawley currently by the M23; more of the current growth in Crawley Down is on the eastern East Grinstead side of the village. Thus growth in the two villages is leading to a greater degree of separation with no evidence of merging.

Worth Parish is one of the largest parishes already and as both Crawley Down and Copthorne have recently expanded (and continue to expand), the population to be represented has also grown.

A Crawley Down Village Council would better represent and speak for the village on local issues such as housing developments, provision of services etc than a council acting for more than one village.

##### Community engagement

A Crawley Down Village Council is much more likely to attract local people, such as myself, to serve on its council, with meetings held locally. **This would lead to improved community engagement.** The Council would also be more accessible to all villagers without the need to travel outside the village, important at a time of increased travel costs and climate considerations. Furthermore, a smaller village council could operate with fewer meetings than at present with Worth Parish Council as these would be focussed just

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

on Crawley Down. **This would be a more effective use of Councillors time.** A Crawley Down Village Council is much more likely to ensure that its focus for expenditure is fairly on local community groups and facilities resulting in **better local democracy and enhanced community cohesion**

I hope that my brief statement above helps to reflect how the establishment of a Crawley Down Village Council would further benefit the identity and interests of the local community of Crawley Down. I strongly support the proposal to set up a Crawley Down Village Council.



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

I believe that MSDC should agree to creating a new parish and parish council for Crawley Down.

To my mind a strong indicator for this is that back in 2011 WPC requested permission to create separate Neighbourhood Plans for the two villages of Crawley Down and Copthorne. The justification for this request being the different nature of the villages, their priorities and needs etc. Significantly the Crawley Down plan was completed some years before Copthorne managed to get theirs together. The Crawley Down work being mostly carried out by Cllrs Gibson and John Hitchcock. It is already accepted that Crawley Down has a separate identity to Copthorne.

At present, it appears difficult to get local people to stand as councillors for WPC. I believe this is because Crawley Downers dislike having to go to the Hub in Copthorne for meetings and having our own Council will encourage people to make an effort for their community. There is a distinct feeling, rightly or wrongly, that whatever the Copthorne based Councillors want, they get. This more than anything puts people off the idea of joining WPC. I have heard claims from WPC that when their offices were at the back of Crawley Down Village Hall that no members of the public ever visited. This is totally incorrect, I used to have need to visit the offices fairly often, and most times when I visited there was another resident arriving or leaving. They were frequently looking at development plans. Now I don't think many can be bothered to go to Copthorne. Crawley Down residents will take the opportunity to engage with their own council.

I have lived in Crawley Down for over 30 years but to be honest, I really know very little about Copthorne and have yet to meet any other Crawley Downers who can claim to know much about Copthorne. Both villages have their own Churches, social groups, schools, doctors and cannot claim to be inter-related.

The two villages already have separate identities, like the 500 on the electoral register who signed Cllr Ian Gibson's petition, I consider myself a member of Crawley Down Community but not Worth Parish. Our own Council will be free to look after its own community and where necessary work with other Councils on matters that jointly affect.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

NK response to the Community Governance Review to Worth Parish Council – ‘Remain or Divide’?

Crawley Down and Copthorne are both large villages with separate identities.

Both Crawley Down and Copthorne villages continue to experience growth in size by housing development despite warnings and concerns about infrastructure limitations in their respective Neighbourhood plans.

I agree with the view that the two villages have separate identities, and this should be a cause for celebration rather than concern. The United Kingdom is famous for its range and diversity of local character summing to a rich National identity.

It is likely, therefore, that the two villages will have different and local specific needs from their local Parish Council and I believe this is likely to be better achieved via a newly formed Crawley Down Council.

Cost implications

There is a large difference in opinion on the probable cost implications for a WPC and CD Parish Council split. We have either a poorly validated £150,000 estimate from the WPC ‘remain’ side and circa £20,000 estimate from the Crawley Down ‘divide’ petitioners.

It is very important to establish as true a picture as possible on the cost issue as this will heavily influence residents’ opinions. So, can the proposed Parish Council split set up costs truly be met from existing resources?

It was said in the first Crawley Down public meeting that “some things are worth paying for” and I support that view. If the division costs can truly be shown to be relatively ‘trivial’ but still ‘reasonable’ then the division case rests on improved service delivery alone.

In terms of the ‘economies of scale’ argument: generally speaking, this makes sense. i.e. fixed costs spread over larger areas should be more efficient and vice-versa. But, if modestly increased fixed costs lead to improved and more focused service delivery, I think most people would be prepared to pay more

Residents are members of their village community, not a Worth Parish community.

Speaking as a resident of Crawley Down for the last 38 years, I and my family and friends feel very much part of Crawley Down and, unsurprisingly, not part of Copthorne. Similarly, I don’t doubt that long term residents of Copthorne have comparable views about where they live and where they belong.

From the above, it is difficult to see how Worth Parish in its full geographical extent, lends any particular relevance to residents of either village. That is, no one living in either village feels that they are part of a Worth Parish community. Both communities are growing and this, I think, lends further merit to the ‘divide’ initiative.

A Council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents.

Access to and information about Worth Parish meetings or administration has, in my experience been almost entirely absent. If one has a particular concern that needs Worth Parish attention, one has to dig deep and find out how and where any representation need be made. This appears to be a consequence of the Parish Council not having much or any visibility. I do not recall receiving promotional information and hence Worth Parish does not enjoy a ‘brand’ image or Internet presence at all.

I would support having a Crawley Down Parish Council office within Crawley Down itself. This can only improve access and information flows.

I would also note that although Worth Parish Council states that members of the public are welcome to attend their meetings, I know of several examples where members of the public have been given short shrift at these meetings. How can it be right to give only two

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

or three minutes to a grant funding applicant to make a case. Often-times, if not exclusively, these applications are made by residents representing a local club or society from a purely amateur and non-profit making basis. Should these people not be given a better hearing?

Again, I would expect a newly formed Crawley Down Council to be able to do a better job in this regard.

A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces.

I would welcome a newly formed Crawley Down Council as I believe that there would, automatically, be an increase in the ability of that Council to focus on specific, and very local, issues.

Membership of a Crawley Down Council would necessarily need to come from local village residents and the selection and election of the appropriate Councillors would be a visible symbol of increased local community engagement.

Particularly, I would want to see a detailed plan of action saying how the Royal Oak pub closure issue would be resolved. Ian Gibson has suggested that Mid-Sussex council have a cash surplus derived from government grants, relating to the considerable housing developments of recent years, and that it should be possible to invoke a compulsory purchase to acquire and then fully refurbish the pub.

Crawley Down and Copthorne already have separate Neighbourhood Plans.

The two villages have their own Neighbourhood plans. These plans were drawn up by volunteers in good faith with a clear mandate to represent the interests of their respective residents. These initiatives are to be applauded. It is, however, deeply disappointing to see these plans apparently entirely ignored by larger agglomerations of Local Government (i.e. Mid-Sussex and West Sussex Councils). What was the point of commissioning these plans and people spending time and effort on them, if they are to be ignored?

It might be, arguably should be, the case that both Neighbourhood plans stand a much better chance of being properly considered to drive local government decision making, if there were two Parish Councils aligned harmoniously to the plans.

In Summary

I feel that there is a good argument to support the 'divide' Worth Parish Council into Copthorne and Crawley Down entities. Perhaps the time has arrived for a Parish Council change that has, at least, a reasonable chance of success. This change would provide an opportunity to serve the community better than now - rather than maintain the status quo. I therefore support the 'divide' initiative.

REDACTED

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

When I followed the instructions on the Mid Sussex web site to submit my response to this CGR, I can only select one option from the drop-down box to indicate 'Your representation'. Therefore, I chose to submit my response representing myself as a Local Resident. However, I am also a Councillor on Worth Parish Council, and I am also the owner of a Local Organisation (Vistavis Limited) with offices based in Copthorne, so I could have chosen either of these, or tried to submit more than one response. I just hope that I can submit this one response in the context I feel most important which is as a resident, but that you may consider the other roles as above.

I have lived in Copthorne with my wife for the last 25 years after voluntarily relocating from Crawley. I had socialised in Copthorne a fair bit and aspired to living here. We also had friends in Crawley Down so spent some time there as well, but it never had the same attraction to me as Copthorne. I have never regretted this decision. 7-8 years ago, my wife and I had an option to either extend our current house or move – whether that be within Copthorne or moving out. Our decision was easy – to extend and remain in Copthorne as we now intend to for our own eternity. Having made that decision, I also then stood as a local Councillor to give something back to our community and relocated my business here to work within – and employ within – our beloved village. I have served on the Parish Council ever since (and am currently the Chair) and now employ 4 local residents. I very much consider myself a 'local' and a majority of our social life is spent in Copthorne, Crawley Down and Turners Hill with other like-minded residents.

Similarly, the friends we have in Crawley Down love their village and also intend to stay. My close friend is very active within the CD Cricket Club as well as the Haven Centre. We have several friends in both villages now and I think a common theme between them is a love of their respective village and a great sense of community and belonging.

In the 25 years I have lived here, I can honestly say I have never had a conversation with any of my friends or colleagues regarding a lack of identity for either village. It is perfectly clear to me that both villages have their similarities and equally their differences and these are fully acknowledged and appreciated. Until this CGR was initiated, I truly believe there was no such issue with identity, and even now with the awareness raised by the CGR I see no evidence that there is! Yes, there are a handful of Crawley Down residents that believe they would be better off with their own Council. There are also a handful of Copthorne residents that believe Copthorne would be better off if separated. But it is just that – a handful in both cases. There are more than 8,000 residents in both villages, and I firmly believe that a vast majority of these are ambivalent. For every voice I have heard supporting a split, I have heard 3 stating "what a waste of time and money". As a local Councillor, all I believe this is achieving is weakening the reputation of local Council at a time when we are trying hard to strengthen it.

I have a very good knowledge and understanding of all the issues relating to the CGR due to my involvement in WPC. It leads me to the same conclusion. The benefits claimed by the tiny minority requesting the split are either extremely tenuous or outright unachievable. The costs will be significant – not just to the residents of both villages in the immediacy and in perpetuity, but also in terms of upheaval and loss of other services whilst all resources are concentrated on resolving the CGR; in terms of the 5 members of staff of the Council who work loyally in the interests of both villages and now see their lives being turned upside down in a turbulent enough time; and in terms of the residents of both villages who are now being asked to consider an issue that did not really exist 6 months ago. If you follow social media in either or both villages, it is creating a divide that was never previously present that can only be detrimental.

The biggest problem I have with the whole situation is why it has really arisen. This is basically an orchestrated move by one specific Councillor who also represents Crawley Down at District level. The "Case for a Crawley Down Village Council" leaflet that was included with the information pack from MSDC almost mirrors the political manifesto on which he campaigned to get elected to MSDC in 2019. I think it is no coincidence that there are elections in 2023 and that this is the only way he may be able to fulfil some of his manifesto claims ahead of those elections to seek re-election. To bring a political

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

agenda to an apolitical level of local governance is inexcusable and should not be given the time of day.

If I return to the more pertinent part of my response in line with the guidelines given in the ToR for the CGR, it is clear and simple for me. Both Copthorne and Crawley Down clearly have their own identity at present, and separate Councils will do nothing to enhance this for either village. Having a larger Council at the lowest level of governance (4th largest in District) can only give both villages a stronger voice at higher levels. There are no questions or issues really being raised with the level of service the existing Council is providing, so what are the issues that would be resolved? Having been involved in WPC for 7 years now, I have seen the very low level of residential interest that is shown at Council meetings or visits to the Council offices. From my understanding this is nothing to do with the location of the offices and is just a normal reflection of the level of interest from most residents in local governance and this is reflected UK wide. Opening a second Council office in Crawley Down will not change this situation.

I am not even going to entertain the claim that a Crawley Down Council will reopen the Royal Oak as this is completely delusional. Similarly, to claim it would resolve the speeding and traffic issues and improve sports facilities are unfounded. I really see no tangible benefits of splitting the Council, I only see cost, disruption, and loss of service provision. Less effective delivery of local services and local government, not more effective. I see no reason it would provide better local democracy at all; in fact, I think raising the issue has only harmed local democracy. I see nothing that will improve community engagement or enhance community cohesion as both are already very evident.

This is nothing but the whim of a handful to the detriment of so many. There is no perfect centralised solution that also meets the needs of separatists, but I believe the current solution is as close as we can get to it. If the same people calling for the split made as much effort to support the existing setup, the results would be even more impressive than they currently are.

I urge you – yes, change the name of the Council to better reflect its representation of both villages. But do not split the Council. Do not waste considerable sums of public money to satisfy a few. Do not fix what is not broken.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

I am concerned about the proposal about the potential splitting of Worth Parish Council into two distinct and independent Parish Councils. Cost is obviously a consideration and clearly having two entities instead of one will add extra costs - even something as simple as payroll management will require two contracts instead of one which will add cost. The only people who pay these extra costs are the residents of Crawley Down and Copthorne. Extra costs can be justified if there are benefits in better reflecting the identities and interests of the community.

In this case, however, I have to question whether there are any benefits. The two villages are very similar in character - they have very similar socio-economic make up, both have junior schooling, doctors surgeries, road networks, road networks and congestion and airport traffic. The issues we face are very similar. My concern is that, if the split goes ahead, the two councils will have a much "quieter" voice than the two combined. Surely we are better working together to address the issues which we both encounter. If the issues facing the villages were significantly different there could be a case made for splitting but, in the situation where the issues facing the two villages are virtually identical, the idea of splitting the existing Council seems a step which will not only increase costs for the residents but also lessen the councils ability to address the issues which the villages face.

In the documentation sent to all residents by the Proposers they stated five issues which an independent Crawley Down Parish Council would address:

- Open a office and hold meetings
- Invest in new sports and community facilities
- Make solving the Royal Oak a priority
- Address speeding on local roads and issues with local services
- Resist development other than for local needs

With the exception of the first one (which will just add costs) it seems to me that all the others can be (and are) being dealt with through the existing Parish Council. Indeed I was particularly drawn to the comment on speeding as I am part of a Speedwatch team in Copthorne. I know that Crawley Down has its own Speedwatch Group which has been operating for longer than our own in Copthorne. We work with both the Police and Worth Parish Council in our attempts to address the speeding issue and I am at a loss to see how splitting the Councils will actually improve what we do on speeding.

I sincerely hope that the Governance Review determines that Worth Parish Council should not be spit into two Councils.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

**I OBJECT to the proposed splitting of Worth Parish Council**

**Community Engagement**

Engagement will be REDUCED because :

- Increase in costs without increase in services will cause lack of faith
- High set up costs will be resented
- Increase in bureaucracy will decrease engagement
- Some benefits would accrue from simply changing the name of the council
- Realistically the offices will be no more accessible than they are now and may have to reduce opening hours

**Community Cohesion**

Cohesion will be REDUCED because :

- The community of the 'in between' villages (between East Grinstead and Crawley) will be lost
- Council staff will be unable to concentrate on specific problems as they will only operate over half the area
- Bureaucracy will effectively be doubled
- Identity and communal spirit are determined by factors outside the council control

**Local Democracy**

Democracy will be REDUCED because :

- Smaller electorate increases vulnerability to extreme groups
- Smaller council increases opportunity for a powerful character to dominate
- Two small councils will have far less impact at District and County level
- Splitting the council reduces the ability of the council to take a strategic approach to the major developments occurring across the area

**Delivery of Services**

Services will be Reduced because :

- High set up costs will impact on long term finances
- Running costs will be increased
- Benefits of scale will be lost especially relating to office accommodation and staff
- Holidays and staff absences difficult or impossible to cover

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

Response to CGR Consultation – Worth Parish Council

**SUPPORT**

**The Petitioners have put forwards a robust case for forming a new Crawley Down Village Council, the following supports their ambitions.**

**Community Engagement**

500 plus signatures gathered in just 4 weekends of campaigning by the petitioners is a clear indication of a significant interest and community engagement, in forming a Crawley Down Village Council.

Residents will experience a clearer identity when working through the Village Council, with community groups and wider local government. Residents will be more likely to attend Village Council meetings than those held at Copthorne.

**Better Local Democracy**

Meeting in the village, with Councillors elected to represent the village, must represent better local democracy. Residents are more likely to undertake direct involvement as a Village Councillor or as a member of a working party or community group, if the Village Council represents just their village.

**Enhanced Community Cohesion**

The petitioners , whether standing for election or not , will offer a broad spectrum of parish, local council and county council experience which will be available and invaluable to the setting up and rapid establishment of a fully active and responsive council.

If TUPE works as expected, the Village Council will start with experienced staff who will be equipped to start up a new council.

The new Village Council will already have abroad view of local issues and be ready to respond to them.

Crawley Down is already a Cohesive Community with excellent local services, societies and sports groups. A well operated, responsive and supportive Village Council can further contribute to this.

**More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government.**

The petitioners have clearly demonstrated that with the exception of energy costs and nationally agreed pay scales for staff, over which they and all other parish councils have no control; they can deliver the required service level at the current budgeted level of Parish Council Tax.

All Village Council Tax raised by village tax payers will be spent in the village.

The petitioners are proposing fewer meetings dealing with statutory requirements such as planning applications, which will mean less staff time spent on administration and more time spent on projects. This is how a Village Council should be run.



**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
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A share of the approximate £340K in reserves means that the Village Council would be formed with both the ability to not only have reserves to cover their budget but also reserves to immediately undertake some project work.

**Reflects the identities and interests of the community**

At a recent public meeting to discuss the potential split, the question was asked “who is from Worth”, no hands went up. This quite clearly indicated that “Worth” does not resonate with either Copthorne or Crawley Down and that the Petitioners view that each large village with its own unique identity, should have its own council, is valid.

Worth Parish Council is already split along the lines of working parties for looking at the interest of individual villages but with a decision making process which is decided by both villages. A Village Council will continue to support this process but with simple one village decisions.

The same issue exists with Neighbourhood Plans, each looking at the identity, requirements and expectations of the individual villages, but reporting as a single statutory consultee on planning decisions. The Village Council wishes to take full responsibility for its decisions on behalf of its electorate.

The identity and interests of a community are key to its success. Crawley Down is a successful community but needs a strong and positive input from a local Village Council to maintain and enhance village growth.

**Why no split is not an option.**

Should MSDC be minded to **not** allow the formation of a Crawley Down Village Council, it is highly unlikely that WPC as large, town sized and increasingly bureaucratic operation, divided on village lines, with overworked staff and councillors, can carry the future fortunes of both villages.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Community Governance Review relating to the Worth Parish Council

I have looked over and read the notices sent out regarding the proposed separation of the villages of Crawley Down and Copthorne to form two 'new' separate councils. Whilst in principle there may be case for this separation, I am doubtful if now is the right time to initiate this split.

1. It seems that only four of the 17 councillors are in favour of this split, that, I think, is less than half of the Crawley Down councillors than half of the Crawley Down councillors, and none of the C, and none of the Copthorne councillors are in Copthorne councillors are in favour.

2. In the past both parishes have had some problems/difficulties in recruiting new people to stand as councillors, and these positions have been filled by people living in the one parish, but serving the other, or left open, but there has always been sufficient councillors from the two villages to fulfil their duties, would that be the case if they were split?

3. Crawley Down say they want the parish rooms to be located in Crawley, but they always were until the Village Hall started to make plans to demolish their current building and relocate, the only suitable accommodation was deemed to be the new St Johns church hall. Where then would Crawley Down have their new accommodation? The Haven has, perhaps one room which could be used, either the Anvil?? Or the Acorn . Neither are ideal, the small Acorn room has a fire exit from the flat, and this means nothing would be securely locked as access would always be necessary as a fire exit. The Anvil room, I think that is what it is called is upstairs and located along the corridor behind the Oak room, but there is no where for anyone to conveniently wait. I'm also not sure there would be sufficient storage for parish records.

4. If the new village hall is built, that is at least two years in the future, where then would the new parish rooms be located in the village? Even the existing village hall is less than ideal, hence the original change of venue for the council rooms.

5. What would the yearly cost be for the room, even if the clerk was only part time the room would need to be reserved every day as on one else could use it, Even at rents of, lets say £10 per hour, eight hours a day, 5 days a week, that is £20,800 per year, even if the cost was £50 per day, to would work out at £13,000 per year. As a charity, the Haven have to be careful with charges for what is a commercial letting. I'm not sure how much or little they could charge, but any units in the area would be around £10-13,000 pa, I would have thought. Not too sure if some would add heating, electricity and water etc onto the costs.

6. We would need to employ at least one part time, if not full time member of staff, or perhaps two part time people. Would these need to be paid at local council, i.e. MSDC rates? If so, would that be around £25-30k pa, and pro rata for part time?

7.7. There would also be other costs, holiday cover, if only one employee, or two part time there would be overtime to cover holidays. Training costs to add

8. The flyer sent out also had Office equipment and Website etc. £9,200, but they did not cover stationery, IT renewables like printer inks, cleaning, and any other items required for running the office.

9. There was also MS set-up rechargeable costs £10k, presumably a one off cost, but the £800 Employment Law advise for TUPE would be ongoing.

10. Also, at present most people are experiencing increases in their Tax, NI, council tax, gas, electricity and every bill which hits their hoe. Is now the right time to be adding yet more costs to an already overburdened public?

I think, on balance, now is not the time to split the councils.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

With Reference to the Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council, I am not in favour of splitting Worth Parish Council into two separate councils.

It is only 4 of the 17 Worth Parish Councillors that fully support this petition, of which 9 of the Councillors represent Crawley Down. They haven't even got a majority in their own Village so how can they be representative of what the residents of Crawley Down want.

How would a smaller Parish Council improve community engagement and cohesion along with a better local democracy when they were not prepared to have a discussion and state their case with the Parish Council in the first place?

I see it to be of no benefit to either Village resulting in increased costs for everyone in council tax including those in Crawley Down.

As a larger entity, when it comes to renegotiating contracts with suppliers and landlords, one larger council would be more likely to get better terms than two smaller ones because of the volumes involved and despite what the petitioners say contracts would have to be renegotiated in the event of a split because the existing contracts are with Worth Parish Council, not the two separate Villages.

The fact that the council offices are in Copthorne doesn't make any difference as to how the council is run for both villages.

If Crawley Down does split from Worth, they will have to obtain office space for which they will have to pay for out of their budget. The bureaucracy and administrative costs for both villages would increase because if the council split, the residents of each village will be paying for their own office space and administrative costs, instead of just the one. Neither can I see that there would be a reduction in the number of meetings.

Worth Parish Council refute the Petitioner's claim that the identity of Crawley Down Village will be better protected with meetings being held in Crawley Down along with a reduction of bureaucracy and committees/meetings. Worth has almost completed a full review of their structure and processes to achieve most the goals required by the Crawley Down petitioners.

As one council, Worth Parish Council, as a larger council has more "clout" against surrounding councils and encroaching housing development than two smaller separate councils. Again, I don't think a split of the council would be beneficial to either village, I feel that larger councils would ignore the views of smaller ones.

Also, Crawley Down and Copthorne already have their own separate identities and Neighbourhood Plans, you do not need separate councils to give us that.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

Splitting Worth Parish Council

First, I am shocked at the lack of public awareness and lack of unbiased information that is available to me about this subject. I was looking forward to attending the open meeting in Copthorne, but this was cancelled apparently due to lack of support! Cancelling a meeting before it happens, and with no way of registering for it beforehand is hardly 'lack of support'. This needs to be urgently addressed.

Second,

If it is true that only 4 out of the 17 Worth Parish Councillors want the split 1 of whom I believe has now moved away, then I am again shocked. I thought local government was a democracy, this above does not seem to echo that.

You must have a majority vote, and then a Public vote for it to be truly fair. Neither of these seem to be happening.

3.

The actual cost! To be spending public money in these current times in this way is bad. In fact - the 2 costs. Creating public awareness to create this cost, and then the forward cost of running 2 Parish Councils when the existing one seemed to be working.

4. I have seen different estimated costs regarding point 3, but have seen no evidence nor explanation of how true they are. So back to point 1 - lack of true evidence to the public.

You ask me to 'properly consider my proposition and that I should concisely explain how it might derive the following benefits' - you now list 4 points, and then a 5th point.

So, quite honestly, without an open Public Meeting where I can ask relevant questions of the various people and then form my own opinion, this whole Review is a waste of time (yours and mine), and a total waste of money (yours and mine). A ridiculous waste of money which would be better spent on facilities for all age groups in both villages.

Due to my points above, I support keeping Worth Parish Council as one entity until full information and costs can be released to the Public (including me).

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Worth Parish Council currently represents the interests of Copthorne and Crawley Down taking into account the needs of both communities. As a successful formula for the last 125 years, why change now?

Worth Parish Council is not that big for a local council. Dividing it into two smaller groups, will surely produce two very small parish councils. Too small?

There will obviously be a financial implications for the villages as the number of staff, premises, contracts and other expenses would need to be duplicated. The costs to those living in the communities would of necessity increase significantly. Any economies of scale currently available to Worth Council, as a larger organisation, would be lost; again leading to increased costs to the residents of both villages.

We must also realise that there will be significant costs in the splitting of Worth Parish Council and setting up of two new smaller separate parish councils for the two villages. This will all have to be paid for, currently estimated at £150,000, by the residents of both communities through their council tax. This will feel very unfair to those residents, who did not want this to happen. This money will effectively be “lost” to the work of the Parish Council in providing services and facilities to the community. The needs of the current employees of Worth Parish Council will need to be considered. Who will their employer be? Will there be dismissals or redundancies? Will their terms of employment be changed?

Many pubs and other businesses fail through lack of custom and rising operating costs. The issues of the Royal Oak is not really a Parish Council issue. Many communities have “saved” failed public houses or village shops. But as these are businesses, they need considerable input, both in terms of finance and volunteer time. The parish council cannot promise to do this.

The case for a separate Crawley Down council says that Copthorne faces becoming part of Crawley and Crawley Down part of East Grinstead. Surely having Worth Parish Council representing both villages as an administrative district, may help to resist and give greater “bargaining power,” than two smaller independent bodies.

I struggle to find any benefits to either village including representation of the communities in the Mid Sussex Council and beyond. Worth Council has managed to represent both communities over the last 125 years. I’m sure it can continue to do so into the future.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

We have lived in Copthorne for 30 years and have enjoyed being part of the Copthorne community.

I welcome the Governance review and strongly believe it is a good time to create a new Council for Crawley Down.

Indeed this petition has been a long time coming, and the seeds were sown in 2012 when Worth PC decided to make two separate Neighbourhood plans, one for Crawley Down and one for Copthorne.

At the time, the Clerk to the Council, Keith Wall, wrote to MSDC thus:

“In accordance with the legislation for Neighbourhood Plans, Worth Parish Council submits area applications for the following to be designated as Neighbourhood Areas within the Worth Parish Council area:

- 1) the Crawley Down ward;
- 2) the Copthorne and Worth ward.

This is in accordance with the resolution passed by the Parish Council at its meeting on January 9, 2012 (minute 31 (a) refers).

Enclosed is a map which identifies the two areas to which this application relates.

The reason for requesting designation of each ward in the Parish as a distinct neighbourhood area is that there is a significant village settlement within each ward (Crawley Down in the Crawley Down ward and Copthorne in the Copthorne and Worth ward) which has its own unique and particular character, issues and ambitions. In order to reflect the wishes of the residents in each area to be as local as possible, the Parish Council recognises that the spirit and intent of the Localism legislation is best served by designating each ward as a neighbourhood area. Each ward is already long established and clearly identified and therefore most appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area.”

Dated 11 April, 2012

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/2775/crawley-down-designation-map.pdf>

Since the Clerk wrote that letter Crawley Down has had a significant number of new houses built, whilst Copthorne is in the process of having significant of new houses built west of Copthorne village. I believe that the then Clerks statement is even more true today.

Both villages are both separate and viable on their own rights - they both have shops, social facilities, doctors surgeries and pharmacies. At election day each village has dedicated polling stations.

They are divided by geography and a busy road network (A264 and the Turners Hill Road (B2028)). Copthorne village is isolated to some extent by the A264 and the Surry Border to the north.

The consequence of this is that there is very little need to travel from or to either village, except for personal or family reasons, except residents have to travel to Copthorne to visit their ‘not so local’ council offices or meetings.

In addition Crawley Down sits in the Imberdown electoral division, and with its proximity to East Grinstead, the residents of Crawley Down look more towards East Grinstead, whilst Copthorne looks more to the west and Crawley.

The current Worth PC consists of 17 councillors which I consider is too many for effective governance of a parish council.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

I would also be concerned that if the petition fails, there will be a certain amount of resentment within the council in the future, and that the issue will have to be revisited again in 5 to 6 years time. Its not going to go away.

I also resent the way WPC is trying to scare everyone that a split would be too expensive costing a reputed £150,000 although no exact breakdown has been given. This from a council that happily spent approximately £90,000 defending its neighbourhood plan some years ago.

I believe now is the right time to create a new council for Crawley Down.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Response to Community Governance Review re Worth Parish Council

I do not support the case for a separate Crawley Down Village Council for the following reasons:

The bullet point items published by the supporters of the petition as to what a Crawley Down Village Council will do are all either already within the competence of Worth Parish Council (WPC), easily resolved without the costs and disruption of a split, or already dealt with via other organisations, as follows:

- open an office and hold meetings in the village:

finding a suitable office space in Crawley Down equivalent to the premises already occupied by WPC in Copthorne will not be easy and the cost will be an additional cost to that already incurred for office space. As “in-person” visits to the WPC offices are almost non-existent and most contacts are made either by phone or e-mail, the question must be asked what benefit this additional cost brings.

Should it be determined that an office location in Crawley Down could be justified, there is no reason why a one or two half days a week rental of such space, when a WPC officer is in attendance, would be a more efficient solution which, while adding a small cost to the current expenditure, would be achieved without the disruption and costs of a split.

holding meetings in the village – WPC meet some 22 times a year. If 11 of those were held in Crawley Down, in space rented at, say, the Haven, the additional cost would be no more than £500 per year. Given that very few members of the public attend meetings, other than when there is a contentious or personal planning matter to be discussed, holding those meetings in Crawley Down would be primarily for the benefit of the Crawley Down ward Councillors. Additionally, there is currently no meeting space in Crawley Down with the same standard of facilities already used, at no additional cost, in Copthorne. Again, when there is a solution (as above) within the existing WPC structure, the disruption and costs of a split must be questioned.

invest in new sports and community facilities – this is already undertaken by WPC which has an excellent track record (no pun intended) of fully supporting such initiatives, regardless of in which village they are proposed. Where developments generate relevant section 106 funds, they are always applied rigorously to investments in the applicable village. Thus, it is not necessary to have a separate council to achieve these aims. That is even more transparent now that each village has its own Infrastructure and Economic Working Party (IEWP), open to residents as well as Councillors (see more below).

make solving the Royal Oak a priority – (this does not make grammatical sense). Presumably, they mean “resolving the issue of the future of the Royal Oak”. This issue has been discussed many times by WPC who applied for the building to be registered as an “asset of community value” and obtained that registration. Splitting WPC would make no difference as to how this task can be moved forward as it lies in the hands of the owners and even Crawley Down councillors acknowledge the cost to purchase and refurbish the building would not be a viable undertaking.

address speeding on local roads and issues with local services – both villages have their own Speedwatch groups, liaising with Sussex Police, and the Crawley Down IEWP can bring serious issues to the Council's attention if it is something which the Council can address. A separate Council would not have more power to address this issue than the existing Council. “Issues with local services” is very vague but, again, if it is something which a parish council has the competence to deal with, or bring to the attention of the responsible authority, the existing structure is more than suited to do so, a larger authority having more “voice” than a smaller authority. Again, a split would not improve such matters and, more likely, make pursuing them less effective.



## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

resist development other than for local needs – this does not require a separate council as each village within WPC has its own Neighbourhood Plan, a deliberate decision by WPC in 2012 to ensure each ward (Copthorne and Crawley Down) developed its own NP. By being within the one council, the two NPs were able to be produced in harmony while still ensuring the unique character and aspects of each ward were fully respected. A model which can be, and is, taken in all other aspects of WPC's management of the two villages within the one council. A split would take away the closeness and balance which the current structure achieves.

The statement that the split “can be achieved without redundancies” is naïve in the extreme. If WPC was split, both Copthorne and Crawley Down councils would each need a qualified clerk (mandatory for a Council to be granted General Power of Competence, as wanted by the petitioners). Because such as accounts preparation, meeting minutes and supporting documents, annual filings, etc would be doubled, it is naïve to believe the same number of staff hours, as currently required, could deal with the workload. Current staff may not wish to transfer to one of the split authorities or be asked to change their terms and conditions. If they did not agree and the new council could not afford them, the position would have to be made redundant. If new staff have to be hired, recruitment costs as well as likely higher salaries need to be taken into account. As there is a national shortage of qualified clerks who are looking for only part-time work, it may be necessary to bring in locum clerks, which would certainly be at a higher cost. It is, therefore, wrong to say that “there will be a reduction in the number of meetings and other administrative costs for both councils.”

All of the foregoing must be taken into account when considering whether or not the split might derive the benefits of:

improved community engagement – the way in which both the Crawley Down and Copthorne Neighbourhood Plans were produced with involvement of local residents as well as councillors within WPC shows that the current set up provides effective and positive community engagement which is now reflected even more in the operation of the CDIEWP and CIEWP. It is difficult to see that separate councils could improve the already very good level of community engagement;

enhanced community cohesion – again, each of the two villages has its own identity which is independent of council involvement, so a separate council would not do anything to enhance that. In fact, as so many residents of one village have friends and relatives in the other, the community cohesion of the two villages is already very strong and would be worsened, not enhanced, by separation;

better local democracy – this is extremely doubtful, as evidenced by the fact that only three of the nine elected Crawley Down councillors on WPC now support this proposal. All councillors of WPC are available to all residents of Worth Parish and the size and “voice” of WPC gives residents more opportunities and avenues in the democratic process.

more effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government – it is very difficult to see how separate village councils could achieve this. The offices of the current council are manned five days a week, meaning contacts by phone or e-mail are dealt with very promptly (face to face visitors are extremely rare). The separate councils proposed would not be manned in the same way, making such delivery less effective and less convenient. In any case, the delivery of local services (in the case of those provided by a parish council such as maintenance of open spaces, allotments, etc) is achieved regardless of where the council offices are based or how the council is named.

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

In summary, therefore, the advantages, economies of scale, experienced staff and ward-based community involvement working parties offered by the current WPC structure far outweigh any perceived benefits of a split which would only worsen all aspects of community engagement, cohesion and democracy.

Should it be felt by residents of both villages that the name “Worth Parish Council” does not clearly identify them, my simple proposal is to rename the council “Crawley Down and Copthorne Parish Council” (or “Copthorne and Crawley Down Parish Council”). Surely a more pragmatic solution than incurring the best part of £200,000 of the WPC reserves on the cost of a division instead of spending it on needed improvements in both villages.

With regard to the considerations proposed in the Public Notice, I address them as follows:

What do you consider to be your community identity? As stated above, each village has its own identity. I consider my community to be the people and organisations I regularly mix with and that includes residents of, for example, Copthorne, Crawley Down, Felbridge, Horley and Crawley, not dependent upon where they live or the name of my Parish Council;

How should the civil parishes in your area be defined in future? Logically, this should be based on population, as is happening with the current ward boundary proposals. This makes names of parishes immaterial and, to a great extent, location also, meaning the current tried and trusted structure of Worth Parish with the two wards of Copthorne and Crawley Down should be retained;

Considering your proposals, what would be the advantages and disadvantages of these? See all my above reasons;

If a separate civil parish council is not formed as proposed in the petition calling for this Community Governance Review, what do you think the impact might be? Some of the signatories to the petition (less than 10% of the Crawley Down population) would be disappointed but the vast majority of Crawley Down residents would not be at all concerned as they are not engaged with the matter. Copthorne residents will be greatly relieved and thankful that the existing, efficient and effective Worth Parish Council is retained and its reserves will be used for the betterment of the two villages and not wasted on a reorganisation which is totally unnecessary.

Respectfully submitted

REDACTED  
REDACTED

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

**I am against the proposal**

None of the bullet points supplied hold up to any scrutiny.

**Open an office and hold meetings in the village**

It will not be easy to find equivalent premises to that already used by Worth Parish Council (WPC).

Most communication with WPC is by telephone or email. Should there be a need for a surgery or meetings within the Crawley Down then rooms could be booked at say £25.00 an hour. A 2 hour meeting would cost £50.00. Assume a need for 12 such surgeries a year the cost would be £600.00. Far cheaper than £150,000. You could hold these meetings for nearly 300 years.

**Invest in new sports and community facilities**

This is already done by WPC. As far as any evidence can be seen in the villages WPC has been very successful. I am not aware of any issues.

**Make solving the Royal Oak a priority**

Not sure what this means. WPC has already facilitated the registration of the pub as an "asset of community value". I'm not convinced this is top priority issue anyway. Do we need to spend £150,000 to sort out a pub. There are a lot of non pub goers in the village.

**Address speeding on local roads and issues with local services**

Both villages have Speedwatch which liaise with Sussex Police. I have often seen them in each village.

What are the "issues with local services"? Has this been added to bulk out the proposal? These issues need to be specified so that I may comment on them.

**Resist development other than for local needs**

Both villages have prepared and submitted Neighbourhood Plans. Separate councils would not have changed that. All councils are under severe pressure for central government policies on housing and both have had large developments forced on them. I do not see how separate bodies could have stopped this. If anything we have a stronger voice in unity.

**A new council can be achieved without redundancies or need to renegotiate contracts**

I think the important word here in "can" and not "will". I think this statement is at best naïve and probably misleading. We have 2 incredibly dedicated and fully qualified Clerks at WPC. We do not want to make their positions insecure, we neither want to force them into redundancy nor encourage them to seek greener pastures.

As to renegotiation of contracts and I cannot be sure but I would expect some renegotiation would be required.

**This will not result in an increase in your council tax**

I do not believe this assertion. It is fact that budgets rise they do not reduce. This saying that having an additional council will cost nothing. I disagree. Everything has a cost.

There is repeated mention to existing reserves. I assume from the proposal that we must have more than £150,000 in reserve as that is "Crawley Downs Share". Do they assume a 50/50 split? I can think of many more issues that can be resolved with that money. Crawley Down will be put at a severe disadvantage if this money was wasted on this unnecessary proposal.

I have friends and relatives in Crawley Down all of whom do not see any benefits from this proposal. The two villages have been served splendidly by WPC and have lived together in harmony for many years. Each village has its own identity, a new council will neither change nor enhance this; it just may mar it.

I believe the empire builders who have made this proposal should be censored for wasting time and money on such an ill considered proposal.

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

I wish to record my full support for the petition to split Worth Parish Council.

The Terms of Reference require me to address how it might derive the following benefits:

- Improved community engagement
- Enhanced community cohesion
- Better local democracy
- More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government

also to explain how the proposition:

Reflects the identities and interests of the community

To do so, I need to add some context.

I write as a resident of Crawley Down for over 40 years, a former Worth Parish councillor, a member of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan team and then the oversight sub-committee formed in 2013. I also acted as Crawley Down representative to the Copthorne equivalent. It is in that context that I address the issues.

Worth Parish Council has, in effect, been largely split for some years. The petition recognises and attempts to address the situation. The distinct differences between identities, priorities and challenges of the individual villages were formally recognised by Worth Parish Council in 2011 when they applied to split the parish geographically for the purpose of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. It was justified by the different nature of, and challenges faced by, the two villages. The split was formally approved by Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) in July 2012 – MSDC implicitly accepting the argument in doing so.

The early work on the Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken by a Steering Group comprised of Parish Councillors and local volunteers. In November 2013, Worth Parish Council formalised the arrangements by establishing a Neighbourhood Plan Committee with delegated authority and separate sub-committees for each village.

In 2015 and later, Worth Parish Council revisited the issues and differences when discussing and preparing the Parish Vision document. The Council agreed to maintain two separate Neighbourhood Plans with a possible view to establishing the feasibility of combining the plans at some future date. Currently there has been little if any progress in that regard and it does not seem likely to happen.

Copthorne and Crawley Down are individual communities with very little in common apart from the Parish Council. Copthorne is increasingly facing towards Crawley with only the M23 separating Forgewood and Copthorne West developments. It cannot be that long before Copthorne joins Ifield and Three Bridges as villages absorbed into an expanded Crawley, possibly as a unitary authority. Crawley already controls some of the affordable housing in Copthorne West. Residents generally rely on Crawley facilities for GPs, secondary schools, shopping and employment.

Although Crawley Down residents also use Crawley as a major employer, Neighbourhood Plan surveys and census data indicate that Crawley Down residents tend to commute over a wider area and greater distance than Copthorne residents - though the longer term impact on working patterns

after Covid has yet to be established for both villages. Crawley Down generally faces towards East Grinstead for secondary schooling, GPs and shopping.

Housing developments without associated increase in supporting infrastructure have tended to reinforce this polarisation. The growth of home deliveries during Covid restrictions has affected shopping habits, with those households on restricted incomes tending to shop directly.

That split also applies to the Parish Council. I can only comment on my time as a councillor and a few years afterwards when still assisting the clerk and RFO with IT and map issues and in Neighbourhood Plans meetings. For many councillors, council meetings formed the first and only time that they had visited the other village apart from possibly the village fair in Crawley Down, Copthorne Carnival or the Scout Fireworks display. At that time council meetings were held alternately in Crawley Down and

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Copthorne, using local school facilities. Since then, with the establishment of the Parish Hub offices in Copthorne, meetings have been almost exclusively held in Copthorne. The Parish Hub is not very conducive to residents visiting by car. Very limited car parking facilities and those limited spaces generally taken up by those using the lower hall, tend to discourage anyone not visiting on foot. The move has significantly disenfranchised Crawley Down residents. A split would go some way towards reversing that.

- With attendant improved community engagement in Crawley Down and no adverse impact on Copthorne in that respect.
- Improved access to council discussions etc through meetings in Crawley Down and shorter, more effective meetings can only improve local democracy, again with no negative impact on Copthorne.
- Current council meetings deal with little of common interest to both villages and could conveniently be shortened and more accessible if only dealing with one village
- Fewer councillors should make decision making and communication faster and more effective.
- Making the council more relevant to Crawley Down residents would go some way to reviving interest in the Council. As a councillor trying to promote the role, I often found that otherwise suitable candidates were reluctant to put themselves forward because they did not feel it relevant to the village.
- Having an office in the village and holding meetings in the village would imply hiring facilities in existing community buildings (such as the Haven Centre, the village hall, the Glebe Centre and the school). Thereby financially supporting those facilities
- Worth Parish Council would appear to be positioning itself as a service provider to other councils, which implies more management dealing with matters outside the parish. The petitioners claim is to concentrate on Crawley Down. That difference would appear to be reflected in the forecast costs. As in most estimates the answer is probably somewhere in the middle, but I tend to believe it to be nearer the lower figure provided by the petitioners. They appear to have done their homework, directly spoken to councils which have undergone a similar exercise and benefit from the expertise of a councillor whose CV includes Financial and Technical directorships of major government agencies. Whereas, WPC have acted in a partisan manner, lobbying against the split.
- The split is already there in part. There are 2 Neighbourhood Plans with no current intent to combine them. Little common business in the council meetings. Villages facing in different directions for health, schooling etc. Finally councillors in favour of a split have been ostracised.
- A local office in Crawley Down would provide convenient and accessible delivery of local services and local government, thus making the service more effective
- At present, there is little community cohesion or interaction between the separate villages. The significant increase in new housing has decreased community cohesion in Crawley Down and I see no reason why Copthorne should be significantly different under similar pressures. The impetus provided by a new local council could well be the spur to improving that. Maintaining the status quo has failed.
- The identities and interests of the community can only be reinforced by a more local and more accessible council focussed on the specific locality and not spread over two very different villages.
- WPC imply that representing a large electorate is reflected in the council having a stronger voice. That has not been the case in my experience and, during Neighbourhood Plan preparation MSDC informed the team that all local councils, regardless of size have an equal voice, whether town or parish. This split would give Crawley Down and Copthorne the same status other large villages in the District and provide two voices for the residents.

I am sorry to say that the petition has highlighted the current split in Worth Parish Council and raised some questions about activities in social media under the name of Worth Parish Council. Those in favour of the split formed a separate media account in order to make their case. Those against have flagrantly abused the official WPC account and web

## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

pages to fight the split despite claiming to be acting impartially in accordance with their duty. Even the information supplied by Worth PC in conjunction with the MSDC notice of governance review contain false claims. They are patently partisan and claiming that WPC is “neither in favour or against a split” is clearly disproved by their social media activity, the strap line (“A fair-for-all, not a free-for-all”) and associated lack of transparency.

I have queried attacking statements made on social media under the WPC name, without any response. Under a previous chair (Cllr Blackman), full council had established governance rules for public statements. Anything released under the council name should be either with a full council endorsement or committee chair or clerk with appropriate delegated authority. Anything else should be clearly annotated as a personal opinion. As far as I’m aware that rule has never been revoked or superseded and is in accordance with the Nolan Principles. I have not been able to find any supporting documentation on the council website to confirm that the statement had been endorsed at full council before release and queries posted in reply to WPC comment on social media have not received a response.

The Terms of Reference suggest that I might care to suggest a name for the new parish councils. The current Ward names would appear to be most appropriate – Crawley Down Parish Council, Copthorne and Worth Parish Council. That would also, in the case of Crawley Down map directly to the new District Council wards.

I’m also asked what I consider to be community identity. The generally accepted academic definition suggests that community identity is based on birth and belonging rather than being acquired. I subscribe to that general principle but would blur the definition to include acquired identity from living in that community and joining into the communal activities. In villages such as Crawley Down it starts with family and that family growing in the village, reinforced by early days in village toddler groups and common schools. It continues with village clubs and rivalry with other villages. The evidence is in the local C of E school being oversubscribed, the majority of pupils moving onto Imberhorne and Sackville in East Grinstead, the large number of village clubs as listed in the Neighbourhood Plan Scoping Report (copy held by MSDC). That community identity obviously risks being diluted if infrastructure does not support that sense of belonging, if local children cannot obtain places in the village school, if the residents consider the council to be remote, or too large an influx of residents over a relatively short period. Based on that definition Crawley Down and Copthorne have very different community identities, with families tending to stay in the same village, different schools etc.

I would have thought the advantages to be fairly obvious! Without a solid community identity you don’t have a community. Parish names should be relevant, using existing ward names avoids confusion and is obvious.

If a separate parish is not formed then I believe that it would further disenfranchise Crawley Down residents and possibly create a totally unworkable Worth Parish Council. Feelings are running high and unlikely to calm down. I could foresee a number of resignations and the loss of invaluable expertise. The cat is out of the bag, splits in policy etc have been exposed. Both sides consider that the other has breached etiquette and I consider that Worth PC has flouted governance rules in taking a partisan approach in social media and council website. That situation is likely to fester and significantly reduce effectiveness or even make the council unworkable - unless the parish is split.

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

Dear Sirs,

I have been a resident of Copthorne for 36 years and certainly identify with the identity of my village and I suspect Crawley Down residents identify with their community in the same way.

That does not mean however that a commitment to one's community means that the only way to preserve that sense of belonging is by having a Village Council with an office located somewhere in a community location. In today's world of electronic communications, this logic is flawed and out of date. Community identity and voice is about so much more than having an office open for a few hours and days per week. Crawley Down are not a minority unrecognised entity within our local government arrangement. There is far more in common between the villages than is distinct. Our shared services, social and community engagements and cohesion is very overlapping and our Worth Parish Council mirrors that well, even if the name is non representative. As to having a voice within local government, I thought that Crawley Down have always had Majority on the Worth Parish Council during my residency and that the main promoter of the split has been representing Crawley Down on the Mid Sussex Council for more than 5 years. If Crawley Down feel they have no voice then they should ask why that might be rather than try and move the deckchairs supporting a campaign which appears to be suggesting responsibilities lie elsewhere. It is a pity the promoters did not seek the views of Copthorne residents before embarking upon their non-cohesive campaign.

Copthorne are in my view well served by WPC and the initiatives they support and the services provided for both communities provide good local effective government. The Clerk and Officers offer easy access to residents of both villages and the Hub office is well positioned with good access and parking for both villages. It is open 5 days a week and is very responsive. I do not remember any campaign for a relocation when the Parish Council operated out of the old Village Hall on the Turners Hill Road in Crawley Down. Rather residents recognised a facility offering good parking, disabled access and modern capabilities as being fit for the modern day. I believe WPC should be able to continue the work they have started. I am impressed with their plans and recent achievements and I do not want to see money wasted duplicating efforts and diluting the capability I see in evidence in the staff and the councillors who represent us. The campaign to divide seems motivated by a few who see the world rather adversarially in my opinion and the benefits claimed, based upon my reading of the public material are somewhat illusory.

The costs to divide, as I understand them, are not modest but anyway I would rather seem Council Tax spent on the proposals that the wider resident bases have put forward to Worth parish Council rather than frittered away on a restructure. The cost of living crisis we are all facing says, this is not a time to pursue nebulous intangibles, particularly if the motive seems questionable pursuing an objective that is not widely shared. I am fully aware that the petitioners question was more likely to gain a signature than a refusal just based upon it's construction. Although maybe it provides a mandate for a review it is insufficient evidence for a division.

The Copthorne residents should not have to pay for one man's pet political agenda. MSDC will do well to dismiss this CGR re a division. Do though change the Parish Council name, seems strange that you have not addressed this before.

REDACTED  
REDACTED

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW: CRAWLEY DOWN**

I have been a resident of Crawley Down for some 24 years and submit my comments on this basis.

I strongly support the creation of a new parish and parish council for Crawley Down and consider this long overdue. I believe that the benefits of this are as follows:

Improved community engagement

Worth Parish Council has its council office in Copthorne. This is remote and detached to me and other residents of Crawley Down. The office may as well be in Crawley or East Grinstead given the distance and need for transport to get there. Having an office in Crawley Down would make the council more accessible. I could easily walk to the offices, be able to speak to someone with any issues I have and be able to follow-up on those issues in an effective and timely way, as would other residents. Having the ability to speak to someone in a manned office rather than on the telephone would enable me as well as other residents to engage in a meaningful way with the Council and would hold the Council more locally accountable to residents.

Enhanced community cohesion

As a resident of Crawley Down, I do not consider myself to be a resident of Worth. This is just a local government administrative construct and is devoid of any local identification. Being a Crawley Down resident of Crawley Down Parish with its own Crawley Down Village Council would actually have meaning to me and other residents of Crawley Down. It provides a coincidence and cohesion of community identity in a way that Worth Parish Council does not.

Better local democracy

Worth Parish Council is far too remote in its location. It is not possible to get to meetings using public transport in a timely and effective manner. Going by car is also an issue with parking since the office only has a small car park. Parking in the local streets is not recommended – not only has there been reports of car vandalism, but the street lighting is not adequate.

I would like to participate in meetings of the council and would more likely to do so if the meeting were held in Crawley Down. On the very limited occasions that I have been to meetings of Worth Parish Council, the non-attendance of residents is very apparent. This contrasts greatly with the meetings that used to be held in Crawley Down. At least two rows of chairs were occupied for most meeting and the hall was packed for AGM's. There was lively and engaging participation, generally of Crawley Down residents – much missed.

The decisions made by Worth Parish Council are generally perceived to favour Copthorne's interests. This is largely due to the fact that Crawley Down councillors get out-voted on a regular basis by Copthorne Councillors. One of the councillors lives in Copthorne but has been co-opted as a Crawley Down Councillor; this seems to be a rather bizzare outcome for local democracy.

All councillors have been co-opted to Worth Parish Council with only one councillor having been elected in the last 12 years. This is not a healthy reflection of local democracy. I would be more likely to be interested in standing as a parish councillor if there was a Crawley Down Village Council which I could identify with at a local level.

As a resident of Crawley Down, I strongly support decisions being made in Crawley Down by Councillors living in Crawley Down who understand Crawley Down issues.

More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government

A Crawley Down Village Council would be entirely focused on Crawley Down issues.

Having local councillors with local knowledge coupled with an effective means of delivery i.e. through a dedicated Village Council, would be a material benefit for the village. The focus would be on Crawley Down issues which in turn means better representation in local issues such as development in the village, the much needed regeneration of the village centre, the condition of local roads, the quality of services such as street lighting.

A separate Village Council would be a huge benefit to Crawley Down. The Crawley Down Village Council would be able to spend all the money it received on supporting Crawley



## Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation

### 1 Local Residents – General Submissions

Down facilities, community groups and sports clubs in the village. Currently, Crawley Down's precept goes toward subsidising facilities located in Copthorne such as the sports pavilion and the Worth Parish Council's offices. I am not aware of these being used by Crawley Down residents and it is perceived that Crawley Down does not get any benefit from them. It is both sad and disappointing that Crawley Down has had no new facilities of its own other than a car park, in the 24 years that I have been a resident.

Reflects the identities and interests of the community

Crawley Down Village is very different to Copthorne. They are geographically and materially separate villages divided by the A264 Copthorne Road. I do not consider myself remotely connected to Copthorne. Each village has its own shops and services and they have nothing in common. There is no overlap in local community groups, doctors, schools and other services.

Crawley Down is more rural in nature, with numerous walks and the Worth Way being an integral part of the village. The recent developments in Copthorne have aligned it more with the Crawley, particularly the huge warehouses built next to J10 of the M23, the large associated brightly lit roundabout which is a material change to the street scene and similarly, the huge Gatwick car parking located just off the M23.

A separate Crawley Down Parish and Crawley Down village Council would truly reflect the situation on the ground, namely that Crawley Down undeniably has a separate identity to Copthorne, and indeed has no discernible identity to Worth Parish. I consider myself a resident of Crawley Down, not a resident of Worth.

How should the civil parishes in your area be defined in future?

My view is that Crawley Down should be a separate Parish. The area should be delineated as the identified Ward in the recent local Boundary Review. The Copthorne Parish should similarly be the area delineated by its current Ward.

Considering your proposal(s), what would be the advantages and disadvantages of these?

The advantages of such separately defined Parishes is that these Wards currently exist and are easily identifiable and identified by residents of each Ward. In the case of Crawley Down, there is a large framed map of Crawley Down, commissioned for the millennium and located outside the Co-Op. It serves as a reminder of what Crawley Down Village is and is seen by residents as they regularly come and go about their daily business in the village.

I don't consider there to be any disadvantages.

If a separate civil parish council is not formed as proposed in the petition calling for this Community Governance Review, what do you think the impact might be?

This would be a great loss of opportunity to the residents of Crawley Down to determine their own local needs, outcomes and solutions since the issues identified above with Worth Parish Council would continue. In the interests of not duplicating comments, please treat the comments on the issues identified with Worth Parish Council as being set out fully here in answer to this question.

Campaign by Worth Parish Council

I would like to make a final comment about the campaign which Worth Parish Council has run. Although holding themselves out to be neutral, which I believe they were required to be, they ran a campaign against Crawley Down having a separate parish and village council. This was very clear from the public meeting held in Crawley Down and was pointed out by a resident attending the meeting.

Worth Parish Council claimed in the flyer enclosed with the CGR Notice issued to all residents that the split could cost residents around £150,000. This claim was also published on the Crawley Down Facebook page and the Worth Parish Website. The councillors and residents supporting the split indicated on the other hand that the split would incur costs of around £20,000. As a result of this, there is a worry that the split would result in increased costs and a number of residents are not likely to support the split because of this.

The Councillors supporting the split have made the evidence to support their costs available to residents. Worth Parish Council have been repeatedly asked to provide their

**Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation**  
**1 Local Residents – General Submissions**

evidence but have failed to do so. It is possible that these costs are unfounded because no evidence has been provided and if this is the case, one can only surmise that Worth Parish Council and the Councillors involved in publishing this claim intended to scare residents into not supporting the split. The net result is that a number of residents have been left in a state of uncertainty and anxiousness on what is the true cost of the split and this is likely to have an effect on the responses received or not received. If this is the case, then the democratic process has been hampered by the actions of Worth Parish Council and the Councillors supporting the campaign and I would like this to be noted in Mid Sussex's assessment.

Worth Parish Council: Community Governance Review Consultation 1  
Local Residents – Hardcopy Submissions

Mid Sussex District Council,  
Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. RH16 1SS

Ref: REDACTED

22/02/2022

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter regarding a new Parish Council for Crawley Down, my neighbours and I are all in favour of this.

There are many things wrong in Crawley Down and I would like a local council to address them. I will list a few of them:

1) The banning of the development of the housing estate in the field behind Woodland Close as this has caused a great deal of aggravation to the owners of houses that face this field as the developers and estate agents keep on pestering us to sell our houses so they can get an access road into the field. So far we have all refused.

2) What is happening to the Royal Oak? The only pub in the village and it has been closed for years because the owners want to develop the site and carpark into flats. Copthorne has at least four public houses. With our own Parish Council we could reopen the pub and keep the trade in the village.

3) The road coming down from the new estate, Bramble Way is an accident waiting to happen as the traffic entering and exiting is traveling way too fast. A suggestion would be speed bumps to slow the traffic down.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

8<sup>th</sup> April 2022

REDACTED

12 APR 2022

RECEIVED

**Response to:  
Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council**

Further to the public notice I wish to OBJECT most strongly to the suggested dissolution of Worth Parish Council to form separate councils for Copthorne and Crawley Down.

The petitioners set out some bullet points in their case, I comment on each:

**Open an office and hold meetings in the village.**

Until very recent years there was an office in Crawley Down. Worth Parish Council Office. It was not fit for purpose and the WPC agreed to make the move to brand new offices in Copthorne.

I cannot see why it is necessary to have 2 offices to cover such a small area. Are Crawley Down residents not able to commute to Copthorne. If it was felt that some meetings ought to be held in Crawley Down there are rooms available for hire at the Haven Centre that could be used on occasion if this was appropriate. I recall annual parish meetings alternating between the villages in the past and this worked perfectly well.

**Invest in new sports and community facilities.**

Why is it necessary to have a separate Council in order to do this? Are the petitioners saying that the Copthorne councillors are in some way preventing this from happening in Crawley Down and that a smaller council will have the finance to be able to facilitate this?

**Make solving the Royal Oak a priority.**

I fail to see how any council, be it Crawley Down or WPC can have any influence whatsoever on a privately owned building that has failed as a business. Do the petitioners really believe that a Crawley Down council could 'solve' anything to do with a public house that was not financially viable and has closed. There is obviously not a need for such an establishment or it would have survived and thrived.

**Address speeding on local roads and issues with services.**

Both villages suffer with speeding. Solving this issue is surely better achieved with resources from as wide a scope as possible not a narrower one. The case does not state what the issues are with local services. Do they mean buses? Broadband services? Rubbish collections? Are there any services that are actually specific to Crawley Down that do not affect Copthorne? The ones I mention are not, as far as I am aware, the remit of a parish/village council. If the petitioners are suggesting that they could 'lobby' better as a smaller voice then I disagree.

**Resist development other than for local needs.**

We are all affected by this issue. A council covering the wider area of both villages carries more weight if the councillors are doing their job properly. They need to work together regarding development in the whole area. We would still, of course, both be in Mid Sussex DC area and they have targets to meet. Splitting in 2 will cause issues with each one trying to move development to the other. A united voice is what we need.

The case mentions that Copthorne faces becoming part of 'greater Crawley' and Crawley Down is being drawn into East Grinstead. This surely has to be an extremely good reason to stick together under one Council umbrella. Together we are stronger and have a bigger voice.

**Finance**

The case states that I may be worried about an increase in Council Tax. It also says that a draft budget has been published. I would like sight of this budget. I cannot believe that anyone is suggesting that the expense of running 2 separate councils will not result in an increase in cost to the consumer – the residents of both villages. Currently the precept for residents in WPC area pays for 'one of everything'. As I see it, in broad terms, there would be two of everything to be paid for. I can accept that costs may not double but they cannot stay the same and therefore there will be an increase in the amount the electorate must pay. No-one minds paying a little extra if they get something in return but there is nothing set out in the statement of case that gives me any confidence that this proposal will benefit either village.

We are asked to consider some points:

**Crawley Down and Cophorne are both large villages with separate identities.**

Of course we are. That just goes to show that being part of the same Parish Council does not affect the separate identities of the villages. We have both retained our individuality whilst being part of a larger council. It is not necessary to split WPC in order to achieve this.

**Residents are members of their village community, not a Worth Parish community.**

Worth Parish Council does not purport to being a community. It is a Council which covers the area that includes 2 village communities. A council does not make a community.

**A council in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents.**

I must assume that by accessible the petitioners mean 'able to visit the office' In todays world it is not often necessary to visit an office as the last 2 years of Covid restrictions have demonstrated.

**A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces.**


This may be true but it is a very blinkered view. Sometimes those closest to a problem cannot look at it objectively and a wider view is often a better option. I was under the impression that each village already has a sub committee within WPC to look at more local issues.

**Crawley Down and Cophorne already have separate Neighbourhood Plans**

Yes we do, and this further demonstrates that when there is a need the current WPC is perfectly able to deal with village matters separately.

The case put forward to support this petition is weak and has no substance. It does not set out any achievable goals and one has to wonder what has actually prompted this petition to be put forward.

The suggested dissolution of Worth Parish Council is not going benefit the residents of either Village and I note with absolut ismay that the petitioners have not even given lip service to the hamlet of Rowfant

 This proposal is short sighted, misguided and unnecessary.

REDACTED

REDACTED

RECEIVED

- 2 MAR 2022

REDACTED

*e-mail:* REDACTED

28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Electoral Services (CGR)  
Mid Sussex District Council  
Oaklands  
Oaklands Road  
Haywards Heath  
Sussex  
RH16 1SS

REDACTED

Dear Sirs,

**COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW RELATING TO WORTH PARISH COUNCIL**

This is my response to the Notice letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022, from Mid Sussex District Council.

I worked on the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan committee for five years and have attended some parish council meetings as an observer, so I have some idea of how the parish council works and what it does.

When it comes to change, I believe that its proponents should show how the current system is failing and how their new proposition would overcome those failings. According to the information provided, the proposition for Crawley Down to have its own Village Council fails on both counts.

I believe that the proposal from those Crawley Down councillors proposing is misguided and I do not understand how splitting from Worth Parish Council (WPC) to create Crawley Down Village Council (CDVC) could benefit either Crawley Down or Copthorne.

Firstly, the proponents say that they will:

- Invest in new sports and community facilities. Where will they be situated and how will they be paid for? If needed, why can the present WPC not provide them, if the money and space is available? If there is either no space or money now, where would the CDVC get it from? The CD councillors on WPC have ample opportunity to make their case for such provision.
- Make the Royal Oak a priority. By "priority", do they mean retaining it, or agreeing to its conversion to another use? In my view the loss of any village pub is regrettable. However, the responsibility here lies with Mid Sussex District Council and if a CDVC believes that it has better leverage with MSDC than WPC, I think they will be disappointed.
- Address speeding on local roads and issues with local services. Exactly what additional powers or influence does CDVC think it will have in addressing these matters? These issues affect both villages and I am sure that WPC will already be using whatever powers and influence it has to address them.

- Resist development other than for local needs. This is disingenuous. As I understand it, the criteria for development is driven by central government, via the county council and district council. The Neighbourhood Plans for Crawley Down and Copthorne have already been adopted, as has the District Plan. Exactly how would CDVC enact its statement, if WPC cannot presently do so?

Secondly, the case to Copthorne residents is poorly made. The statement that Crawley Down is being drawn into East Grinstead and Copthorne into Crawley is unsupported. My understanding is that such absorption or transference is highly unlikely or even impossible. Even if a possibility, then surely the existence of a single parish council (WPC) will be more effective at countering it, unless it is MSDC's intention to promote such a transfer.

The statement that new councils can be created without increasing costs is presumptive and badly thought through. No redundancies? Is that not assuming that current staff will willingly transfer to one or other council? Supposing they don't? I doubt that they could be forced to legally, so there is every possibility of redundancies and the costs that go with it. Who will pay? It should surely be CDVC, as they are proposing the split.

Furthermore, it is likely that additional staff will be needed both in the council offices and outside, in order to provide cover and to undertake jobs which currently can be done across the parish as a "shared" entity (economies of scale). I am sure that the proponents of the separation know this, so why pretend otherwise?

It is stated that there will be no need to increase council tax. That is almost certainly incorrect. At present, WPC meets in The Hub, in Copthorne, with WPC meeting the cost. If CDVC separates, will they continue to pay for The Hub, for the remainder of its lease? Of course not, so Copthorne will have to pick up the whole cost, or terminate the lease (if it can) and find cheaper premises. There is also the issue of duplication of staffing, as economies of scale and efficient working will be lost.

CDVC will also need to buy or rent its own office premises, thus incurring additional costs. Current economies of scale will be lost and the overall cost is bound to rise, in both villages. It is dishonest to claim otherwise.

At present, Worth Parish Council has nine councillors from Crawley Down and eight from Copthorne and Worth, so Crawley Down's interests are very well represented. I truly cannot see what benefit there would be for the two villages to have their own councils and which particular issues cannot be addressed because of the nature of WPC's current organisation.

In conclusion, I would say that the case to split WPC into two separate village councils is poorly thought through, badly presented, and potentially divisive. Its aspirations are naïve and over optimistic at best and disingenuous at worst. The application should be rejected by MSDC.

Yours faithfully,

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

RECEIVED

- 2 MAR 2022

REDACTED

Dear Sirs,

Ref: Review of Wort Parish Council.

1. Could you please consider that Crawley Down & Copthorne are stronger, have more of a voice together.  
Crawley Down might be overwhelmed by Expansion of East Linstead and Copthorne swallowed up by Crawley.
2. Cannot understand how anyone can think that by having separate councils the long term issues like the Royal Oak will magically be solved?  
- Surely cost of 2x councils will reduce the available funds?
3. Where is the transparency on how much this split will cost us residents, who wants to pay even more council tax?
4. All over the country, councils etc seem to be merging to become more cost effective and efficient - so why do we need extra costs and doubling up of some positions

I have read the leaflet and it fails to explain, how Crawley Down split will give - suddenly - more power than the current councillors.

Surely in today's climate, we need to become more efficient and more effective, whilst controlling costs - more money spent on councils - officers - offices etc and running costs = Less money spent on the villages.

I also fail to understand how "enhanced community cohesion" would come about, at moment one council discuss and recommend best for both villages - co-operation and in both villages, in future if 2 councils - where would the cohesion be - yet more meetings between 2x councils.

So, personally, I fail to see how splitting Wort Parish Council into two would deliver any of the points made.

REDACTED



12 APR 2022

**Response to:  
Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council**

Dear Sirs,

I write to object to the proposed creation of a separate parish council for Crawley Down.

I have read the 'Case for Crawley Down' produced by the minority of parish councillors and Crawley Down Residents that support the petition together with the Q.A. information published by the parish council.

My comments are based on these documents together with my community involvement in Copthorne over the past 50 years.

Your Notice of the Community Governance asks that we state positive reasons to support the proposition made by a small number of the residents of Crawley Down. Although it does not indicate that opinions are acceptable whether or not they support the proposition I am writing in the hope that a democratic review will take on board the opinions of the whole electorate.

It has been said to me that one should not bother to write unless one has something positive to say about the proposition made. This is totally unacceptable and one hopes it will not distort the review.

**Community involvement.**

There is no reason to believe that separating the parish councils would give rise to any improvement in this regard.

We are all aware that we, the residents, should be more involved with the Parish Council.

- There are, I am sure, a number of residents who regularly criticise the Parish Council's actions or inaction.
- There are a number of vocal residents who quite rightly monitor and comment on all Parish Councils every decision.
- There are a much larger group who are so deeply involved in the many activities in the villages and look only to the Parish Council for support when it is needed
- Of course there are those who have no interest.

If the Council is separated it will still be the same number of people involved with the Parish Councils for the same reasons. However an undesirable effect could be that the voices of the more vocal may have more power against a smaller council, will have a greater air time and may result in less balanced decision making.

The council offices have now been located in both villages for a length of time and the level of community involvement has not changed significantly with the changes in location.

**Community Cohesion**

Both villages have very healthy communities supporting a vast range of clubs and organisations. Many residents travel between villages to make use of the opportunities available.

The Parish Council provides valuable support to community activities throughout the area but they are not, and cannot be the community. They are however a representative voice of the community when required and the stronger that voice is the better.

In our area we are plagued by boundaries. From an administrative point of view these are County, Ward, District; Boundaries which form barriers. Within many organisations the boundaries are more complex, related to links with past liaisons. The creation of yet another boundary would not help our communities.

Another consideration is where this new boundary would it be drawn. As an example, historically The Dukes Head was part of Copthorne but more recently it has been referred to as Crawley Down because it is in Crawley Down Ward. The Neighbourhood Plans are not consistent with ward boundaries. Equally the boundary would split the residential properties in Rowfant. These government set ward boundaries do not reflect the actual communities and there is a continuing need for our councillors to work together to ensure the whole area is represented.

I note that the proposition states that the Crawley Down Village Council would take control of all the allotments in the Worth Parish Area, and the largest proportion of playing fields leaving the remainder of the Parish even more deficient in these important facilities.

#### **Local democracy**

Opinions on issues received from the larger area should enable the Parish council to arrive at more balanced decisions.

We live in an area where Gatwick airport, County boundaries, developments in our villages and expansion of Crawley and East Grinstead all impact on our environment. These issues are all coalesced. Two egotistical inward looking councils will not provide an improved level of democracy particularly when they are required to make stands on the wider issues.

#### **Delivery of local services.**

2 offices, with staff, office running costs, expenses, more meeting across the two councils must add to cost. The funds available to the Parish Council without increasing the precept are finite and therefore the sums available for local services must be reduced. Set up costs will affect both areas.

It is difficult to understand how this proposition can be considered to enhance local democracy when for residents of Copthorne, and those Crawley Down residents who oppose the proposition, a letter of objection constitutes their only vote and there is uncertainty that it will be considered.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED

REDACTED

11<sup>th</sup> April 2022

RECEIVED

ELECTORAL SERVICES - 2 MAR 2022

REDACTED E

M S D C

C HO

HAYWARDS HEATH

9

RN 16 155

28 FEBRUARY 2022

Dear Electoral Services,

REF REDACTED

CRAWLEY DOWN BREAKAWAY

YOUR LETTER OF 14 FEBRUARY 2022 ENCOURAGES US TO VOTE CONCERNING THE PROPOSED CRAWLEY DOWN BREAKAWAY COUNCIL. IT APPEARS THAT THIS IS A COSTLY EXERCISE TO APPEASE THOSE WHO WANT TO BREAK AWAY AND PERSUADE ALL ELECTORS THAT THEIR VIEWS WILL BE CONSIDERED.

AS THERE IS NO REFERENDUM, THIS PROCEDURE IS IN EFFECT "REFERENDUM BY ESSAY" RATHER THAN A YES/NO CROSS ON A VOTING FORM. AS THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT BINDING, MSPDC CAN SIMPLY DISREGARD THEM AND MAKE A DECISION BASED ENTIRELY ON ITS OWN WISDOM - WHICH I HOPE IS CONSIDERABLE.

THERE IS A NATIONWIDE SHORTAGE OF WISDOM AT PRESENT TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT ONE VILLAGE COULD NOT FIND

THREE WISE MEN FOR ITS NATIVITY PLAY.

MY VIEW IS TO SUPPORT RETENTION OF THE COMBINED COUNCIL IN ITS PRESENT FORM AS THE FACILITIES IN THE NEW BUILDING AT COPTHORNE ARE EXCELLENT AND THERE IS A CAR PARK. THE FINANCIAL ADVANTAGES OF REMAINING AS ONE COMBINED COUNCIL ARE PARTICULARLY GOOD.

WHEN DECISION DAY ARRIVES AND MSPDC PUBLISHES THE RESULT, I SHALL BE INTERESTED TO LEARN TO WHAT EXTENT OUR VIEWS INFLUENCED IT.

HAD THERE BEEN A REFERENDUM, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A STRAIGHT FORWARD CASE OF NUMBERS. PERHAPS MSDC WOULD THEN HAVE TO TAKE ACTION BASED ON THOSE NUMBERS, WHICH MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN IN AGREEMENT WITH ANY VIEW MSDC HOLDS AT PRESENT. THE "ESSAY RESPONSE" STYLE OF REPLY TO WHAT SEEMS TO BE A FALSE CONSULTATION, ALLOWS MSDC TO AVOID THIS PROBLEM.

THIS IS AN OLD POLITICAL TACTIC WHICH THOSE OF US WHO HAVE BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME HAVE SEEN USED MANY TIMES. THIS, COMBINED WITH THE OBSERVATION OF MANY ELECTIONS AND THE FRUSTRATION EXPERIENCED UNDER MANY GOVERNMENTS HAS HELPED TO CREATE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR POLITICAL MASTERS.

REDACTED  
REDACTED

Mid Sussex District Council,  
Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. RH16 1SS

Ref: REDACTED

22/02/2022

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter regarding a new Parish Council for Crawley Down, my neighbours and I are all in favour of this.

There are many things wrong in Crawley Down and I would like a local council to address them. I will list a few of them:

1) The banning of the development of the housing estate in the field behind Woodland Close as this has caused a great deal of aggravation to the owners of houses that face this field as the developers and estate agents keep on pestering us to sell our houses so they can get an access road into the field. So far we have all refused.

2) What is happening to the Royal Oak? The only pub in the village and it has been closed for years because the owners want to develop the site and carpark into flats. Copthorne has at least four public houses. With our own Parish Council we could reopen the pub and keep the trade in the village.

3) The road to the Health Centre at Bowers Place is a disgrace. It is so narrow that cars are parked both sides, the left side going up is half on the path. If we had our own Parish Council we could remove the footpath and widen the road so that traffic could pass without pulling in to allow passing.

4) Crawley Down has no Police support.

Yours sincerely

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

15 MAR 2022  
RECEIVED

REDACTED

REDACTED  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2022

REDACTED

Dear Terry Stanley,

In reply to your letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 regarding the new parish council for Crawley Down - I am against this move and I am urging ever one I meet to oppose most strongly to feel the same way – we have existed along side Crawley Down quite happily for over 150 years and I see no reason at all to change things – it will cost the District Council unnecessary expense and that should be avoided at all costs.

Yours sincerely,  
REDACTED  
REDACTED

REDACTED

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**Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council**

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REDACTED

Thu 10 Mar, 13:47

To: <communitygovernancereview@midsussex.gov.uk>

We the undersigned residents of Crawley Down, request Mid Sussex Council to undertake a Community Governance Review to consider the creation of a Crawley Down Parish Council based on the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Area and , in the event of a positive outcome to the review complete the establishment of such council by May 2023.

It is important, as areas grow that the appropriate provision of guardianship of the local area is supported as these areas grow in population through developments.

It will allow the area to manage its own affairs in accordance with the community wishes in a focused manner.

We totally support the review and outcome of a new Parish.

REDACTED

REDACTED

REDACTED

RECEIVED

8 APR 2022

5<sup>th</sup> April, 2022

REDACTED

Dear Sir,

I do not agree with the splitting of Worth Parish Council.

I feel at such a time when councils and residents are going to be under severe financial pressure this would be an irresponsible use of our money. I'm sure it would cost more than estimated. If the residents of Crawley Down are in favour of this change then they should bear the cost alone.

When the Parish office was in Crawley Down the residents of Copthorne travelled there. At least there is a car park and bus stop at the Copthorne Parish hub.

If there are objections to coming to Copthorne for meetings would it be possible to alternate them between the two villages? The other benefits for change stated I believe could be dealt with by the existing Worth Parish Council.

Yours faithfully,

*REDACTED*

REDACTED



## Councillor Submissions

## REDACTED

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**From:** eforms  
**Sent:** 12 April 2022 16:45  
**To:** communitygovernancereviews  
**Subject:** Commmmunity Governance review response (Ref: DSCGR-1649778039)  
**Attachments:** Community Governance Review.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

<b>team - team email</b>	communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk
<b>team - team name</b>	the Democratic Services team
<b>Reference number</b>	REDACTED
<b>Your representation</b>	Councillor
<b>Council name</b>	Worth Parish Council
<b>Your name</b>	Chris Mayor
<b>Contact email address</b>	REDACTED
<b>Confirm email</b>	REDACTED
<b>Phone</b>	REDACTED
<b>Postcode</b>	REDACTED
<b>Address</b>	REDACTED
<b>Which review are you responding to?</b>	Worth Parish Council
<b>Would you like to enter your response below, or upload it?</b>	Write
<b>Your submission to the community governance review</b>	<p>Improved community engagement.</p> <p>I can see no evidence that increased community engagement will occur from creating two smaller Parish Councils from the existing Worth Parish Council.</p> <p>Engagement with the public is low in all local councils. I was co-opted as a Councillor for the Crawley Down Ward although being a resident in Copthorne. No other residents put themselves forward for the role.</p> <p>I attended the Worth Parish Council stands at both Crawley Down and Copthorne carnivals, and counted the number of visits from residents on one hand.</p> <p>One of the major proposers took a stand outside of the local shops to obtain signatures to the petition. I am of the opinion, that those who signed were not aware of the facts a split would entail, as these were not fully explained to them. Some were possibly, misled by the idea that a referendum would take place.</p> <p>Enhanced community cohesion.</p> <p>I fail to see how splitting a council can provide an enhancement to cohesion.</p>

A new Crawley Down Parish Council would have no immediate office to administer its affairs, and recruiting staff will be found difficult. Basic economies of scale will be lost, on IT systems and ongoing projects being progressed, CCTV systems and Youth Worker, for both villages.

Better local democracy.

As previously stated, engagement is low, so creating a new Parish Council will probably have to same level of engagement.

More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government.

Without premises and storage facilities, I fail to see how existing services in the Crawley Down Ward can be delivered as conveniently as the current process. Currently we have two groundsmen, one can cover for the other during holiday and sickness periods, whereas a single groundsman would leave a hole in the services, or create more expense if temporary staff is utilised.

It is my belief, as a WPC Councillor, that the proposed split should not be undertaken to avoid unnecessary expense, and stress on the current members of staff.

IN ADDITION.

As a resident of Worth Parish Council, a Parent and a Grandparent, decisions taken now may not have an immediate negative effect on my Grandchildren, but will do so in the future.

Currently my granddaughter must travel to Balcombe for her schooling as Crawley Down is full. Many residents of Crawley Down travel to Copthorne for the Doctors Surgery and Post Office as many entries on Social Media complain about the Crawley Down equivalent.

As a larger Parish, WPC should be able to have more impact to address the real concerns of resident.

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**From:** eforms  
**Sent:** 13 April 2022 20:45  
**To:** communitygovernancereviews  
**Subject:** Commmmunity Governance review response (Ref: DSCGR-1649878556)  
**Attachments:** Community Governance Review.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

<b>team - team email</b>	communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk
<b>team - team name</b>	the Democratic Services team
<b>Reference number</b>	REDACTED
<b>Your representation</b>	Councillor
<b>Council name</b>	Worth Parish Council
<b>Your name</b>	Christopher Phillips
<b>Contact email address</b>	REDACTED
<b>Confirm email</b>	REDACTED
<b>Phone</b>	REDACTED
<b>Postcode</b>	REDACTED
<b>Address</b>	REDACTED
<b>Which review are you responding to?</b>	Worth Parish Council
<b>Would you like to enter your response below, or upload it?</b>	Write
<b>Your submission to the community governance review</b>	<p>Worth Parish Council has already undertaken a review of its operation procedures in an attempt to improve community engagement. Working groups have been set up for each village which residents who are not Parish Councillors are able to become members of. These working groups are able to identify and cost projects which are then brought to the Full Council for consideration. The Parish Council as structured is able to achieve economics of scale which means more of the precept is available to finance projects than would be the case if the Council were split as administration costs would be duplicated meaning that without an increase in precept, the projects currently identified would not be able to be actioned as quickly as the current combined Council would be able to achieve. When the 2 working groups identified their priorities, the same priorities were identified for each village and the provision of CCTV, the employment of a youth worker would be more economically and better introduced by a combined Council.</p> <p>If the Council were split, the reduced administrative staff in each village would in all probability mean that the Parish offices would not be manned when staff took leave or were sick and the lack of groundsmen cover which we have at present would mean basic services like clearing litter would not be carried out when the groundsmen were on holiday. Thus the villages would receive an inferior service if the split were sanctioned.</p>

It is difficult to see how the improved services that the promoters envisage for Crawley Down can be achieved with the reduced precept they would have, even if they were in the remit of a Parish Council which actually is very doubtful. The existing Worth Parish Council are committed to a new Council office in the Parish Hub in Copthorne for a period of 15 years. For the first 10 years of this period they are repaying a loan to the Public Sector Loan Board which would be onerous on a new Copthorne Parish Council if they were to be solely responsible for this.

In summary, the cost and time spent on negotiating the split of the existing Worth Parish Council into 2 would not justify the marginal benefits which may be achieved by splitting the Council. The current economics of scale, the ability to provide services 52 weeks of the year and the already introduced community engagement groups, would indicate that the continuation of the current Worth Parish Council is in the best interests of the residents of both Copthorne and Crawley Down.

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**From:** eforms  
**Sent:** 17 March 2022 11:00  
**To:** communitygovernancereviews  
**Subject:** Commmmunity Governance review response (Ref: DSCGR-1647514226)  
**Attachments:** Community Governance Review.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

<b>team - team email</b>	communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk
<b>team - team name</b>	the Democratic Services team
<b>Reference number</b>	REDACTED
<b>Your representation</b>	Councillor
<b>Council name</b>	Worth Parish Council
<b>Your name</b>	Graham Casella
<b>Contact email address</b>	REDACTED
<b>Confirm email</b>	REDACTED
<b>Phone</b>	REDACTED
<b>Postcode</b>	REDACTED
<b>Address</b>	REDACTED
<b>Which review are you responding to?</b>	Worth Parish Council
<b>Would you like to enter your response below, or upload it?</b>	Write
<b>Your submission to the community governance review</b>	<p>I am against the splitting of the council into two parts as I feel that it will seriously disadvantage the residents of Copthorne by reducing their say in the democratic process by taking the 4th largest ward in MSDC and making 2 small insignificant parts.</p> <p>Over the last few years WPC has had its own governance review and has changed how it operates to give more say to each village and ensure that the community became more engaged. This was just starting to work and will provide much of what the petitioners want without going to much needless expense.</p> <p>However, I do agree that the title of Worth Parish Council is one that the majority in both villages do not relate to, and creates a feeling of loss of identity. The renaming of the council to either Copthorne and Crawley Down or Crawley Down and Copthorne will again give the residents the identity that they want which will improve engagement and will be the most cost effective and convenient way to deliver local services and local government at a minimal cost to all.</p>

I have been a Worth Parish Councillor for Crawley Down Ward since 2013 and a District Councillor since 2019. I am also the current County Councillor for the Imberhorne District which includes the village. I strongly support the creation of a new parish council for Crawley Down and am a joint author of the submission by the local councillors and residents supporting the creation of a new parish council.

This submission is written from my individual perspective and is primarily based on my ability to contrast how Turners Hill Parish Council serves its local community compared to how Worth Parish Council serves Crawley Down, my insights into the wider group of Parish Councils across Mid Sussex as Chair of the Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils prior to becoming a District Councillor, and my understanding of the challenges faced by the village.

My vision for a Crawley Down Village Council is to be a mirror of Turners Hill Parish Council; a group of 8 (or 9) Councillors meeting once a month at an accessible location for all residents, focused and able to make immediate decisions on local issues, and supported by a Parish Clerk who is not over-burdened with administration. I believe that this will provide a better experience for residents, councillors and the Parish Clerk. From my experience as a Councillor, the most effective (and enjoyable) aspects of Worth Parish Council are its village focused groups that work on Neighbourhood Plans or the more recently created Environmental Working Groups.

I am not saying that the Worth Parish Council is failing administratively. With a few gaps, it has a comprehensive suite of up to date policies and procedures and its financial affairs are sound. It is not the quality of its bureaucracy that is the problem, it is the extent. With over 60 minuted meetings per year, too much effort is devoted to administration and too little to delivery. Alongside this, the Council spends more on IT support than on grants to community groups in Crawley Down. A Crawley Down Village Council would conduct its business within one public meeting per month and spend all its precept monies in the village. Decision making, including funding, would be a fundamental part of the monthly Council meeting, avoiding the delays involved in referring to an appropriately empowered executive committee by Worth Parish Council. The Parish Clerk will have more time to devote to taking forward the actions that Council agrees.

Adopting this model will ensure that a Crawley Down Village Council delivers benefits in community engagement and cohesion, local democracy and services.

I believe that there are three aspects to the issue of identity in local representation. The first is geography; Crawley Down is undeniably a separate rural settlement of significant size and it is surprising that it does not already have a separate identity in local government. The second is community; all the majority elements of community life in the village, sports and social, are centred on and linked to the village by name. The Football and Cricket compete as Crawley Down not Worth. The third aspect is the threat to retaining this separate identity in the future. Many of the green spaces that provide the setting for the village have been concreted over already and too many are under threat. The reluctance of the Local Planning Authority to resisting unnecessary Government housing targets presents a threat to both geographical and community aspects of Crawley Down's separate identity. The green gap between Crawley Down and East Grinstead faces significant erosion while the preference of developers to build expensive three and four detached properties, rather than the smaller properties needed to keep emerging or older households or in the village, is changing the local demographic. In short, the challenges faced by Crawley Down are different to those faced by Copthorne and a Crawley Down Village Council will be better placed to understand and address them.

## REDACTED

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**From:** Trevor Hodsdon <REDACTED>  
**Sent:** 08 April 2022 11:07  
**To:** communitygovernancereviews  
**Subject:** Worth Parish My reference REDACTED

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

You don't often get email from trevor@thegtpartnership.co.uk. [Learn why this is important](#)

I have been a resident of Copthorne for the last 36 years and for the last 3 years have served on Worth Parish Council as a councillor, I chair the HR committee. My perspective and that evidenced by the vast majority of my fellow councillors has always been to act in the best interests of both Copthorne and Crawley Down equally. In fact until this petition was raised I was totally unaware of any suggestion that Crawley Down Village might want it's own parish and council and I have several social and leisure interests taking me to and bringing me into discussion with CD residents almost every day of my life. There are many physical and societal overlaps between the two villages, each has a degree of interdependency upon the other and will continue to do so unless disturbed.

During my time in this locale and on the parish council there has been no sustainable concerns regarding the level of democratic representation provided by Worth Parish Council, there is a recognised need to improve community engagement, but that is a far broader shared concern involving our political and government system as a whole and in fact the initiatives in evidence at Worth Parish with Neighbourhood plans made involving resident resource, a 5 year vision of community led initiatives, close engagement and support with local community groups such as Speedwatch, Village Associations and IT and Comms Officer in place, it rather confirms that WPC is already an exemplar in this area compared to peers. The absence of voice at MSDC level is a claim that has no merit, if it did then Councillor Gibson has failed and he is the lead proposer!

Much has been made of the need to support CD's own identity and that this will be done by locating a new council office in Crawley Down. The case conveniently ignores the fact that until circa 7 years ago, the office was in Crawley Down apparently operating without any identity concerns raised by Copthorne residents and no evidence that the move to Copthorne, 4 minutes from the old site by transport has impacted CD's identity either. The development of alternative contact platforms, consistent with UK Gov's own digitisation strategy means that convenient and effective local government must be delivered in our current and future era using means other than just a physical presence and here WPC recognise that need. Even the Public meetings held regarding the proposed division supported this with less than 1% of the Ward's electorate attending, despite 2 of the 3 meetings being held in CD and the last one hosted by the proposers alone. I counted 18 residents only and those possessed similar older and common socio demographic features. A local government model must reflect the needs of all and not exclude those that do not identify with an approach which might well be popular with a small noisy action group but are not inclusive. Apathy should not be assumed to be evidence of not caring, the voice of the silent majority must be given consideration and regarding the split the over whelming silent majority see little reason to disturb the status quo it seems. There has been scant acknowledgement by the proposers that CD, like Copthorne already has a strong community identity totally unrelated to the name of it's local council representation but driven more by it's peoples shared values, history of placement and memories associated with their chosen place of settlement. Our community experiences during Covid and lockdown confirms this beyond doubt. It is true that the name of Worth Parish Council is an outdated legacy but that can be easily fixed. I personally have no idea why this has not been promoted more strongly before or indeed why the WPC in the past voted against a name change. The minutes confirm the only vote in favour was from 1 Copthorne Councillor, those against included "now" proposers. This in itself suggests a somewhat confused motive concerning both the timing and nature of the proposal to divide the parish.

My role on WPC has brought me into more of the proposers' campaign approach than the general public and I am sad to say it has not been fair and balanced. This is not the right place to detail my concerns, that is more appropriately via Tom Clark and our Clerk, however there have been times where myself and fellow councillors who



dared to challenge the lead proposer have been subjected to accusations and coercive manipulative behaviours which undermine the very nature of our structure and model conduct code and seem more focussed upon getting a result that supports politically motivated objectives than providing the ward with an opportunity to hear and understand perspectives and considerations to allow informed conclusions. The whole approach has likely damaged community cohesion than improve it.

This matter is in plain evidence relating to the economic impacts of a division. The main proposer has emailed me and the Chair and Deputy Chair from his personal mail address instructing me to be silent on the costs, which I and others have been keen to explain to our residents will include costs incurred at Principal, and both resultant Parish Council levels. Attempts to agree a common statement or sensibly discuss these disparity of perspectives has been refused unless we concede to the position the main proposer prefers to adopt which denies the electorate a full transparent understanding of where their Council Tax will be spent. The same is true on staffing. The legal process of TUPE has been constantly presented as one which supports the pre determined and convenient division of resources post division. Also said and supported in public meetings using the alleged status of the main proposer's wife as a barrister, to undermine the advice the Council has been given and shared in confidence with the proposers.

I am of the view that many of our residents have been at best mis-directed and at worst mis-lead by a highly selective campaign designed to control the narrative. This is not how the CGR legislation was intended to be used. I fear it is being abused for substantially personal reasons.

My professional background is in banking, I was an Executive with Lloyds Banking Group and became a Director and Consultant with particular experience in transformational change and delivery. I spent the last years of my working life testing the assurance of operational and business proposals and plans in force or under consideration for large companies and household names.

In my opinion this proposal should be regarded as what is known as a "Vanity Project". An objective evaluation of the reasoning and benefits in play do not support the impacts, costs and risks that have to be considered or adopted to deliver the intended outcome.

I have not determined this lightly, I approached the proposal with the same rigour I would use if being paid: below is my conclusion:

## **Background and Methodology**

In reaching my conclusion I have thoroughly researched the case studies and benchmarking evidence signposted at various times by the promoters since September 2021 and also read widely, researching all the latest and available relevant material I could source. Key documents informing my understanding, but not exclusively, include a publication from the House of Commons Library titled Parish and Town Councils dated 15/9/2021, Guidance on community governance reviews, published by the Boundary Commission for England under Crown copyright in March 2010. The latest guidance on the ACAS working for everyone resource concerning TUPE, as well as Gov.uk information concerning staff redundancy entitlements. I have also attended several virtual meetings with our HR advisers Worknest and our Legal advisers Surrey Hills resulting in written confirmations. Similarly Terry Stanley of MSDC has too provided helpful information and guidance to WPC. Additionally I have attended both public meetings held and all CGR working group meetings to ensure I have had an opportunity to understand the various interpretations of all the data currently available, hard and soft. I have followed social media postings, with some frustration at times and read all the literature put out officially and unofficially by stakeholders. I have also examined a large sample of minutes available on the websites of Hexstable and Turners Hill Parish Council and Bingley and the most recent examples of recent years to test the claims made by the promoters particularly regarding efficiency, convenience, identity and economic benefits to test likelihood of realisation. I have also searched our own minutes to test the reliability of several statements made regarding certain historic decisions of this council to test whether time and current subjectivity has affected the manner in which these have been presented during the campaign, including examining the lease and grant terms and conditions relating to the Hub offices and South room.

I have taken all of this evidence and more, mapping it as objectively as I could against the “criteria” which guides a principal authority when they set about determining to make or not, a CGR such as is in process here.

This methodology resulted in distinguishing those claimed benefits which passed a reasonable evidential hurdle standard, albeit somewhat qualitative in nature and those which either failed the hurdle or in fact should not have been included in the benefit case at all.

**Conclusion:**

The majority of benefits claimed **lack clear and identifiable evidence proving** that a division of the existing Worth Parish Council **at this time** would justify the risks and costs involved to create a new Parish and Council of Crawley Down: specifically

- Delivering a more effective, democratic and economical service provision.
- Community cohesion is more likely to be damaged than enhanced.
- Election versus co-option is not presented in a balanced fashion as independently assessed benefits and actualities of co-option have been ignored in the promoters’ case.
- The issue of identity has been over simplified and important considerations have been ignored in the promoters’ case.
- The financial modelling presented as illustrative and modest is unsafe and incomplete.
- The promoters’ case fails to evidence a balanced evaluation on a “functional” basis, virtually ignoring the scale benefits being lost to the administrative functions of WPC versus the claimed but unproven community engagement benefits of the proposal.
- The proposal results in an unequal and perhaps unfair cost consequence on Copthorne village, who have never expressed any desire to disturb their current representation by WPC on behalf of their community.
- The proposal has not claimed that WPC does not already provide strong, accountable local government and leadership. The absence of which is relevant.

- WPC has proven itself capable of fulfilling the role of “place shaping” working well in partnership and supportively with existing and emerging stakeholders.
- Size is not a clear and single determinant in the case submitted.
- It is reasonable for a Parish (or other council tiers) to represent and well, several neighbourhoods within a parish.
- The Royal Oaks’ inclusion is inappropriate and should be discounted. I support a concern raised, but not only, by a long standing CD resident that it’s inclusion in the proposal is there to support a previous political manifesto commitment and to capture the support of a specific cause group within CD.

I shall not be supporting the division of Worth Parish and the creation of a new Crawley Down Village Council **at this time**. The continuing clear and obvious **evidenced** lack of community engagement and comment from the overwhelming majority of the residents of both villages resonates with me as much as the relatively few (a noisy minority) who are active promoters and supporters of a division. The majority seem content by their silence to leave things as they are.

#### **Recomendations:**

I am mindful and sympathetic to the valid motivations behind the promotion and consider there is evidence and merit in the concern about the inappropriate and historical naming convention which applies to this parish. Thus in a consultation response, I would formally request a name change which reflects the **actual** names of our villages.

I also recommend that WPC should immediately instigate regular Officer/Councillor surgeries in the daytime in Crawley Down to test the validity regarding the claims of opportunity improvement relating to convenience and local engagement. Likewise meetings of the Full Council, Planning and GP and F committees should alternate between the two villages to test the concerns raised and to support the functional distinctions which should have been better recognised and distinguished, regarding administration and community engagement, in the case made by the promoters.

Finally this Council should, if the division is not made by MSDC in September 2022 or ceased before commit to raise a CGR in 2025/2026 if a **sustained** campaign continues for a division by CD community representation or a **new** request emerges from Copthorne. By the end of 2026 the build out at Copthorne West will likely be done, based on current plans, leading to a more balanced precept income spread across the parish aligning to a locale then maybe closer to 12,000 (2x 6,000) electors. The rent free period on the Hub offices arising from the rental agreement will also be operating helping to provide a degree of impact protection to Copthorne residents as well as allowing CD residents to benefit from such an advantageous agreement.

I am also mindful that current pressures upon rising living costs in the UK may have subsided or at least become mitigated by 2026. We cannot simply excuse ourselves from these broader macro considerations, particularly as they will impact more upon the poorer residents in our communities and we have a legal obligation not to discriminate when making our determinations.

Trevor Hodsdon.

## Parish Council Submission



# WORTH PARISH COUNCIL



**Clerk: Mrs Jennifer Nagy**

5th April 2022

Community Governance Review,  
Electoral Services,  
Mid Sussex District Council,  
Oaklands, Oaklands Rd,  
Haywards Heath,  
West Sussex, RH16 1SS

VIA EMAIL

Dear Sirs,

## **Worth Parish Council Community Government Review Response**

It was agreed at a Council meeting held on 4th April 2022, that the following response would be submitted in relation to the Worth Parish Community Government Review.

Worth Parish Council was disappointed that four of its number commenced campaigning for a separate Crawley Down Council without any prior notification to the Council as a body. Prior to Summer 2021, there had been no indication from any quarter that the Worth Parish Council was not providing strong accountable local government and leadership. Nor had there been a sustained campaign by any community group.

We will express our response under the following headings

- Better local democracy
- Improved community engagement
- More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government
- The identity and interests of the community
- Enhanced community cohesion
- Economic considerations
- Conclusion

### Better local democracy

The council comprises of only two wards of roughly equal electoral size, with overlapping communities and services. There has never been an issue with co-opting Councillors onto either ward.

At the time of the latest Boundary Commission review, it was noted that by 2027, the electorate of both villages would be the same – c4,800. The Council discussed seeking a Community Governance Review itself, to examine reducing the number of Councillors from 17 (currently 9 for Crawley Down ward, 8 for Coptthorne ward) to 16, 8 for each ward. However, it decided to wait until after the Boundary Commission review to consider in more detail.

.../...

This review did make a change impacting Crawley Down's representation on the Principal Council, removing Turners Hill but leaving two Councillor seats, thus able to focus absolutely with a single voice on Crawley Down issues regarding planning and sports and leisure services.

Local democracy is already well-served by the existing arrangements.

#### Improved community engagement

During the course of 2019, due to the perceived restrictive nature of conducting business at Council meetings due to Standing Orders and other legal requirements, two Working Parties were formed, one for each village.

Membership of both Working Parties involves Councillors and members of the public and their remits have evolved to incorporate consideration of any project that will enhance the local area. Recent examples already include consultation on whether to introduce a one-way system in Copthorne and how to improve the appearance and accessibility of the area in front of the shops in Crawley Down.

This initiative has been very successful. Community engagement is now strong through these Working Parties, which have attracted members of the public to join these groups, concentrating on immediate community issues, and promoting ideas without taking on the responsibilities of being a Parish Councillor.

This initiative is successfully engaging the Council with both communities.

#### More effective and convenient delivery of local services and local government

Banking on this success, in early 2021 a Governance Review Working Party was formed, made up of Chairs and Vice Chairs of Council and Committees to examine the whole Council structure to ascertain if it was fit for the purpose and the most efficient way to conduct Council processes and business. It used evidence from a Staffing Review conducted during 2020 in order to ensure that staffing levels would be able to support any changes introduced. Its aim was to reduce time spent in the Council meeting room whilst improving the level of service to local residents and the scope of improvements to local infrastructure. An example of the success of this Working Party is that the Council Planning & Highways Committee meetings have reduced from around an hour to an average of fifteen minutes.

Experience shows that a larger council can harness greater depth and range of skills from both councillors and staff and can afford projects which would be far beyond the reach of an authority with a smaller tax base; one example being the call in to the Secretary of State to overturn decisions relating to development on two major sites in Crawley Down, the cost of which approached £100,000.

Much has been made in literature supporting the division of the parish, of the location of the Council offices being in Copthorne, with Crawley Down residents having to drive a seven-minute journey to visit. The current premises, on the first floor of the Parish Hub in Borers Arms Rd, are occupied as a result of a very advantageous lease agreement, which allows for a 15-year rent free period. This office provision provides a convenient location and is excellent value and responsible use of public money. It is worth noting that there is currently no office space available to rent in Crawley Down on reputable agency websites. With the government being urged to change legislation to allow for virtual/hybrid meetings, the venue of Council meetings will become much less of an issue as residents will have the option to attend meetings from their own homes enhancing the wide use already made by residents of electronic communication.

Worth Parish residents already benefit from a representative body which optimises significant economies of scale while still maintaining close engagement with its communities.

### The identity and interests of the community

Underpinning all the above, the Council has developed a Vision document – a business plan covering a rolling five-year period – which identifies both long- and short-term projects. During workshops held in both villages, it was established that the top three priorities were the same for each – installation of a CCTV system, joint funding for a youth support officer and resolution of traffic/speeding issues.

Both villages already have strong identities largely independent of any legislative representation. Each enjoy residents' associations, which complement the activities of the Parish Council, and are represented on the Working Parties mentioned above.

The deterioration of the abandoned Royal Oak has been a matter for concern since it closed. The Parish Council has had the pub registered – and re-registered – as an Asset of Community Value. It has corresponded directly with the owner requesting meetings to no avail. It managed to gain outright ownership of the car park immediately adjacent to the pub to secure this facility for ongoing community use, and to prevent commercial exploitation of the site. It has strenuously objected to proposals to convert the pub into residential dwellings. MSDC advised that it would not consider a compulsory purchase order. It is difficult to see what more could have been done by Worth Parish Council or indeed any other public body.

We conclude that there is no evidence that dividing the Parish will provide any benefits in this category, indeed the opposite is more likely.

### Enhanced Community Cohesion

Worth Parish Council is both reactive – quick to respond to changing circumstance – and proactive. It recognised a need to better engage with all of the community and created a new post of Communication and IT Administrator to promote the Council and its activities within the Parish, giving residents the opportunity to interact more with the Council, thus enhancing community engagement.

Low attendance by residents at meetings evidenced that the Council needed to employ more hybrid means of communication via modern technologies and platforms.

Because the two villages are close together there is significant cross over between their residents to access facilities such as doctors, schools, transport and leisure facilities. Creating an artificial barrier, should a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down be formed, presents a risk to the existing social cohesion that currently exists between the two villages.

### Economic considerations

Worth Parish Council's reconfiguration of the proposers' budget of £160,000 using figures based on factual evidence, gives a total precept value of nearly £186,000, a discrepancy of £26,000. It should be noted that the proposers' budget will only allow the basic functions of a Parish Council to be carried out, playground and open space maintenance, and litter bin emptying, with no provision for staffing cover for absences. There is very little (£15,000 only) for any project work, or contingencies, and no allocation for two of the three aspirations identified in the Vision document – provision of CCTV and provision of a youth support worker. It is difficult to see how any of the aspirations of the new Council – investing in sporting facilities, resolving the Royal Oak, resolving speeding and other local issues – can be successfully addressed with such meagre funding.

Worth Parish Council has compiled estimated budgets for separate Crawley Down and Copthorne Councils, and both entail an increase in Band D tax; an increase of 10.5% for Crawley Down, and nearly 36% for Copthorne, an average of over 20% across the two villages.



Worth Parish Council has considered all elements of dividing the existing Council into two, benefits presented by the Promoters are almost all illusory and these do not justify the increase in cost, not only for the division itself, but also for ongoing funding.

This proposed division comes at a time when many residents are experiencing economic difficulties and Parish Councils are being urged to cluster together to create a greater voice in local government.

As the fourth largest Council in terms of electorate in Mid Sussex, behind the three towns, Worth Parish Council already has a recognised presence in the district, an influence which can only diminish with two smaller entities.

The benefits being claimed cannot be justified economically.

### Conclusion

Worth Parish Council provides strong accountable government and leadership and is a proven capable place shaper.

Crawley Down's "Voice" will not benefit from a division as suggested.

The Council has undergone a structural and cultural change over the past few years, such as the creation of village Working Parties, clearer accountability for delivery and a modernisation programme harnessing the benefits of technology. There has been insufficient time for these changes to fully manifest themselves due to Covid and as the majority of resources and efforts being diverted to deal with this opportunistic Community Governance Review.

The differing aspirations of the two villages are already fully considered and are progressing via its village Working Parties. It has been proved that the core aspirations of the two villages are the same, and these are being facilitated via the Vision document and the upskilling of Council resources. The current Council office and meeting space are provided at minimum cost to the public purse.

Worth Parish Council urges MSDC to resolve to keep the current local government status quo and to vote against the division.

Yours faithfully,



**Jennifer Nagy**  
**Clerk to the Council**

## Local Organisation Submission

local organisation

# ROWFANT SOCIETY

BRANDON HOUSE WALLAGE LANE ROWFANT WEST SUSSEX RH10 4NL  
01342 714677 e-mail: [ministryofpeace@btinternet.com](mailto:ministryofpeace@btinternet.com) 07483 219729

9th April 2022

RECEIVED

12 APR 2022

Terry Stanley Esq  
Business Unit Leader for Democratic Services  
MID-SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Oaklands Road  
Haywards Heath  
WEST SUSSEX  
RH16 1SS

Dear Mr Stanley

## CRAWLEY DOWN VILLAGE COUNCIL

Thanks for your letter announcing a Community Governance Review relating to Worth Parish Council.

Although Worth Parish Council was historically responsible for this area, Worth Church, for example, is now on the other side of the M23, making it more aligned with Crawley and distancing it from our more rural concerns. Even its Council offices at Coptorne are outside the centre of gravity of population and activities of this area which is broadly in Crawley Down.

Creating a Parish Council for Crawley Down would thus make meetings and administration more accessible to residents and improve community engagement and local democracy. It should also focus Councillors more on local needs such as those set out in the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan.

The residents of Rowfant (about 100 west of Crawley Down to the M23) largely chose to live here because of its rural qualities. Most of us also feel the need to protect the countryside, woodland, farmland and amenities like the Worth Way and the farm shops.

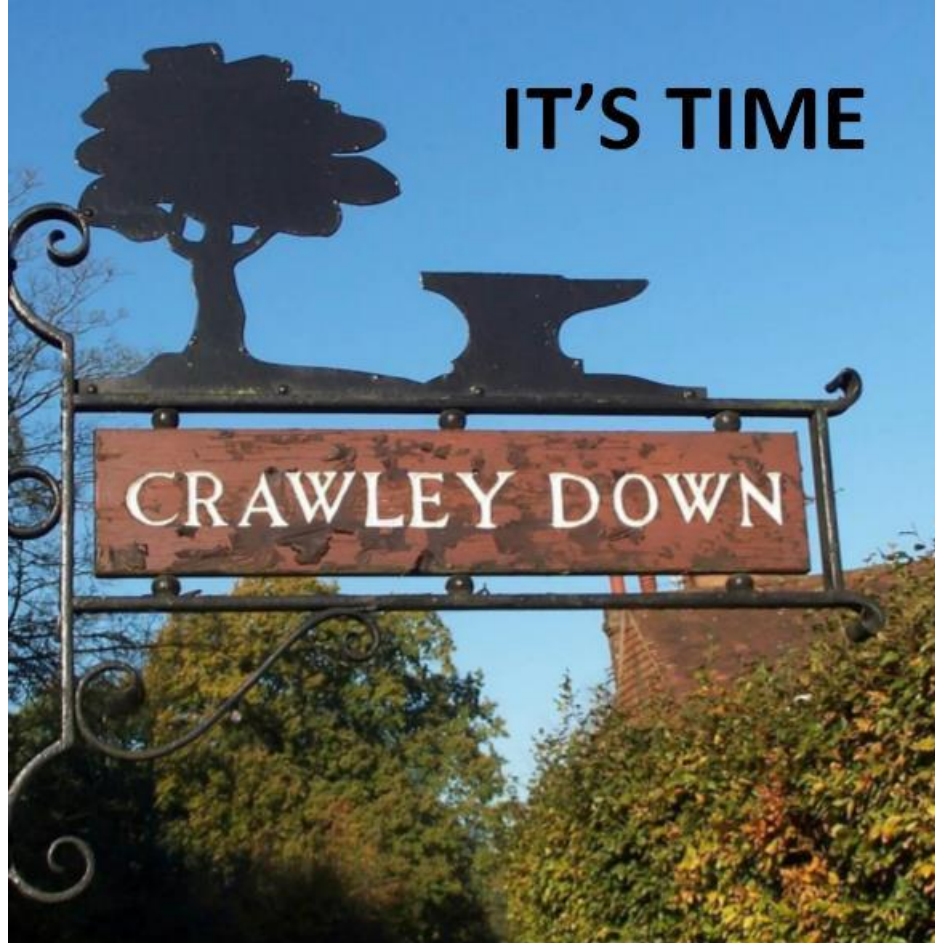
The case for establishing Crawley Down as the Parish Council for our area will help the community to resist increasing pressures of unsustainable development on greenfield sites which threaten to destroy rural amenities and independence.

Yours Sincerely



Dr James B Thring, Chair

## Petitioners Submission



## **The Case for a Crawley Down Village Council**

The Local Councillors and Residents Supporting the Creation of a Crawley Down Village Council

Elaine Anscorb  
Alex Cruickshank  
Ian Gibson  
Sally Gibson  
John Hitchcock  
John Plank

14<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## Summary

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down believe that it will provide more inclusive democracy, better serve the local community and provide the village with a clearer identity in the local government hierarchy than the current arrangements. This document is their submission to Mid Sussex in response to their Community Governance Review (CGR) consultation.

A Crawley Down Village Council will be unambiguously identified as being associated with the village by its residents and the wider general population. It will be better placed to engage with local community groups and provide leadership and cohesion in community life, in a way that Worth Parish Council is unable to do.

The creation of a separate Parish Council will give the village a clearer identity and equal status with other members of its peer group, the other large villages in the District, who all have Parish Councils to manage their local services and represent their interests.

The creation of a separate Parish Council will complement the recent Ward Boundary changes that will make Crawley Down a separate District Council Ward in the May 2023 local government elections. Together these changes will establish a clear hierarchy for Crawley Down in local government. Residents can be confident that their elected representatives understand local issues. The new Parish Council will support their District Councillors and, in turn, those Councillors can be confident that a Crawley Down Village Council represents the views of the village.

The creation of a separate Parish Council that maintains an office in the village and holds all of its meetings at accessible venues in the village would ensure that all of its residents can participate in or observe the business of the Council. A secondary, but important effect is that the money spent on hiring facilities in existing community buildings such as the Haven Centre, the village hall, or the Glebe Centre will contribute financially to the upkeep of those facilities.

The creation of a separate Parish Council will provide an opportunity to greater community engagement by generating enthusiasm for taking the role of Councillor in a Council that is directly identified with the village and holds its meetings in local venues accessible to all residents.

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Parish Council recommend that the new Council should have no more than 9 Councillors. This number is considered to be sufficient for effective engagement with 6,000 residents and robust scrutiny of an annual programme with a value of some £160,000, while enabling efficient greater agility and pace in service delivery and in responding to problems than the current arrangements achieve.

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Parish Council have prepared an indicative annual budget which indicates that the new Council can deliver the

benefits they identify to residents within a precept of £160,000, equivalent to the current Parish Council tax paid to Worth Parish Council by the village.

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council understand that some of the current Worth Parish Council staff may transfer to the new Council under the TUPE<sup>1</sup> regulations, and that the employment terms and conditions of such staff will be protected. The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Council will work with Mid Sussex and Worth Parish Councils to agree such staff matters.

A Crawley Down Village Council will seek to invest in existing community facilities, including the use of Public Works Loan Board (PWL) loans, and will be pro-active in working with developers and Mid Sussex to ensure that Developers Contributions and Government grants, such as the New Homes Bonus, are used for their intended purpose; namely to mitigate the adverse impacts of development on the local community. All the monies raised through the Parish precept will be spent in the village, to the benefit of the community facilities and local traders.

The case in favour of the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down is undeniable. Mid Sussex can embrace the proposal with confidence that the team of local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Council have the knowledge, skills, connections and energy to ensure that it is a success.

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<sup>1</sup> Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations

## Introduction

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down believe that it will provide more inclusive democracy, better serve the local community than the current arrangements, and provide the village with a clearer identity in the local government hierarchy.

This document is their submission to Mid Sussex in response to the Community Governance Review (CGR) consultation and sets out the benefits of a separate Crawley Down Village Council to its residents in the key areas of identity, community, democracy and services.

## Identity : Geography and Community

Worth Parish Council is one of 21 Parish Councils in Mid Sussex. It has undergone significant changes over the 125 years of its existence, to the extent that the community which gives it its name is no longer part of it. The following extract is taken from the History of Worth Parish on the Worth Parish Council website<sup>2</sup>:

*“For centuries Worth was one of the largest rural parishes in Sussex. Since the end of the Second World War, however, the growth of Crawley and, latterly, the formation of a separate Parish of Turners Hill, have eaten into that area so that the present Parish occupies little more than a third of the original.....*

*..... Since the early 1980s, even the village of Worth itself ceased to be part of the Parish which bears its name.”*

The present day Worth Parish comprises the villages of Crawley Down and Copthorne and has an overall population of approximately 10,000. The villages are geographically separate settlements of roughly equal size, and are about 3 miles apart with poor sustainable travel links. Community life is centred on each village with few joint activities. Each village has its own range of societies, sports clubs and social activities with a significant degree of duplication, including separate residents associations. Residents think of themselves as living in Crawley Down or Copthorne, not Worth.

The separate identities of Crawley Down and Copthorne are best illustrated by the words of the Parish Clerk in the request to Mid Sussex District Council to prepare separate neighbourhood plans for each village:

*“The reason for requesting designation of each ward in the Parish as a distinct neighbourhood area is that there is a significant village settlement within each ward (Crawley Down in the Crawley Down Ward and Copthorne in the Copthorne and Worth Ward) which has its own unique and particular character, issues and ambitions. .... Each ward is already long-established and clearly identified and therefore most appropriate to be designating each ward as a neighbourhood area.”*

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.worth-pc.gov.uk/History\\_of\\_the\\_Parish\\_21538.aspx](http://www.worth-pc.gov.uk/History_of_the_Parish_21538.aspx) retrieved 8th April 2022



A separate Crawley Down Village Council will be unambiguously identified as being associated with the village by its residents and the wider general population. It will be better placed to engage with local community groups and provide leadership and cohesion in community life, in a way that Worth Parish Council is unable to do.

### **Identity : Equal status within its peer group**

The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 places the District’s 24 settlements into a hierarchy of five Categories according to the key services they provide and the employment opportunities that they support. Crawley Down and Copthorne are both classed as Category 2 rural settlements along with Cuckfield, Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Lindfield, all of whom have a Parish Council.

Worth Parish Council is by far the largest Parish Council in Mid Sussex in terms of population, and the third largest in West Sussex, but size does not give it a greater voice in the wider Council community forums such as WSALC<sup>3</sup> and MSALC<sup>4</sup>, or in campaigning groups such as CAGNE<sup>5</sup> and GACC<sup>6</sup>, or in Mid Sussex and PCC<sup>7</sup> briefings. Crawley Down and Copthorne are disadvantaged in being represented by a single Parish Council with a single voice compared to the other Category 2 villages in their peer group, or smaller villages such as Turners Hill, who each have an individual voice.

The creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down will give the village a clearer identity and equal status with other members of its peer group, the other large villages in the District, who all have Parish Councils to manage their local services and represent their interests.

### **Identity : A better fit within the Local Government hierarchy**

Parish Councils are the lowest tier of local government, sitting below District and County Councils. Crawley Down is virtually invisible within the current structure, being twinned with Copthorne in the Parish Council, with Turners Hill in the District Council, and with the western side of East Grinstead in the County Council.

The creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down will complement the recent review of electoral Ward arrangements in Mid Sussex by the LGBCE<sup>8</sup> which has made Crawley Down a separate Mid Sussex Ward, and together they will establish a clear hierarchy for Crawley Down in local government. Residents can be confident that their elected representatives understand local issues. The new Parish Council will support their District Councillors and, in turn, those Councillors can be confident that the Parish Council represents the views of the village.

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<sup>3</sup> West Sussex Association of Local Councils

<sup>4</sup> Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils

<sup>5</sup> Campaign Against Gatwick Noise and Emissions

<sup>6</sup> Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign

<sup>7</sup> Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner

<sup>8</sup> Local Government Boundary Commission for England

## **Better Local Democracy : Accessibility for all residents**

Worth Parish Council holds all its Council meetings at its offices in Copthorne which are virtually inaccessible to Crawley Down residents who lack their own transport.

Until 2016, Worth Parish Council had its office in Crawley Down and held its Council and Committee meetings alternately in Crawley Down and Copthorne. This format generated community engagement at meetings in both villages. As part of the Council's move in 2016 to new offices at the Church owned Parish Hub in Copthorne, the Council promised to hold a regular weekly 'drop-in' office presence in Crawley Down but this commitment was dropped the same year. The Council also ceased holding meetings in each village immediately on its move to Copthorne in 2016 and since then has held only one Council meeting in Crawley Down. In effect, Worth Parish Council turned its back on formal community engagement in Crawley Down in 2016.

Crawley Down Ward Councillors have regularly requested that the Council return to holding meetings in both villages, but this has always been refused on the advice of the Parish Clerk that the Council must use the meeting room (the South Room) that it leases from the Church at a cost of £7,500 per year. Suggestions from Crawley Down Councillors that the Council give up its lease on the South Room and hire meetings rooms as and when necessary to remove this perverse and undemocratic restriction, have always been refused.

The creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down that maintains an office in the village and holds all of its meetings at accessible venues in the village would ensure that all of its residents can participate in or observe the business of the Council. This will be a clear improvement in local democracy. A secondary, but important effect is that the money spent on hiring facilities in existing community buildings such as the Haven Centre, the village hall, or the Glebe Centre will contribute financially to the upkeep of those facilities.

## **Better Local Democracy: Elected Councillors and Quality Councils**

Properly elected representatives are an essential part of democracy at all levels of Government. One of the key criteria for a Parish Council to be a Quality Council is that two-thirds of the Councillors are 'elected'. Worth Parish Council proudly displays the Quality Council logo on its publications, but only one of the current Worth Parish Council Councillors was formally elected to the Council on the basis of votes cast in an election (Cllr Gibson in 2013). Like many Parish Councils, Worth Parish Council prefers to avoid the cost of by-elections, preferring to co-opt to fill casual vacancies and relies on Councillors being deemed to have been 'elected' in the local government election cycle for its Quality Council status. There have been no elections in Copthorne for over 12 years and the status of Copthorne Ward Councillors as democratically elected representatives of their community must be questioned.

Although lack of interest in membership of Parish Councils is a nationally recognised problem, in recent years there has been a significant reduction in the willingness of Crawley Down residents to stand for election to Worth Parish Council, and poor attendance of meetings by many of those who do. This can be attributed to the commitment necessary to attend

fortnightly meetings in Copthorne, the effective exclusion from the role of Councillor of those without private transport, and the low perception of the value of being a Worth Parish Council Councillor due to its lack of presence in Crawley Down. This has created a situation in which Copthorne residents are co-opted as Crawley Down Ward Councillors, altering the 'political' balance within the Council.

The creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down will provide an opportunity to greater community engagement by generating enthusiasm for taking the role of Councillor in a Council that is directly identified with the village and holds its meetings in local venues accessible to all residents.

### **More Effective and Convenient Delivery of Local Service: A streamlined administration**

The operational structure of Worth Parish Council is comprised of two parallel streams of sub-committees and working groups for each village reporting into an executive structure that controls finance and provides the personnel function (see Figure 1). The resulting complex decision making structure, with over 60 meetings per year, carries a significant administrative overhead that is more appropriate for a town council than a parish. In fact, with 17 Councillors for 10,000 residents, Worth has only 2 fewer Councillors than East Grinstead Town Council has for 25,000 residents. This large number of Councillors, coupled with the complexity of its decision making structure means that Worth is slow to get things done. Smaller Parish Councils, such as Turners Hill, display greater agility and pace in service delivery and in responding to problems.

This complex structure of committees and meetings also means that Worth Parish Councillors must tailor their involvement to the time that they have available to devote to Council business and many Councillors limit their involvement to just the Council meetings.

A separate Crawley Down Village Council would retain the village related activities in the shaded boxes in Figure 1 and would follow the Turners Hill Parish Council model of holding one Council meeting a month on a fixed day of each month (i.e. on the first Monday of the month) covering all business including planning applications and finance. This will result in a reduction of over 30 meetings per year compared to Worth Parish Council with significant savings in the proportion of staff and Councillor time devoted to administration without any reduction in the degree and quality of scrutiny. It also ensures that residents have a fixed point in time and place where they can raise issues of importance to the community and all Councillors are involved in all the discussions and decisions of the Council. This will significantly improve local democracy as well as the effective delivery of services.

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council recommend that the Council should have no more than 9 Councillors. This number is considered to be sufficient for effective engagement with 6,000 residents and robust scrutiny of an annual programme with a value of some £160,000, while enabling efficient greater agility and pace in service delivery and in responding to problems than the current arrangements achieve.

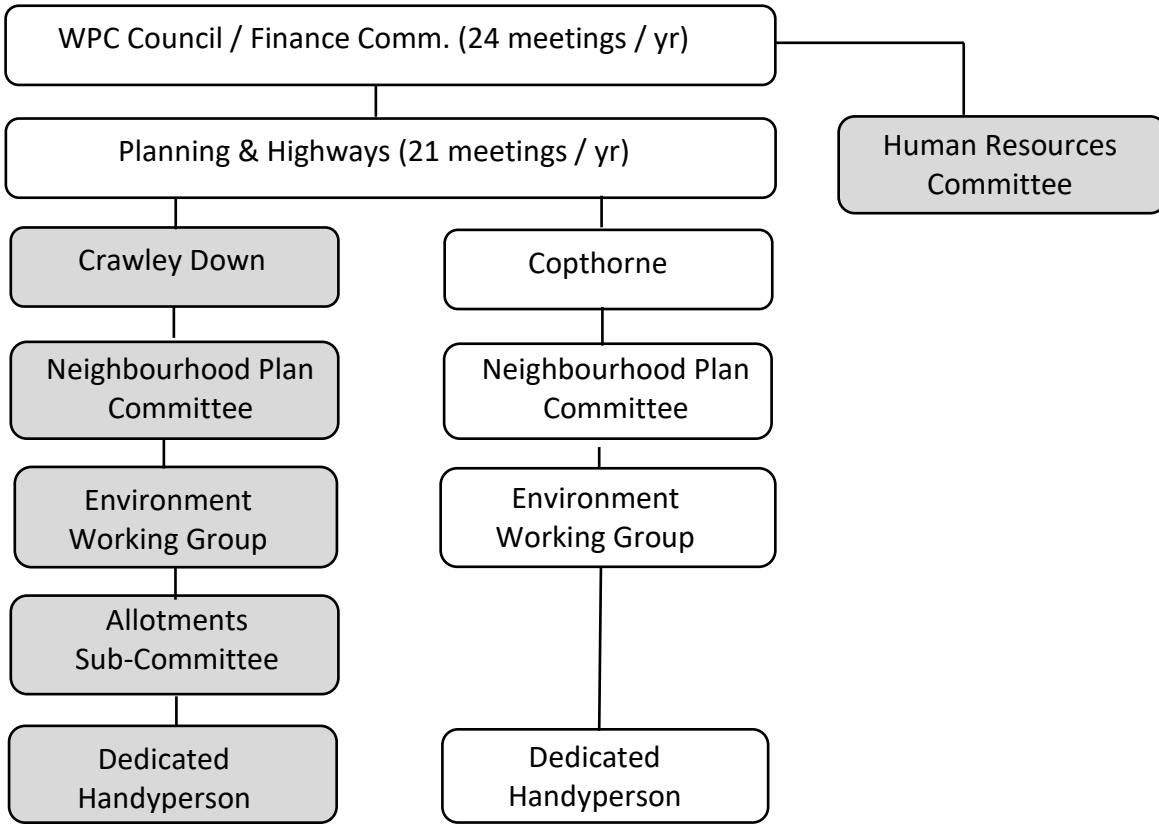


Figure 1. Schematic representation of the operational structure of Worth Parish Council

**More Effective and Convenient Delivery of Local Service: Indicative Annual Budget**

Drawing on many years collective experience of Parish Council annual budgets and precept setting, the local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council have prepared an indicative annual budget at FY21/22 costs (Appendix A) which indicates that the Council can deliver the benefits stated above to residents within a precept of £160,000<sup>9</sup>. This is equivalent to the current Parish Council tax paid to Worth Parish Council by the village. The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council would welcome the opportunity to support Mid Sussex in preparing a budget for FY23/24, should the creation of a new Parish Council be confirmed.

In preparing the indicative annual budget, The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a Crawley Down Village Council have used a standard staffing model for a Parish Council with a CiLCA<sup>10</sup> qualified Clerk, a separate Responsible Finance Officer (RFO), an Assistant and a Handyperson. The NALC<sup>11</sup> calculator indicates that a separate Crawley Down Village Council will require a Level 2 qualified Parish Clerk at salary point 23 on the national

<sup>9</sup> Subject to revision to take account of increased energy and staff salary and NI costs and general inflation.

<sup>10</sup> Certificate in Local Council Administration

<sup>11</sup> National Association of Local Councils

scale. An estimate of 25 hours per week has been used to give an annual salary figure, but it is recognised that this may need to be reviewed. The RFO will be part-time at 15 hrs per week. The Assistant will also be part-time and their role will be related to specific projects. The Handyman will be full-time. In total the indicative annual budget included £74,500 in staff costs. The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council also recognise that it may not be possible to recruit an appropriately qualified clerk at the salary level indicated by the NALC calculation and have sought advice from WSALC on this and on other matters, but WSALC have refused to provide any assistance.

Worth Parish Council has published criticism on the indicative annual budget on the Council website and on a number of Facebook pages. The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council consider that these criticisms reflect a lack of understanding of how the precept tax base is calculated and the impact of inflation and increased staff and energy costs on the financial year to which the indicative revenue budget applies (FY21/22). The full response to the Parish Council's criticisms is at Appendix B.

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council understand that some of the current Worth Parish Council staff may transfer to the new Council under the TUPE<sup>12</sup> regulations, and that the employment terms and conditions of such staff will be protected. The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Council will work with Mid Sussex and Worth Parish Councils to agree such staff matters.

### **More Effective and Convenient Delivery of Local Services : A 'can-do' Council, tackling the key issues**

The local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Crawley Down Village Council have identified five projects which are representative of the enhancements that the new Village Council will pursue:

#### **Rat Runs and Speeding Traffic**

The need to manage traffic speeds on a number of roads in the village was one of five Proposals set out in the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan which was made in 2016.

Speeding traffic on the Turners Hill Road has long been a problem and minor accidents at the Sandy Lane junction and Worth Way bridge are regular events. The new signalised pedestrian crossings at Sandy Lane and the entrance to Huntsland are expected to have a calming effect on through traffic. The need for a crossing was a key part of the 2016 case prepared by Crawley Down Ward Councillors against further development on the green fields West of the Turners Hill Road. The two signalised crossings were mandated by the Secretary of State when he approved the development. The estimated £100,000 cost of the two crossings can in some respects be seen as a return on the estimated £80,000 spent by the Councillors in fighting the

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<sup>12</sup> Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations

case, although most residents agree that refusal of the planning application would have been a better outcome.

In order to addressing the wider problems of passing traffic speeding on the roads through the village, the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Committee requested in 2019 that Worth Parish Council purchase a Speed Indicator Device (SID) for the use in the village. A number of locations where it could be mounted were identified in Hophurst Lane, Vicarage Road, Sandy Lane and the Turners Hill Road. A SID was purchased at a cost of £3,000 and Crawley Down Ward Councillors were trained in its use by Ashurstwood Village Council. It was expected that the use of the SID would be managed by Ward Councillors and volunteers, following the same approach as Turners Hill. Unfortunately, a Worth Parish Council Health and Safety audit concluded that mounting the SID was a two person operation and it has remained unused since it was delivered.

The problem of speeding by traffic passing through the village is continuing to increase with Hophurst Lane and Vicarage Road becoming the focus due to traffic from the new housing built on the Crawley Down Road in Felbridge. A Crawley Down Village Council will make addressing this problem a priority. It will invest in a SID with an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) capability at an estimated cost of £20,000 and will work with Sussex Police and local residents to identify locations where it will provide most benefit. The management of the device will follow the approach used in Turners Hill and will be delegated to Councillors and volunteers who have the appropriate skill set and training. A request to Worth Parish Council to budget for the purchase of such a device in 2021 was refused.

### **3G Football Pitch**

Crawley Down Gatwick runs 24 sides drawing from all age groups in the village. The first team plays in the premier division of the Southern Combination League. The main ground at the Haven Centre is currently undergoing a major upgrade using Developers Contributions to meet league standards but replacement of the current grass pitch with a modern artificial surface would enable the club to play and train in Crawley Down more often, avoiding the need to hire expensive facilities elsewhere.

A separate Crawley Down Village Council will not need to balance the relative demands of Crawley Down and Copthorne and will engage with the Mid Sussex review of playing pitches to promote the requirement for an artificial playing surface in Crawley Down as a priority. The new council will support applications by the club for grants from sporting bodies and for Developers Contributions to be focused on improving the sports facilities at the Haven Centre.

### **Sustainable Transport Links**

Crawley Down Ward has an extensive network of footpaths, but bridleway and cycleway provision is poor, particularly in respect of North-South routes. Cyclists using the Turners Hill Road often create congestion and numerous 'near-misses'. A separate Crawley Down Village Council will work with landowners to improve North-South links such as the Sussex Border Path from the Worth Way to Copthorne and from Rowfant to Tulleys Farm.

## **The Village Pond**

The Village Pond is situated just North of the Worth Way at the Eastern end of the village. The pond is owned by West Sussex, while the grassland around it is owned by Mid Sussex. The Worth Way is heavily used throughout the week for leisure and as a sustainable transport link between East Grinstead and Crawley. The pond has potential as a stopping-off point where nature can be admired, but has suffered significant clay silting in recent years due to contaminated surface water run-off from a succession of building sites around Burleigh Woods. The ecology of the pond has been badly damaged with a resulting decline in the wildlife that live around it.

A separate Crawley Down Village Council will take responsibility for the pond and the surrounding land and will restore and improve the natural habitat. The paths alongside the stream that link the village and the pond will be improved to create a linear park at the heart of the village.

## **The Royal Oak and the Crawley Down Village Centre**

A solution to the problem of the virtually derelict Royal Oak, and its relationship to the village centre as a whole, has been sought since the pub closed in 2014. Crawley Down Ward Councillors of that period used Worth Parish Council as a vehicle to request (and renew) an Asset of Community Value status for the building and included a requirement for any redevelopment of the site to include a pub in the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan. Subsequently, the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Committee recognised that a solution was most likely to be found in a redevelopment of the village centre as a whole to create a more 'complete' suite of shopping offerings and exploit its potential as a destination on the Worth Way. The pandemic brought this work to a halt in 2020, but the proposals have potential to contribute to the Government's net zero carbon agenda by reducing the need to travel outside the village for services and to promote sustainable travel.

A Crawley Down Village Council will engage with Mid Sussex through its work on Village Action Plans and delivery of its Sustainable Economy Strategy 2022-2025 to create a more sustainable village centre, including a solution for the Royal Oak.

## **More Effective and Convenient Delivery of Local Service : Investment in Community Facilities**

Worth Parish Council has failed to support the community facilities in Crawley Down. All its major capital investment programmes in the past decade have been in Copthorne. PWLB<sup>13</sup> loans totaling almost £250K have supported the building of the Sports Pavilion on Copthorne Bank and the Parish Hub owned by the Church on Borers Arms Road. The failure to invest in the Crawley Down Village Hall in 2016, with the Council opting to leave its offices there and invest in the Parish Hub, has resulted in its decline to the extent that the Trustees have applied for its demolition and propose to sell the freehold. The village hall is the only community facility on the western side of the village which has seen significant growth in recent years.

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<sup>13</sup> Public Works Loan Board

Worth Parish Council has also failed to grasp the potential of Developer's Contributions and other sources of funding related to housing development to provide new facilities for the village. Instead of being proactive in engaging with developers and Mid Sussex, the Council has limited its ambitions to the replacement of existing playground equipment. Major projects, such as the Millenium Car Park in the village centre and the proposed parking on Bowers Place for the village green, have been led by the Crawley Down Ward Councillors who support the creation of a new Council.

As well as the lack of capital investment, Worth Parish Council's failure to hold meetings or other events in Crawley Down has meant that the community facilities there have had no opportunity for income from the Council's revenue budget, despite the village being the biggest contributor to the budget. Community facilities across the District have faced significant financial challenges from the pandemic and are facing further challenges from increased energy costs and the need to reduce their carbon footprint. Against this background financial support from Councils at all levels is essential.

A separate Crawley Down Village Council will seek to invest in existing community facilities, including the use of PWLB loans, and will be pro-active in working with developers and Mid Sussex to ensure that Developers Contributions and non-ring-fenced Government grants such as the New Homes Bonus are used for their intended purpose; namely to mitigate the adverse impacts of development on the local community. All the monies raised through the Parish precept will be spent in the village, to the benefit of the community facilities and local traders.

### **The approach to the CGR taken by Worth Parish Council**

Worth Parish Council discussed splitting the Council in June 2019 and agreed that it should not be pursued. The Council's existing policy is therefore that it is opposed to a split. Despite this policy, in the Council and public discussions of the CGR since September 2021, the Council has purported to be maintaining a neutral position while arguing against the creation of a new Parish Council. The central tenet of the Council's argument has been a claim that the cost of the split could be as high as £150,000. In publishing such a figure and failing to publish promised supporting documentation despite numerous requests, the Councillors promoting this claim could be considered to have brought themselves and the Council into disrepute.

Alongside the figure of £150,000 the Council has published a series of estimates for revenue budget costs that fail to take account of the growth in tax base and the lower complexity of the Clerk's role in Crawley Down. These scare tactics echo the Project Fear of the BREXIT debate and have effectively derailed the democratic process and destroyed the opportunity for proper debate in both villages of the key issues of identity, community, democracy and service.

The Parish Council has also endeavoured to make political capital of the withdrawal of two of the Crawley Down Ward Councillors during the collection of signatures for the petition and the recent departure of another from the village. The remaining Local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a new Council are confident that they have the knowledge, experience and expertise to deliver the new Council (see Appendix C).



Remarkably Worth Parish Council has failed to address the ‘easily re-butted’ aspects of the case for a separate Crawley Down Village Council, such as committing to holding meetings in Crawley Down. This highlights the arrogance of the Councillors who have led the Parish Council’s case and their complete lack of commitment to democracy.

### **The approach to the CGR taken by the local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a Crawley Down Village Council**

One of the recurring questions when Crawley Down Ward Councillors hold drop-in sessions to encourage residents to become a Councillor is “*why doesn’t Crawley Down have its own Parish Council like Turners Hill?*” Councillors do not find this an easy question to answer. There is a modest cost saving<sup>14</sup> in combining ‘back-office functions’ such as accounts, but as this paper has shown, that is at the expense of a considerable loss in identity and local democracy. The inverse of the question is far easier: “*If Worth Parish Council didn’t exist, would we create it?*” It is hard to find a single resident in Crawley Down or Copthorne that would answer “yes”.

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact point in time at which this Community Governance Review became a compelling option given the extent of the effort involved and the expertise required to successfully implement a separate Crawley Down Village Council. One of the key factors was the LG BCE Review of Mid Sussex Ward Boundaries announced in July 2020, together with initial support from six long standing Crawley Down Ward Parish Councillors, including all three Mid Sussex Crawley Down and Turners Hill Ward Councillors. Other factors were the completion of the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan, the repaying of the Copthorne Pavilion loan and the Local Government Election Cycle with Local Elections due to be held in May 2023. Examination of case studies suggested by NALC highlighted the need for the order establishing a new Council to be made several months before the first elections in order to allow sufficient time to complete the initial setup of the new Council before the first elections and the first Annual Council Meeting in mid-May. In this respect it is important to also take account of the approximately 6 week mismatch between the start of the Council’s financial year (1<sup>st</sup> April) and the first Annual Council Meeting. Together these suggest that the order establishing the new Council should be made no later than November 2022.

A petition was used to initiate the Review after consideration of the other options. The Boundary Review itself was not expected to recommend a Community Governance Review as Crawley Down and Copthorne are already in separate Wards. It was assessed to be unlikely that Worth Parish Council would reverse its June 2019 decision not to support a split following discussion with the Chair and Vice-Chair. Mid Sussex Democratic Services Officers expressed support for a Review after the Boundary Review had concluded in initial discussions in February 2021, but a petition was seen by most, but not all, of the Councillors involved as the best way of guaranteeing a timely Review.

Following a recommendation by NALC that the split of Hextable away from Swanley Town Council in 2008 was the most appropriate case study, a visit was made to Hextable to review

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<sup>14</sup> Equivalent to one part-time Responsible Finance Officer

the paper files from the period concerned and understand in particular the costs involved and the implications for staff. With regard to the latter, the Hextable Parish Clerk had herself TUPE'd from Swanley to Hextable and was extremely helpful in describing the process. This visit was followed up with phone calls to the protagonists in both Swanley Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council, and a Zoom conference with the current Chairman of Hextable Parish Council.

Similar conversations were held with Bingley Town Councillors who effected a split from Bradford Municipal Council in 2016. The separation of Bexhill Town Council from Rother District Council was also studied as an example of a politically driven outcome. The recommendation to create a new Council was initially refused, but the decision was reversed two years later following a change of political leadership in Rother District Council. This is seen as an undesirable outcome for the current Review.

The wording of the petition (attached at Appendix D) was agreed with Mid Sussex in June 2021 who insisted on setting a target of 10% of the electorate, or 461 signatures<sup>15</sup>. Over 500 valid signatures were collected in just four weeks of campaigning in the village and through a Facebook Page set up for the purpose. The speed at which the signatures were collected, and the very low refusal rate (2% or 3%) was a clear indication of the significant community interest in the creation of a Crawley Down Village Council. Mid Sussex validated the petition on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

Both the Parish Council and the Local Councillors and Residents supporting the creation of a new Council were invited to comment on the draft Terms of Reference and it remains the opinion of the latter that the consultation lost the clear focus on the future of Crawley Down that the Petition requested. The insistence on qualitative responses without any quantitative element is also significantly different to the approach used in the Hextable Review and is itself expected to have impacted adversely on community engagement.

The Local Councillors and Residents supporting the creation of a new Council provided a single sheet A4 leaflet setting out the case for a Crawley Down Village Council to Mid Sussex to be circulated to all electors at the start of this consultation (see Appendix E). A Facebook Poll was used to understand how residents wished to obtain information and have their questions answered. This indicated that a Facebook Group, a leaflet and a public meeting were all favoured. A dedicated Facebook Group was set up agreed answers to a series of questions from residents were posted there (see Appendix F). A presentation was given and questions answered at public meeting in Crawley Down and Copthorne arranged by Worth Parish Council (see Appendix G) and the Local Councillors and Residents supporting the creation of new Council arranged a Q&A session moderated by Councillor Heidi Brunsdon on 1<sup>st</sup> April. A leaflet setting out the benefits to and costs was hand delivered to over 2,200 households in the Ward in the Week of 21<sup>st</sup> March (see Appendix H).

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<sup>15</sup> Changes to the Legislation introduced in 2015 requires only 7.5%. The insistence on a higher target meant that Mid Sussex did not qualify to receive 'New Burdens' funding for the cost of the Review or the creation of the new Council.

This document provides a record of the information gained and used by the Local Councillors and Residents supporting the creation of a new Council.

### **Next Steps**

The responsibility for setting up and running the new Council rests with Mid Sussex until the first Annual Council Meeting. This responsibility includes establishing the legal basis for the new Council, setting an initial precept, opening bank accounts, purchasing computer equipment and software licence, making provision for the payment of staff TUPE'd to or otherwise joining the new Council, reviewing contracts for shared services such as street lighting maintenance and energy and calling the first Parish Council Meeting.

The Local Councillors and Residents supporting the creation of a new Council look forward to working with Mid Sussex to achieve this aim.

### **Conclusion**

The case in favour of the creation of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down is undeniable. Mid Sussex can embrace the proposal with confidence that the team of local Councillors and residents supporting the creation of a separate Council have the knowledge, skills, connections and energy to ensure that it is a success.

## Appendix A : Indicative Annual Budget

### CRAWLEY DOWN PARISH COUNCIL Draft Revenue Budget (FY21/22 ex VAT)

#### Staff Costs

Clerk, RFO (p/t), Admin Asst (p/t), Handyman	£60,000
NI	£8,000
Pension	£5,000
Staff Training	£1,500

#### General/Admin Costs

Office rental	£10,000
Utilities	£500
Postage	£100
Photocopying/Photocopier	£1,250
Office supplies	£250
WSALC/SALC subscriptions	£1,500
Web site/IT support/Zoom/Office365	£3,000
Parish Online	£500
Accounting package RBS Rialtas	£750
Audit fees	£600
Legal fees	£1,000
Telephone/Broadband	£750
Insurance	£2,500
Publicity	£1,000
Meeting Room Hire	£3,500
Meetings/Conferences	£500
Purchases	£2,000
Loan repayments	£0

#### Councillor Costs

Chairmans Allowance	£200
Councillors Allowance	£0
Councillor Training	£750

**Parish Maintenance Costs**

Handyman vehicle lease	£3,000
Handyman vehicle servicing	£1,000
Handyman vehicle fuel	£1,200
Handyman equipment	£1,000

Land & Tree	£2,500
Churchyard	£500
Allotments fencing & security	£500
Playground	£2,500
Litter bin replacement	£500
Bench seating	£500
Litter and dog bin emptying (MSDC)	£5,000
Car parks	£1,000

Streetlighting maintenance & repairs (SSE)	£5,000
Streetlighting energy (SSE)	£9,000

**Community**

Grants to Community Groups	£5,000
Elections	£2,000
Environmental projects	£15,000
Neighbourhood plan	£2,500

**Income**

Allotment rents	-£2,000
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<b>Total</b>	<b>£160,850</b>
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Precept of £160,000 equates to £61 for Band D

## Appendix B Response to Criticism of Indicative Budget

From: Ian Gibson <ian.gibson@kilnwood.com> Sent: Thu 03/03/2022 09:00  
 To: Worth Parish Council Clerk  
 Cc: John Hitchcock; Alex Cruickshank; Elaine Anscornb  
 Bcc: 'sally@sallygibson.co.uk'; 'John Plank'; 'Elaine Anscornb'; 'johnalso@btinternet.com'; 'Aol customer service'; 'ian.gibson@kilnwood.com'  
 Subject: RE: Budget costs

Message Staffing costs Petitioners Response.docx (25 KB) Copy of Promotors Budget - Petitioners Response.xlsx (31 KB)

Hi Jenny,

Thank you for sight of this. Basically I want to thank the Council for verifying the Petitioners estimated 21/22 budget prepared and published last August.

The Crawley Down Village Council will follow the same staff model as Turners Hill in terms of staff. The original staff estimates were prepared as estimates for each role as cross checked against total staff cost in equivalent Councils (Cuckfield, Lindfield, Hassocks). Since last August these have been verified using the NALC calculator which puts the Crawley Down job at scale point 28; within the substantive range of LC2. I have prepared an equivalent of your table using both our original estimates and staff hours based on Turners Hill and am pleased to see that there is a saving of £2K when no need to pay NI for staff over retirement age is taken into account. This is good news but it will be prudent to consider the sum as being needed to cover the outstanding 2% pay rise from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

The over-egged staff costs account for £16K of the £26K discrepancy you identify. The remaining £10K is more than accounted for in the use of 22/23 budget estimates for energy costs that were not expected when the 21/22 budgets were drawn up, and a ludicrously high charge for IT support that the Parish Council would be wise not to reveal to residents.

We do not understand the Band D analysis which appears to confuse FYs and takes no account of the latest tax base and actual Band D charge for FY 22/23 agreed by Council last night. The correct figures are shown for your information and we will be happy to consider commenting on an updated version of the analysis. Note that we do agree that it is difficult to close a budget for Copthorne without a CT increase. But this is because Crawley Down tax payers have effectively been subsidising facilities in Copthorne for years. If the £120K spent on the Parish Hub in 2015 had been spent instead on updating the village hall/offices in Crawley Down there would be a better financial balance across the villages today. That said, a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down would still be justified and worthwhile.

We will restrict ourselves to saying that your analysis verifies our estimates; but frankly Councillors must have known that they would be wasting their time and Council resources challenging them.

We continue to look forward to sight of a breakdown and evidence for the claimed £150,000 of costs in the Council' handout to residents.

Kind regards

On behalf of the Councillors and residents supporting a separate Crawley Down Village Council.

	Copthorne	Crawley Down	Petitioners Budget
Clerk Full Time @ £16.75*	£32,234	£32,234	£24,000
RFO 15 hours @ £16.75	£13,065	£13,065	£12,000
Admin 10 hours @ £12.23	£6,360	£6,360	£4,000
Groundsman Full time @ £11.53	0	£22,184	£20,000
Groundsman 25 hours @ £10.04	£13,052	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£64,711</b>	<b>£73,843</b>	<b>£60,000</b>
NI @ 12% (current)	£7,765	£8,943	£8,000
NI @ 13.25% (proposed)	£8,575	£9,874	£8,000
Pension @ 7%	£4,530	£5,216	£5,000
<b>Total (Salary + NI + Pension)</b>	<b>£77,816</b>	<b>£88,933</b>	<b>£73,000</b>

\*Allows for 12 meeting a year only, as per the petitioners statement. To allow for admin of 2 committees would put Clerk salary up to £35,745

Qualified Clerk with 2 to 5 years experience.

NB Does NOT allow for pending pay increase of around 2%.

	Petitioners Original	Petitioners Update	Clerks Estimate
Clerk 25 hours @ £16.75*	£24,000	£21,775	£32,234
RFO 13 hours @ £16.75	£12,000	£11,323	£13,065
Admin 10 hours @ £12.23	£4,000	£6,360	£6,360
Groundsman Full time @ £11.53	£20,000	£22,184	£22,184
<b>Total</b>	<b>£60,000</b>	<b>£61,642</b>	<b>£73,843</b>
NI @ 12% (current)	£8,000	£4,800	£8,943
Pension @ 7%	£5,000	£4,314	£5,216
<b>Total (Salary + NI + Pension)</b>	<b>£73,000</b>	<b>£70,956</b>	<b>£88,933</b>

	Promotors	Adjusted	
<b>Staff costs</b>			
Salaries	60000	73843	
NI	8000	9874	
Pension	5000	5216	
Staff Training	1500	1500	
	<b>74500</b>	<b>90433</b>	
<b>General/Admin costs</b>			
Office rental	10000	10000	
Utilities	500	500	
Postage	100	100	
Photocopying/Photocopier	1250	500	
Office supplies	250	250	
WSALC/Subscriptions	1500	1900	we won't be joining WSALC!
Website/IT Support/Zoom			
Office/Office 365	3000	7000	John Plank to Review
Parish Online	500	500	
Accounting Package	750	270	
Audit fees	600	760	
Legal Fees	1000	1000	
Telephone/broadband	750	0	
Insurance	2500	2500	
Publicity	1000	1000	
Meeting Room Hire	3500	3500	
Meetings/Conferences	500	500	
Purchases	2000	2000	
Loan Repayments	0	0	
	<b>29700</b>	<b>32280</b>	
<b>Councillor Costs</b>			
Chairmans Allowance	200	200	
Councillors allowances	0	0	
Councillor training	750	750	
	<b>950</b>	<b>950</b>	
<b>Parish Maintenance Costs</b>			
Handyman vehicle lease	3000	0	
Handyman vehicle servicing	1000	1000	
Handyman vehicle fuel	1200	1200	
Handyman equipment	1000	1000	
Land and Tree Management	2500	2500	
Churchyard	500	0	
Allotment fencing and security	500	1000	This is a 21/22 estimated budget; not 22/23

Playground	2500	2500	
Litter bin replacements	500	575	
Bench seating	500	500	
Litter and dog bin emptying	5000	2500	
Car parks	1000	1000	
Streetlight maintenance (SSE)	5000	7500	This is a 21/22 estimated budget; not 22/23
Streetlighting energy	9000	17500	This is a 21/22 estimated budget; not 22/23
	<b>33200</b>	<b>38775</b>	But of course these costs have risen considerably.
<b>Community</b>			
Grants to Community Groups	5000	5000	
Elections	2000	2000	
Environmental projects	15000	15000	
Neighbourhood plan	2500	2500	
	<b>24500</b>	<b>24500</b>	
<b>Income</b>			
Allotment rents	2000	3400	
	<b>2000</b>	<b>3400</b>	
<b>Total expenditure</b>	162850	186938	
<b>Total Income</b>	2000	3400	This is a 21/22 estimated budget; not 22/23
<b>Budget/Precept</b>	<b>160850</b>	<b>183538</b>	
<b>Omitted</b>			
Bank charges	0	100	OK
Office cleaner	0	1250	Covered by Rented Office
CCTV	0	?	We haven't got any
Youth support	0	?	We haven't got any
HR Support	0	1500	
SLCC subs	0	285	OK
<b>Total omissions</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3135</b>	
<b>Budget/Precept</b>	<b>160850</b>	<b>186673</b>	Difference



## **Appendix C : Brief Details of Relevant experience of the Local Councillors and Residents supporting the Creation of a Crawley Down Village Council**

### **Elaine Anscorb**

Worth Parish Council Crawley Down Ward Councillor 2015 – 2022  
Chairman Worth Parish Council 2017 – 2021

### **Alex Cruickshank**

Crawley Down Resident since 1978  
Worth Parish Council Crawley Down Ward Councillor 2015 -  
Chairman Worth Parish Council Allots Sub-Committee  
Chairman of the Crawley Down Allotment Gardens Association 2008-2018.  
A member of the CDCCA committee 2008-2018

### **Ian Gibson**

Crawley Down Resident since 1997  
West Sussex County Councillor for Imberhorne Division (Imberhorne & Crawley Down) (2021-  
WSSC Planning & Rights of Way Committee (2021-  
WSSC Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee (2022-  
WSSC Standards Committee (2021-22)  
Mid Sussex District Council Member for Crawley Down & Turners Hill (2019-  
MSDC Audit Committee (2022-  
MSDC Licencing Committee (2019 -2021)  
MSDC Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Finance & Performance (2021-2022)  
MSDC Scrutiny Committee for Community, Customer Services and Service Delivery (2019-2021)  
Worth Parish Councillor, Crawley Down Ward Councillor 2013 -  
Chairman Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Committee (2016 –  
Chairman Planning and Highways Committee (2016 - 2018)  
Member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee  
Co-author of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan  
Turners Hill Parish Councillor 2019 -  
Chairman Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils (2017 - 2019)  
Director West Sussex Association of Local Councils (2017 - 2019)

### **Sally Gibson**

Crawley Down Resident since 1997  
Support on legal issues in the 2016 Hazel Close and Land West of the Turners Hill Road Call-In

**John Hitchcock**

Crawley Down Resident since 1982

Worth Parish Councillor, Crawley Down Ward Councillor 2014 -

Chairman Planning and Highways Committee (2018 –

Member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Co-author of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan

8 years as a Governor at CD Junior School 4 of which were as Chair of Governors, leading to 4 years as a Governor at Imberhorne School

Scout leader for the past 26 years with 1st TH and CD Scout Group and still active within the East Grinstead District as a Skills Adviser

Committee member for several years at Crawley Down FC, responsible for processing all planning and development issue.

**John Plank**

Crawley Down Resident since 1984

Member of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Committee

CDRA committee member 2006 to 2015

Chairman 2012 – 2013 & 2015

Established and managed Crawley Down Village Website from 2005 to present day

## Appendix D : The Petition

### **SHOULD CRAWLEY DOWN HAVE ITS OWN PARISH COUNCIL?**

Crawley Down will soon have over 6,000 residents. Should it continue to be part of Worth Parish Council or should it have its own Parish Council?

Parish Councils are the lowest level of local government and look after facilities like allotments, playgrounds, playing fields, village greens and street lighting. Crawley Down is currently part of Worth Parish Council, the biggest Parish Council in Mid Sussex and the third largest in West Sussex. Worth is one of the oldest parishes in England and used to be much bigger. Over the years, several areas have left to form new Parish Councils or other community groups. The Tilgate area is now part of Crawley, and Turners Hill split away in 1986. Since the early 1980s, even the village of Worth has itself ceased to be part of the Parish. This gradual attrition has left just Cophorne and Crawley Down in the modern version of the Parish. In terms of identity, character and activities, the villages have little in common. Mid Sussex includes them both in the second tier of settlements with Cuckfield, Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Lindfield, all of whom have separate Parish Councils. Operationally Worth already exhibits many similarities to a Town Council with 17 elected Councillors (just two less than East Grinstead Town Council) and a complex set of committees and sub-committees to deliver its services. Much of its business is actually conducted in two parallel streams, one for each village.

Worth Parish Council has no office in Crawley Down and holds no public meetings here. In recent years this remoteness has led to a lack of interest in the work of the Council and difficulties in recruiting Councillors.

A Crawley Down Parish Council would be clearly identified with the village and would have its offices and meetings in the village. Its smaller size would avoid the need for a complex set of committees with all business dealt with in a monthly Council meeting as is the case for other local Parish Councils. This will reduce the administrative burden on staff and provide a more rewarding experience for Councillors

The process for creating a new Parish Council requires Mid Sussex District Council to undertake a Governance Review and consult with the local community. The Governance Review is triggered by a petition signed by 10% of residents. If you are in favour of Crawley Down having a separate Parish Council please sign the petition overleaf.

The following current Crawley Down Ward Councillors and residents believe that a separate Parish Council would be the best approach and encourage you to sign the petition:

Elaine Anscomb  
John Hitchcock

Alex Cruickshank  
John Plank

Ian Gibson

**PETITION : CALLING ON MSDC TO UNDERTAKE A GOVERNANCE REVIEW TO CONSIDER THE CREATION OF A CRAWLEY DOWN PARISH COUNCIL**

We, the undersigned residents of Crawley Down, request Mid Sussex District Council to undertake a Community Governance Review to consider the creation of a Crawley Down Parish Council based on the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Area and, in the event of a positive outcome to the Review, complete the establishment of such a Council by May 2023.

The new Parish Council would:

- Assume ownership or guardianship of land and buildings within the proposed Parish Area.
- Inherit the responsibility for services provided by Worth Parish Council within the proposed Parish Area including:
  - Maintenance of the allotments, the village green, playing fields, buildings, car parks, cemeteries and war memorials.
  - Emptying of litter and dog waste bins.
  - Provision and maintenance of bus shelters and street lights.
- Inherit an appropriate share of the equipment and financial holdings of Worth Parish Council as at 6 April 2021, based on relative electorate numbers.
- Become the precepting authority for the proposed Parish Area.
- Become the statutory consultee for the proposed Parish Area.
- Appoint representatives to local and national bodies as appropriate for a Council of this nature.
- Exercise such other duties and hold such rights as are appropriate for a Council of this nature.
- Seek to manage its affairs in a manner that enables it to be granted General Power of Competence at an early stage.

Signed	Name	Address	Postcode
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....

Local Councillors will be collecting signed forms in the village centre on Saturdays during August 10.30 to 12.30hrs. Alternatively a scanned or photographic image of the form can be emailed to [petition@kilnwood.com](mailto:petition@kilnwood.com)

## Appendix E : Supporting Leaflet Circulated by Mid Sussex to all Electors



# The Case for a Crawley Down Village Council

from the local Councillors and Residents  
supporting the Petition



### To Crawley Down Residents

The question that this Review has to answer is how Crawley Down should be represented in Local Government. For over 125 years it has been part of Worth Parish Council. Should this continue? or would the village be better represented by its own Village Council?

Parish and Village Councils are an important part of Local Government in England. They are funded from your Council Tax and manage a range of local services. They represent the views of their communities in decisions concerning housing, schools and roads, and influence the future of their area through Neighbourhood Plans.

We believe that a new Crawley Down Village Council can do all of these things better for the village. A Crawley Down Village Council will

- Open an office and hold meetings in the village.
- Invest in new sports and community facilities.
- Make solving the Royal Oak a priority.
- Address speeding on local roads and issues with local services.
- Resist development other than for local needs.

We have published a draft budget that demonstrates that a Crawley Down Village Council can deliver an improved level of service without an increase in your Council Tax. The set-up costs are modest and can be met from existing reserves. You can be confident that this proposal is sound as collectively the Councillors supporting the creation of a new council have over 30 years of experience as a local Councillor.

We also think that more of you will want to join a Council that works solely for its community.

### To Copthorne Residents

We recognise that our wish to create a separate Council for Crawley Down has implications for Copthorne. Our objective is to give Crawley Down a clearer identity, equal to that of the other large villages in Mid Sussex. However, we believe that Copthorne would also benefit from the same status and we would encourage you to support our proposals.

Copthorne and Crawley Down are both large villages but are very different in character and layout. Each has its own sports clubs and community groups. Both villages have seen significant new housing development in recent years and this has created different challenges. Copthorne faces becoming part of greater Crawley and Crawley Down is being drawn into East Grinstead.

The creation of a new council for Crawley Down can be achieved without redundancies or the need to renegotiate contracts with suppliers and landlords. Once Crawley Down has left, Worth Parish Council can simply change its name to Copthorne Parish Council if it so wishes.

You may be worried that this change will result in an increase in your Council Tax. There is no need for this to happen. Compared to Worth Parish Council there will be a reduction in the number of meetings and other administrative costs for both new councils. A Copthorne Parish Council will inherit Worth Parish Council's buildings in the village. There will be set-up costs for the new Council in Crawley Down but these will be met from Crawley Down's share of the existing reserves.

If you agree that a new Crawley Down Village Council should be created, your response to the consultation should consider the following points:

- Crawley Down and Copthorne are both large villages with separate identities
- Residents are members of their village community, not a Worth Parish community
- A Council based in Crawley Down would be more accessible to its residents
- A Crawley Down Council could focus solely on the key issues the village faces.
- Crawley Down and Copthorne already have separate Neighbourhood Plans.

**Appendix F : Residents Questions and Answer thereto posted on Facebook**



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** created a poll. ...

**Admin** · 5 February ·

The consultation on whether Crawley Down should leave Worth Parish Council is finally going to start. Mid Sussex are running the consultation and will be sending out details in a week or so. The consultation pack will include a leaflet from us (the local councillors and residents supporting the creation of new Council), but we want to know how you want us to engage with the village to answer your questions. Please can you complete the short poll below:

Added by you Social Media	 48 votes
Added by you A leaflet through your letterbox	 27 votes
Added by you A public meeting on a Friday evening	 6 votes
Added by you A Zoom Conference	



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** updated the description.



[Admin](#) · 5 February ·

This group has been created to answer questions on the Community Governance Review to create a Crawley Down Village Council.



1

2 comments Seen by 84



**John Plank**

WPC have published a leaflet claiming that the cost of Crawley Down separating will be in the order of £150,000 whereas you state that the cost will be modest and able to be met from existing reserves. You cannot both correct so how can this be explained?

Like 7 w



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** [Author](#) [Admin](#)

**John Plank** The Petitioners researched the cost implications at length before proceeding with the petition. A draft budget and estimated set-up costs for a new Crawley Down Village Council were published last August. The draft budget was based on the £165,000 paid to Worth PC by Crawley Down residents in 2021/22. The set up costs (see below) are estimated to be £20K and can be met from the new Council's share of the reserves. It is suggested that there will be other costs which relate to the financial impact on Worth PC of Crawley Down leaving. This will be a subject for negotiation under the leadership of MSDC, but the Petitioners view is that if any exist, they will be limited to minor administrative costs. The Petitioners have requested a breakdown of the vague estimate of £150,000 published by Worth PC, but the Council has declined to provide it.



CRAWLEY DOWN PARISH COUNCIL	
Estimated set-up costs (ex VAT)	
Office Furniture	£1,500
Office Equipment (fridge, etc.)	£500
Laptops (3) + project & screen	£3,000
Telephones	£500
Software	£600
Domain name registration	£100
Website setup	£3,000
Chairmans Chain of Office	£2,500
Councillor Training	£1,500
Elections	£4,000
Legal fees	£2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£19,200</b>



**Craig Davis**  
18 February · 🌐



Please can you say where the new office will be?

1 comment · Seen by 85

Like

Share



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** [Admin](#)

Thank you for the question. We expect to rent office space in the village and have included £10,000 for this within the illustrative annual budget of £165,000. There are a number of buildings that we believe would be suitable. We expect to begin discussions with landlords in earnest after the initial recommendations are published by Mid Sussex in June. The new Council will become operational in May 2023 after the local elections.



Like Share 7 w







Craig Davis

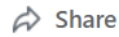
19 February · 🌐



Does WPC currently pay rent for office space?

Of the land & buildings that Crawley Down Village Council will inherit, are there any buildings?

1 comment Seen by 84



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** Admin

The second question is the easier; Worth Parish Council owns no buildings in Crawley Down Ward, so Crawley Down Village Council will inherit no buildings. There are buildings on the land that the new Council will inherit; the Scout Hut, the allotments shed and the Cricket Pavilion, but these are owned by the organisations that use them.

The answer to the first question is complicated: WPC does not currently pay any rent for office space; however; in 2015 the Council borrowed £120,000 from the Public Works Loan Board, and contributed this sum towards the construction of the offices on the first floor of the Parish Hub in Copthorne in exchange for 15 years rent-free use of the offices. The Council is repaying the loan and interest in annual instalments; in the current Financial Year it repaid £9,726.

The Council does rent the first Floor Meeting Room at the Parish Hub at a cost of £6,400, although it recovers some of this cost through renting the room to local groups when it is not being used for Council meetings. Before the pandemic struck the Council shared the cost of a marketing manager, but bookings for the room are now managed by Council staff. The staff time involved is not separately costed.

The Council has also budgeted £3,000 for office maintenance.

An extract from the latest accounts is attached (note that these figures do not include the costs of the 'consumables' – paper, printer cartridges, etc. - used in the running of the Council).

The Petitioners would like to clarify that it is perfectly legal for a Parish Council to borrow money from the PWLB and give it to a community organisation for a capital project within the Parish that benefits the residents. The Council does not have to have ownership of the land or buildings involved. More usually, a Council takes out a loan to purchase land or buildings. Both of these options will be open to a Crawley Down Village Council.

31/12/2021  
12:58  
Worth Parish Council Current Year  
Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31 DECEMBER 2021  
Worth No: 9  
Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current YTD	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure
<b>533 South Office</b>					
1336 South Room Hire - Receipts	467	2,472	5,000	2,528	
1338 Meeting Room Hire-Deposits	0	460	0	(460)	
1902 Air Conditioning South Room	0	1,333	0	(1,333)	
<b>Parish Office - Income</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>4,265</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>765</b>	
4077 Rent South Room- 1st Floor	0	4,800	6,400	1,600	
4230 Maintenance- various miscodes	505	2,029	3,000	971	
4338 Loan Repaym- New Parish Office	0	4,863	9,726	4,863	
<b>Parish Office - Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>11,692</b>	<b>18,126</b>	<b>7,434</b>	
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(390)</b>	<b>(7,427)</b>	<b>(14,126)</b>	<b>(8,661)</b>	

Like Share 7 w





**Andrew Metcalfe**

21 February · 🌐



You state that you "have included £10,000 for" for rent and that "there are a number of buildings that we believe would be suitable."

Owning and running a company locally, decent office space is almost non-existent and £10,000 per annum would not get much. Let alone adequate space to run a Parish Council from, host public meetings, and have adequate car parking for visitors.

Please can you provide more detail on the potential venue / office space you've identified as I'm afraid I believe this figure to be unrealistic.

The only suitable venue I can think of in the village itself would be the Haven Centre - have any discussions taken place?

1 comment 2 shares Seen by 93



Like



Share



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** [Admin](#)

The figure of £10,000 is based on 600 sq ft at £16/sq ft /pa. This will be for office accommodation only; the figure of £16 /sq ft / pa is taken from a Google search on local office rental prices. The intention is to hire large rooms for public meetings and the draft budget includes a figure of £3,500 for this. The Haven is seen as a possible location for Council meetings which must be held in public. Crawley Down Village Council will follow the same model as Turners Hill Parish Council and hold just one Council meeting each month that covers all Council business.

Like Share 6 w



**Andrew Metcalfe**

22 February · 🌐



Please can you share on here the illustrative budget and all material setting out how it is perceived that the new Parish Council would be run.

1 comment Seen by 85



**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** Admin

The illustrative budget is attached.

The Council will be run by elected Councillors. Currently there are 9 Councillors for Crawley Down Ward this may increase to 12. The first elections to the new Council will be held in May 2023. The Council is expected to have a staff of 4: a full time Clerk, a Responsible Finance Officer and an Admin. Assistant (both part-time), and a Handyman (full-time).



STANLEY DOWN PARISH COUNCIL		STANLEY DOWN PARISH COUNCIL	
Draft Revenue Budget (in K£) (21/22 figures)		Estimated set up costs (in K£)	
<b>Staff Costs</b>		<b>Parish Maintenance Costs Item</b>	
Clerk (FTE) (incl. holiday) (Handyman)	100,000	Land & Tree	12,500
W	10,000	Christmas	1,500
Parson	10,000	Attendance/Security	2,000
Staff Training	4,000	Playground	12,500
<b>General Admin Costs</b>		Life for replacement	1,500
Office rent	24,000	Workshop	2,000
Utilities	2,000	Life and Right to Roam (MDC)	10,000
Postage	1,000	Car park	10,000
Printing/Photocopy	1,000	Streetlight maintenance & repair	10,000
Office supplies	4,700	Streetlight energy (20%)	10,000
WiFi/Cloud, subscriptions	2,000	<b>Community</b>	
High speed internet/Cloud/Cloud	12,000	Signs in Community Group	10,000
Parish Office	2,000	Electrons	12,000
Accounting package (MSD) (Notes)	2,700	Environmental projects	10,000
Audit fees	1,000	High Street plan	12,500
Legal fees	2,000	<b>Totals</b>	
Telephone/Internet	4,700	Attendance	12,500
Insurance	12,500	<b>Total</b>	<b>190,000</b>
Publicity	2,000		
Printing/Postcards	1,000		
Printing/Conferences	2,000		
Postboxes	12,000		
Landscaping	10		
<b>Capital Costs</b>			
Chairman's allowance	1,000		
Councillor allowance	10		
Councillor Training	4,700		
<b>Parish Maintenance Costs</b>			
Handyman vehicle lease	10,000		
Handyman vehicle servicing	2,000		
Handyman vehicle fuel	12,000		
Handyman equipment	10,000		
<b>Total</b>	<b>190,000</b>		
		<b>Office Furniture</b>	10,000
		Office equipment (bridge, etc.)	1,000
		Labour (2 x person's wages)	10,000
		Telephone	1,000
		Software	1,000
		Design team negotiation	1,500
		Website setup	10,000
		Chairman Chair of Office	10,000
		Councillor Training	10,000
		Electrons	12,000
		Legal fees	10,000
		<b>Total</b>	<b>190,000</b>

Like Share 6 w



### Crawley Down Parish Council Petition

Admin · 26 February · 🌐



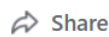
The Worth Parish Parish Clerk has written to the Petitioners with the following question:

*I have a copy of the petitioners' proposed budget for Crawley Down Village Council, with a suggested precept of £160,850. It states this equates to £61 for a Band D property*

*I have asked MSDC if they could split the Worth Parish tax base into the two villages, but am told this is not possible. As you know, any change in tax base affects the Band D value. Indeed, our current 2022/2023 budget increase for a Band D was less than expected as our tax base changed.*

*Can you let me know please, what tax base the petitioners have used in their budget.*

1 comment 1 share Seen by 83



#### Crawley Down Parish Council Petition [Author](#) [Admin](#)

Details of the draft budget have been published in an earlier post. The objective was demonstrate that an improved service could be achieved within the existing Council Tax collected from the village.

The tax base is expressed as the number of 'Band D equivalents' for the area concerned. This is calculated by combining the number of properties in each Council Tax Band using ratio of the tax paid in each band to the Band D tax (Band A properties pay six ninths of the Band D tax and Band H pay twice Band D). The result is adjusted to take account of single occupancy and other CT reliefs.

The Petitioners were able to calculate the tax base for Crawley Down because they had collected the numbers of properties in each Council Tax Band in each village as part of their work on the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Review. This was combined with the details of the Worth Parish tax base in the Mid Sussex Corporate Plan 2021/22 (see analysis). The resulting tax base for Crawley Down was 2625 out of 4669 for Worth Parish, which means that Crawley Down CT payers contributed £160,206 towards the WPC precept of £286,000 in 2021/22. This precept is equivalent to £61.25 for a Band D property.

The tax base of Crawley Down will increase when the 120 homes under construction are finished and occupied. Copthorne will increase by nearly 30% as the Heathy Wood development is completed and its tax base will be roughly the same as Crawley Down in the near future.

CT Band	No. of houses in Crawley Down	No. of houses in Copthorne	Total	WPC Tax Base from MSB Susses Corp. Plan 2021/22	CD Tax Base pro-rata	CD cost, in Precept
A	19	26	45	21	12	£ 712.62
B	150	44	194	76	10	£ 5,604.58
C	188	179	367	291	149	£ 9,115.30
D	895	600	1495	1161	794	£ 49,630.29
E	496	167	663	1187	508	£ 34,248.13
F	464	411	875	1186	629	£ 38,523.65
G	246	202	448	595	284	£ 24,218.97
H	18	7	25	44	30	£ 2,853.58
<b>Total Houses</b>	<b>2488</b>	<b>1182</b>	<b>3670</b>	<b>4669</b>	<b>2625</b>	<b>£ 160,206.43</b>
				<b>Parish Precept 2021/22</b>	<b>£ 286,000</b>	<b>Band D £61.25</b>

Like Share 6 w



**Andrew Metcalfe**

27 February · 🌐



Please allow commenting on posts to allow meaningful discussion.



2

1 comment Seen by 78



Like



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**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** [Admin](#)

This Group was set up to answer questions. The Petitioners would like to permit comments but their experienced of the conduct of debate elsewhere leads them to believe that allowing comments would be unwise. Worth Parish Council is opposing the split but has advanced no arguments that it provides a better service to Crawley Down residents that a Crawley Down Village Council would, and has published no documents to support its claims of £150,000 costs. The public meeting at the Haven on Friday 4th March (7.30pm) will provide a controlled environment for meaningful discussion.

**Like** **Share** 6 w





**Robert Wathan**

27 February · 🌐



Given that open Councillor vacancies for Crawley Down Ward in the existing Worth PC have had to be filled by co-option of Copthorne residents due to lack of interest from those living in CD, is it realistic to believe you will get enough CD based applicants for a dedicated CD Council, let alone increasing numbers from 9 to 12?

1 comment Seen by 76



Like



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**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** [Admin](#)

It is indeed a sad reflection of the interest in local government in this Parish that the last person to have been elected to WPC by a vote was Gary Williams in 2014. Being a Councillor for Crawley Down is not easy. Councillors are required to travel to Copthorne twice a month for meetings in order to play an effective role in WPC. The Petitioners believe that more residents will embrace the opportunity to represent the village in a Crawley Down Village Council that holds its meeting in the village.

Mid Sussex will make the final decision on numbers of councillors, the Petitioners believe that the lower limit of 9 will be sufficient.



Like Share 6 w





Alan Brooks

27 February · 🌐



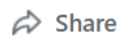
What are the benefits of staying together that Crawley Down residents could potentially lose?

I've seen widely differing estimates of costs (start up and running), but not seen a breakdown of the WPC figures.

As a parish we are currently one of if not the largest in mid-Sussex. Many smaller parishes don't appear to be disadvantaged compared with Worth. Often the reverse.

Having individual Neighbourhood Plans for Copthorne and Crawley Down, though logical given the different village profiles etc, has not served the parish well.

1 comment Seen by 73



Crawley Down Parish Council Petition [Admin](#)

The benefits of staying together is a question that should really be put to the WPC Councillors opposing the split. WPC has a Handyman, an Environmental Working Group and a Neighbourhood Plan Committee for each village, all of which would continue without change if a new Council was created. In terms of administrative costs WPC employs a Clerk, Deputy Clerk and a Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). Each Council would need at least a Clerk and an RFO after the split, which implies an increase of one. However, the RFO is a part time post and the Parish Clerk often takes on the RFO duties if they have the necessary qualification. The costs of the offices in the Parish Hub are currently shared but the draft budget published by the Petitioners demonstrates that the increased costs of offices in the village and an RFO can be absorbed within the current tax paid by the village.

Estimates for both start-up and running costs have been published in a previous post. The Petitioners have not been given a breakdown of the figure of £150,000 published by WPC so cannot comment.

The Parish is lowest tier of Local Government and all Parish Councils have the same responsibilities and opportunities, and equal weight in wider issues, no matter what their size.

The principle of separate Neighbourhood Plans was agreed by Mid Sussex in 2012 at the request of WPC. The Petitioners believe that the reasons for this separation (see extract below) are still valid today. The Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan has played a significant role in many planning decisions such as the recent refusal of permission for three new properties on Twoways.

The reason for requesting designation of each ward in the Parish as a distinct neighbourhood area is that there is a significant village settlement within each ward (Crawley Down in the Crawley Down ward and Copthorne in the Copthorne and Worth ward) which has its own unique and particular character, issues and ambitions. In order to reflect the wishes of the residents in each area to be as local as possible, the Parish Council recognises that the spirit and intent of the Localism legislation is best served by designating each ward as a neighbourhood area. Each ward is already long-established and clearly identified and therefore most appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area.

Like Share 6 w



Andrew Metcalfe shared a post.



27 February · 🌐

The Haven have no space to house the Parish Council to my knowledge, and I'm not aware of any other suitable space in the village - where else are you looking at?

The case being put forward appears to be, go with it, vote for all the 'benefits' we are promising for no extra cost... without showing the numbers actually work - i was expecting more than a quick spreadsheet tbh, and a reasoned and justified budget showing how numbers had all been identified.

Quite reminiscent of the case for Brexit IMO.

I have not yet formed a firm view on the proposal yet, and do like the idea in principle, but atm I am not convinced that the benefits will outweigh the considerable setup costs (which could be better spent locally), nor that the proposed budget is realistic.

Please convince me...!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/323681053024732/permalink/332901495436021/?sfnsn=scwspmo&ref=share>



Andrew Metcalfe ▸ Crawley Down Village Council Consultation

21 February · 🌐

You state that you "have included £10,000 for" for rent and that "there are a number of buildings that we believe would be suitable."

Owning and running a company locally, decent office space is almost non-existent and £10,000 per annum would not get much. Let alone adequate space to run a Parish Council from, host public meetings, and have adequate car parking for visitors.

Please can you provide more detail on the potential venue / office space you've identified as I'm afraid I believe this figure to be unrealistic.

The only suitable venue I can think of in the village itself would be the Haven Centre - have any discussions taken place?

👍 1

1 comment Seen by 75

👍 Like

➦ Share



Crawley Down Parish Council Petition Admin

The Petitioners would prefer to rent space in an existing community building so that the tax money involved can be used to maintain facilities for the community that provided the funds. The current consultation needs to be completed and the outcome published before there can be definitive conversations with possible accommodation providers. Commercial properties and temporary accommodation will be explored as alternatives.

The draft budget has been published in a previous post. The costs identified and the budgets allocated to each are based on equivalent costs in the WPC and other local Parish Council budgets with which the Petitioners are familiar as Councillors. The figures were published last August and the Petitioners have received no challenges to the individual figures.

We look forward to further questions from you on the budget estimates and would encourage you to challenge WPC to publish a breakdown of the claimed £150,000 costs of the split that are concerning you.

Like Share 6 w





Alan Brooks

2 March · 🌐



In response to my previous question you state that “The Parish is lowest tier of Local Government and all Parish Councils have the same responsibilities and opportunities, and equal weight in wider issues, no matter what their size.” If true in practice as well as theory, doesn't that imply a greater weight for wider issues under a split parish?

1 comment Seen by 77



Like



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Crawley Down Parish Council Petition [Admin](#)

There are 21 Parish Councils in Mid Sussex (153 in West Sussex) ranging in size from 300 to 10,000 by population (2011 Census). They are treated equally by Mid Sussex and West Sussex, and their views on local issues all carry the same weight. Worth is the largest in Mid Sussex and third largest in West Sussex. The new council for Crawley Down, and the remaining part of Worth PC will be third equal in size across Mid Sussex (based on 2027 electorate roll estimates).

It is a fact that joint representations from separate Crawley Down and Copthorne Parish Councils would carry greater weight than from Worth alone in local issues. In simplistic terms, there would be two Councillors invited to meetings by Gatwick or early briefings on the Mid Sussex District Plan.

The public meeting at the Haven on Friday (4th March) at 7.30pm will be an opportunity to discuss this further.

Like Share 5 w



Nikki Daniels

7 March · 🌐



Can you please explain what the plan is for the Royal Oak pub? The leaflet mentioned the situation would be resolved, but how will you go about achieving this when others have failed? Thanks 🙏🙏

👍 2

1 comment Seen by 89

👍 Like

➦ Share



Crawley Down Parish Council Petition Admin

There is a planning tool called a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) that allows the granting of planning permission for specified types of development without the need to submit plans to the District Council. In brief, an NDO could be used to oblige Mid Sussex to compulsorily purchase the site of the Royal Oak as part of a wider redevelopment of the village centre. The NDO would still need to meet current planning legislation and demonstrate that finance is available. It would also need to be approved by a local referendum.

In the last application for redevelopment of the Royal Oak (8 flats + a pub) the construction was costed at £2.1M. It is difficult to extract the cost of stabilising the facade and building the new pub from the rest of the development, but it appears to be around £0.3M. It would be reasonable to assume that a budget of £0.5M is needed to restore the Royal Oak within its current footprint. Of course, this excludes the cost of acquiring the site itself, but there was also an analysis which indicated that if the Royal Oak was a going concern then its value as a business was around £0.5M. There is anecdotal evidence that the Oak was purchased for £750K and that a price of £1.2M has been sought from recent prospective purchasers. In practise Mid Sussex would be responsible for negotiating a value for a CPO.

Mid Sussex has committed to undertaking a 'Village Health Review' as set out in the Councils Economic Development Strategy. Such a review would identify the short-comings of the village centre at present and its conclusions could be implemented as part of a redevelopment scheme. This review is finally being undertaken now with the preparation of a Village Centre Action Plan.

A 'think piece' developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Committee for the village centre redevelopment included new single storey commercial buildings on the car part next to the pub, replacement car parking, redevelopment of the Royal Oak Barn and pedestrianisation of the village centre at weekends, as well the restoration of the Royal

Oak. It is nothing more than a think piece and others could emerge through the village action plan. The cost estimate of £3M is based on £1.5M for the Royal Oak, £0.8M for the two new buildings (based on £2K/m2), £0.2M for new carparks and £0.3M for the pedestrianisation, plus contingency.

Funding would need to be a partnership between the Parish Council, MSDC and a commercial investor (currently unknown). Assuming an equal contribution from each, the commercial investor would get an income from the new shops, Mid Sussex should contribute £1M of the £2M that they have received in New Homes Bonus Grants from the Government for the homes built here. The Parish Council would finance their contribution through a loan from the Public Works Loan Board, S106 contributions from the developer seeking to build 400 new homes on Huntsland Farm, and, if necessary, sale of land.

Like Share 4 w



**Julie Bridges**

9 March · 🌐



In the interests of openness and balance, I would like to see people debating the Petition on the FB site to state whether they support or oppose the split up front.

I was open minded when I went to the meeting but was disappointed that some participants were less than courteous and their tone rather aggressive.

So far, the debate has been largely about costs but sense of community and local participation is to my mind just as important. I have lived in the Worth area for over 50 years and I don't even know where the "Hub" is. Yes, shame on me, but that says it all about inclusivity ... or lack of it.

So... at the moment, I think it's time for change and I want CD to thrive and have a positive future that is in its own hands. I also believe that it would give a greater sense of community and local participation. So, that's where I stand.



2

1 comment Seen by 62



Like



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**Crawley Down Parish Council Petition** Admin

Thank you for your views.

The outcome of the CGR will indeed ultimately rest on whether a new Parish Council will give Crawley Down a clearer identity, improved democracy and better services than Worth Parish Council. The Parish Council is relying on the issue of costs but have failed to provide a breakdown of, or any evidence for, their estimate of £150,000. This was not challenged sufficiently at the meeting last Friday. There is a real danger that the Council is misleading residents and it should withdraw the figure if it cannot support it.



Like Share 4 w

## **Appendix G : Presentation to Worth Parish Council Public Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

Good evening, thank you for coming tonight

Can I start by getting a quick understanding of my audience

Can you put your hand up if you're a resident of Crawley Down

Thank you and if you're a resident of Worth put your hand up

This highlights the key issue that we are discussing tonight: IDENTITY; we think of ourselves as living in Crawley Down or Copthorne, not Worth.

I am going to say a few words about the importance of Identity in local government and then talk about

The level of Service that you could expect from a new council

What is involved in setting up the new council

And finally, why this is happening now

### **The importance of Identity in local government**

For those who don't know me I am Ian Gibson; I have lived in Crawley Down for 24 years and I am a Worth Parish Councillor; a District Councillor and your County Councillor; however, in none of these roles am I representing just Crawley Down.

Lack of identity was one of the problem that I highlighted in 2019 in the leaflet that I delivered to every property in the village.

Crawley Down is effectively invisible in local government; it is twinned with Copthorne in Worth Parish Council; with Turners Hill in Mid Sussex District Council and with part of East Grinstead in West Sussex County Council.

A village with a population of 6,000 should have a separate voice in local government.

Both Crawley Down and Copthorne are classed as large villages in Mid Sussex along with Cuckfield, Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Lindfield, all of which have a Parish Council.

There are 15 other parish councils in Mid Sussex with smaller populations, one as low as 300. All parish councils are treated equally in local government, it's not dependent on size.

Crawley Down already has the basis for a clear identity. It is geographically separate. There are a large number of active community groups and sports clubs which represent Crawley Down in leagues. It also has a Neighbourhood Plan which set out the criteria that new developments must follow.

A Parish Council that speaks for just Crawley Down will be better placed to address local issues than one which has to balance its position across more than one village.

### **So what level of Service could you expect from a new council**

The funding for your parish council is a very small part of the Council Tax bill that will soon drop on your doormat. The bill for a Band D property this year will be £2,023.90. Just £62.89 of this is for your Parish Council.

Since 2015 Worth Parish Council has had no offices in Crawley Down and has held no Council meetings in the village. Residents have to travel to Copthorne if they want to ask questions or speak to the Council about planning applications or other issues.

A Crawley Down Village Council would rent offices and hold all its meetings in the village.

Worth Parish Council has a complex structure of Committees and sub-Committees that in total hold some 60 meetings a year. A Crawley Down Village Council will adopt a simpler model of one council meeting per month like Turners Hill which will significantly reduce the amount of time spent in preparing minutes and agendas by the Parish Clerk and in meetings by Councillors.

Since Worth Parish Council moved out of the village in 2015 it has become increasingly difficult to find residents who are prepared to represent Crawley Down as Councillors. Attending meetings in Copthorne twice a month is not an attractive long term option. The creation of a separate council for Crawley Down that holds its meetings in the village will lead to more residents willing to become Councillors.

A new village council dedicated to Crawley Down would do the simple things that have eluded WPC, like installing speed indicators on the rat runs through the village. Solving the Royal Oak would become a top priority.

And ALL the council tax money that funds the Council would be spent back in the village.

### **So what is involved in setting up the new council**

Firstly, it is important to understand that Worth Parish Council is not being abolished. Staff will not be made redundant and contracts cancelled. There will be no need to renegotiate leases.

A new council will be established for Crawley Down and the remainder of Worth Parish Council is then expected to change its name to Copthorne Parish Council.

The new Council will be created in May next year when its first councillors are elected in the scheduled local elections. We expect the number of Councillors to be 9 as at present.

TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) rules will apply to the creation of the new council. We expect to see the same staff doing, broadly, the same work. Worth Parish Council has two qualified clerks, a Finance Officer, two Handymen and a Communications and IT Administrator. We think that a Crawley Down Village Council will need a Clerk, a Finance Officer, a Handyman and in the longer term an assistant.

Many Clerks are also the Finance Officer and Turners Hill have just appointed a new Clerk who will also be the Finance Officer.

The Petitioners , 523 of us signed the petition, have published a draft budget last August which demonstrates that the new Council could achieve the promised benefits without an increase in the Parish element of the Council tax.

The Parish Council has challenged our figures, but they have inflated the energy costs to reflect the recent increases and failed to take account of reduced administration in the staff costs. Otherwise their assessment agrees with our budget and we thank them for that endorsement.

When we revise the budget in preparation for the new Council we will need to include the jump in energy costs, I'm afraid that is inescapable.

The Copthorne Councillors opposing the split have suggested that it will cost, well various figures at various times over the last 6 months - £50,000, £100,000, £300,000 – and they seem to have settled on £150,000 but, even as late as yesterday, they have not published a breakdown or any evidence to support this figure, or indeed any other.

We have studied a large number of recent new councils and found no evidence of such costs. We spoke again yesterday with the Clerk and Chairman of Hextable Parish Council who split from Swanley Town Council in 2008 who recall only that Sevenoak District Council gave them a loan of £20,000. This is a Bradford City Council report on the creation of Bingley Town Council in 2015 which includes a figure of £20,000 for set cost, precisely the figure we published last August.

We are forced to conclude that the figure of £150,000 has been published to scare you.

Please ask them for details tonight, are they counting redundancy costs, or anticipating constructive dismissal cases. Press them for evidence, don't let them hide behind phrases like staff confidentiality – they can talk generally about numbers, maximum costs and probabilities. Its called Risk Assessment.

It goes with saying that it would be more advantageous for all Councillors to work towards a well-managed split and we are disappointed that the Parish Council has chosen to resist the creation of a new Council so aggressively.

### **And finally, why this is happening now**

The benefits of a separate Parish Council for Crawley Down have been evident for many years, in fact since Turners Hill left Worth Parish Council in the 1990s. So why has the petition been brought forward now.

When current construction is completed in 4 years there will have been 30% growth in both villages since 2010. The villages will be the same size and the Parish population will have risen to around 12,000, past the threshold at which a Parish Council should consider becoming a Town Council

But the villages are facing different challenges. Proposed housing developments are drawing Crawley Down into East Grinstead, while Copthorne faces a similar challenge from Crawley with the threat of a further 2,500 homes on Crabbett Park either side of Old Hollow.

Administratively, May 2023 is a good moment to go separate ways. The District Council elections are due to be held then so the £8,000 cost of separate elections for the new Parish Council will be avoided.

The Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan was finally completed last year, so both villages now have the protection of current Neighbourhood Plans.

I am not going to pretend that the split will be as financially beneficial for Copthorne as it is for Crawley Down in the short term. There is an imbalance in the land and buildings owned or leased by Worth Parish Council. The lion's share will go to Copthorne as both the sports pavilion and the offices are there. The down side for Copthorne is that the associated running costs and loan repayments will fall on them. However, the level of debt is very low, the loan for the pavilion was paid off this year and the lease agreement for the offices is such that the loan repayment of £10,000 a year is equivalent to the £10,000 budgeted by the Petitioners for the rental of offices in Crawley Down. We think that this is fair, especially as the villages will be the same size when the 500 homes on Copthorne West are completed.

Of course, the new council in Crawley Down will have the same ability to take out low interest loans from the Public Works Loan Board for capital projects. This is one of the key opportunities that we expect the new council to exploit.

I look forward to your questions and I will be around afterwards if anyone wants to ask about



# The case for a separate Crawley Down Village Council

Dear Resident,

You recently received a letter from Mid Sussex District Council seeking your views on whether a new Parish Council should be created for Crawley Down. This letter is from the local Councillors and residents supporting the new Council. Following the public meeting at the Haven Centre on the 4<sup>th</sup> March, we have set out overleaf a clear description of the Benefits of the new Council, and the Costs involved in setting it up and running it. We hope that this will help you decide. If you have further questions please contact us:

Buildings & Land	John Hitchcock	01342 716831
Budget & General	Ian Gibson	01342 716790
Allotments	Alex Cruickshank	01342 714328
Website & IT	John Plank	01342 716731

There will be a further public meeting at the Haven Centre on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 7.30pm which we encourage you to attend.

Mid Sussex District Council are asking you to respond to the consultation by submitting a short statement setting out your views on a number of points. If you are supporting the new Council you might include some of the following points in your submission:

Crawley Down is a rural village, surrounded by fields, with a different character and issues to those of its neighbours.

A Crawley Down Village Council would better represent the village on important local issues such as plans for more development, quality of services and the condition of local roads and other infrastructure.

Residents would be more likely to attend Parish Council meetings held in the village than meetings held in Copthorne.

A Crawley Down Village Council would spend all the money it received on supporting the community groups, facilities and sports clubs in the village.

I would be more likely to get involved in a Parish Council that is clearly linked with and holds its meetings in the village.

We have investigated the start-up costs of new councils in great detail and can provide evidence, including written quotations, for the figure of £20,000 shown overleaf. **Do not be misled by the figure of £150,000 published by the Parish Council. They have provided no evidence for this figure. Please speak to us if you are worried, or have been put off supporting a new council by this figure.**

If you have mislaid the letter from Mid Sussex District Council your submission can be emailed to them at [communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:communitygovernancereviews@midsussex.gov.uk) or posted to Electoral Services (CGR), MSDC, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath RH16 1SS. Submissions should be from individuals not households, but you can put more than one submission in the same envelope. You should include your name and address. **The closing date for submissions is Friday 15th April.**

Even if you have already responded to Mid Sussex, you can send a further submission to add to or revise your previous comments.

*If you would like a copy of this letter in MSWord format please email [CDVC@kilnwood.com](mailto:CDVC@kilnwood.com)*



# Please support a Crawley Down Village Council

Over 500 residents have signed a petition to create a new Parish Council. Now Mid Sussex are asking everyone for their view. The key issues are set out here to help you decide.



## The Benefits

- **A clearer identity** when working with community groups and in wider local government.
- **Better democracy** – Meetings in the village again. Councillors elected to represent just their village.
- **Improved service** – More responsive; Offices in the village again. Fewer meetings dealing with just Crawley Down means less staff time spent on administration and more time on projects.
- **Economic benefits** – All Parish Council Tax spent on the Village (est. £165,000 in 2022/23)
- **Community benefits** – a Council that understands and addresses local issues like speeding on rat runs, improved sports and social facilities, the future of the Royal Oak and defending the surrounding countryside from more development.

## What's agreed?

- The existing reserves of approx. £340,000 will be split between the villages.
- Crawley Down and Copthorne will still be able to work together and with other local Councils.
- The first elections will be in May 2023.

## The Costs

- It will be necessary to use some of the existing reserves to set up the new Council.
  - Office equipment & website, etc. (est.)      £9,200
  - Mid Sussex set-up rechargeable costs      £10,000
  - Employment Law advice for TUPE, etc.      £800
  - **Total**      **£20,000**

**These figures are based on evidence;** Worth Parish Council has published a figure of £150,000 **but has provided no evidence to support it.**

- A draft annual budget for the new Village Council has been prepared and compared with the current Worth Parish Council budget. This shows that the costs of running the new office in Crawley Down **can be delivered for the current level of Parish Council Tax.**
- There will be a small increase in the Parish Council Tax in Copthorne to cover the costs of running the facilities there, as these costs are currently shared by both villages

## Is this fair to Copthorne?

- Copthorne will take ownership or benefit of all the existing Parish Council buildings and facilities (the Parish Offices and a modern sports pavilion).