

Crewkerne Town Council

NEWSLETTER

February 2017 – Issue 51



Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7LN
Tel: 01460 74001 Email: towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk Website: www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

Mayors Annual Budget Report



The Council has now set the budget for the year 2017/18. During this process a full review of all aspects of its spending was carried out with the aim to achieve the continued provision of services and properly maintained amenities for the town whilst trying to keep any increase to a minimum. As always this was a difficult task as we face fewer services being provided by County and District Councils.

After reviewing general expenses Councillors agreed to maintain funding in the areas that we already support, plus the acceptance of certain increases such as salaries and employer costs due to increased service provision. For energy and other bought in commodities where increases in costs were outside the Council's control, a firm commitment is made to test the market to try and achieve cost effective purchasing of those items.

Further considerations were made and approved that have increased the budget:

- The Victoria Hall structure is in need of considerable work over the coming years. Whilst some works have been carried out over this year many more jobs remain.
- The roof of the Aqua Centre, whilst not being replaced, still has issues due either to a defective membrane or untried building techniques, but means the roof must have more remedial works carried out.

- Owing to poor building work carried out by building companies, now bankrupt, we have been left with outstanding repairs to the George Reynolds Centre, whilst in themselves minor, they nevertheless add to our buildings maintenance costs.
- We are continuing our projects to improve the green spaces and play areas within the town and these new pieces of play equipment are not cheap, but are deemed wanted by the children and parents alike!

With these additions the final budget for the year 2017/18 stands at £439,185 an increase of 28.6% on the current year. Once the adjustment has been made by the District Council for those claiming Council Tax benefit this represents an increase of £46.01 per household or 88p per week.

A major part of this is the Allocation of Government Grant which has reduced from £25,020 to £8,380 (monies granted to offset housing benefit council tax payments), which in itself accounts for a percentage increase of 17% of our precept increase. These are monies devolved from government to offset council tax contributions for those on housing benefits.

This is a considerable increase, one this council has avoided making for many years, but we are unable to prevent this and maintain the standards we have set, and you have come to expect.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS

This year's meeting will take place on
Monday 20 March 2017
at 7.30 pm

Victoria Hall, Market Square

Everyone welcome to attend!

On and Around Henhayes

Henhayes Playground

The extension to the playground at Henhayes continues to take shape. The whole area was grass seeded some months ago and now that the grass has properly taken, the heras fencing is to be removed and the area opened up to the public. The swings for the two new major pieces of play equipment will shortly be installed. A new flower border has been created and, as soon as the risk of frost has passed, this area will be planted up.

The Council is planning to purchase seats and benches for this new area. Should you wish to sponsor a seat, please contact the Town Council for further information.

Looking ahead, work is underway to choose an appropriate piece of play equipment to be positioned inside the dry "moat" area.

Drainage at Henhayes

An ongoing issue whenever there is heavy rainfall, is the poor drainage of surface rainwater across the lower part of the Henhayes pitch area. The Town Council is therefore working with a drainage contractor to investigate possible improvements to the drainage in this area. Any disruption caused by the necessary drainage improvement groundworks will be kept to an absolute minimum.

Crewkerne Rangers

The Town Council would like to welcome Crewkerne Rangers football club to the Henhayes playing field, which is now their home pitch. They play most Saturday afternoons during the season.



For further information, please contact Mark Holton for fixtures: crewkernerangers@aol.com



South Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau Outreach Sessions

The outreach service is at Crewkerne Town Hall from 10 am – 1 pm on the following dates:

- Thursday 23 February
- Thursday 9 March
- Thursday 23 March

Drop in for help and advice on any issue you may have

Another Successful Christmas Market

The Crewkerne Christmas market ran for only its third time in December and was hailed a success by traders and shoppers alike, despite some very inclement weather.

Although the amount of people visiting the market was down due to the weather, those that came were definitely buying.

The market boasted a very good range of stalls offering gift ideas, decorations, food and drink. An added attraction was the Crewkerne Crewners who sang at the top of the Town Hall steps and brought a very festive atmosphere to the whole event.

Thank you to all the stall holders and shoppers who attended as the weather forecast wasn't good for the day. We were also really pleased that the Crewners braved the rain to sing Christmas carols for us.

A Problem Near You?

Do you have concerns about overgrown paths or poor lighting? If you do, please let the Town Council know as we would like to draw up a list of areas that need attention, to enable us to lobby the relevant authorities to make improvements.

Tel: 01460 74001

Email: towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

Please Park Responsibly



In a town in Germany they have a sign that says, "Are you stuck in traffic? If so, the problem is you!" We may not be quite so forthright in Somerset, but it is a fact that many of the traffic problems in the town are caused by inconsiderate or thoughtless parking. Please drive and park with consideration for other road (and pavement) users.



Blue Badge Holders - There are government rules on where blue badge holders may park and where they cannot park. A blue badge is not a licence to park anywhere. Please do not park at a bus stop during hours of operation or on the zig-zag lines at pedestrian crossings.

DO NOT park where it would endanger, inconvenience or obstruct pedestrians or other road users, e.g. opposite or within 10 metres of a junction, where it would hold up traffic and where it would make the road narrow such as a traffic island. Finally the rules state; 'if you park where it would cause an obstruction or danger to other road users you could be fined or receive a penalty charge notice or have your vehicle removed'.

Crewkerne's Annual Lighting Up Event

Once again the crowds turned out to enjoy the annual Lighting Up in Crewkerne. The Stalls in Falkland Square and the George Shopping Centre did a roaring trade and many of the town centre shops and businesses stayed open to ensure the town was festive and busy.

There was a continual stream of people visiting the craft fair in the Victoria Hall, with, gluhwein and mince pies in hand! The children's Christmas Hat competition was popular and once again the standard was really high. Well done to everyone who took part.

Santa's procession this year included Merriott Majorettes and the fire engine from Crewkerne Fire Station. By the time Santa reached the stage for the Christmas lights switch on, there were well over a thousand people crammed into the Market Square.

The Crewkerne Christmas Committee were delighted with this year's event, it was a huge success but thanks especially go out to all the volunteers and businesses who helped make this happen and to everyone who donated generously on the night. If you would like to be involved, why not join the Christmas Committee? For more information, please email: Laura Gowers deputyclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

Somerset Day Craft Fair
Saturday 13 May

Bincombe Fair
Saturday 10 June

Lighting Up
Friday 24 November

Christmas Market
Saturday 9 December

SPEAK TO YOUR COUNCILLOR

**Forthcoming Town Council Surgeries in the
Community Office at the Town Hall, Market Square**

Saturday 18 February
Saturday 18 March
Saturday 22 April

10.30 a.m. to 12 noon

*Opportunity for informal conversations
with District and Town Councillors*

Pom Pom Bombing 2017

Once again Creative Crewkerne will be covering the town in Pom Poms from Saturday 22 April and hope that residents and retailers will take part by decorating windows, doors, gardens, fences, trees etc.

To celebrate this event this year there will be a special 'Pom Pom Ceilidh' on Friday 28 April, with the fabulous 'Banter' featuring Simon Care melodion virtuoso, Nina Zella on keyboard and Tim Waller on drum and trumpet!

To find out more:

Email: crewkernepompom@gmail.com

Follow Creative Crewkerne Facebook page or ask at the LIC desk in the Town Hall. Donations of help and or wool will be gratefully received.

Town Council New Website

The Town Council is in the final stages of developing a new website, which will bring a fresh, modern look to the site. By the time this newsletter is distributed, the new website should be "live".

The new website address is: www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk. If you have any comments or suggestions for our new website, please let us know.

Are you a Dog Owner?

Did you know that if your dog injures a person, another animal or destroys property, you may be liable for damages?



Successful claims can be brought against dog owners who can be proven legally liable for the injury, illness or death of a third party occurring as a result of an incident in which the animal is involved. Without third party liability insurance dog owners may find themselves paying compensation and costs awarded against them or a hefty legal bill to defend the claim. Penalties could also include a prison sentence.

Many dog owners have pet insurance which gives public liability cover. If you don't have pet insurance but you have home insurance or rental insurance, it may include third party public liability insurance; it is worth checking the small print. If you don't have any third party public liability insurance, it is worth exploring available policies.

It may save you a fortune.

If you have any comments or concerns about issues which affect Crewkerne, please contact:

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Tel: 01460 74001
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Website: www.crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

OFFICE STAFF

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 Deputy Town Clerk: Laura Gowers
 Finance Officer: Paula Hewitt
 Amenities Operations Manager: Mark Jay
 Administration Officer: Julie Cowie

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