

Minutes of a meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square at 18.45 on Monday 28 November 2022.

PRESENT

Cllrs. K. Head (Mayor), S. Ashton, M. Best, T. Bond, N. Draycott, D. Livesley, P. Maxwell, J. Morris, J. Nathan, A. Samuel, and A. Stuart.

In attendance: Town Clerk K. Sheehan, PS George Flint and 8 members of the public.

OPEN FORUM

Three members of the public raised concerns regarding the application from Taylor Wimpey to fell two mature lime trees on Station Road, at the entrance to the CLR development (22/03256/TPO), noting that:

- The trees had benefitted from Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) for the past 30 years; residents queried what the point of TPOs was if they could simply be removed to accommodate development.
- The trees were mature specimens forming part of the visual landscape on the approach to Crewkerne and could not be replaced once gone.
- Queries were raised over the required width of the junction, which had previously been accepted in a narrower format which wouldn't impact the trees in question.
- Detail on 'other options' considered by Taylor Wimpey was not included in the documents.
- Could root protection systems be investigated to help protect the trees and the health of the trees monitored over time?
- The trees played an important environmental and visual role and should be retained.

A member of the public representing Action Against Foxhunting (AAF) stated that the Seavington Hunt's Boxing Day meet in Crewkerne had not sought the required permissions to hold an event on the Highway and asked if the Town Council would give consideration to writing to the Hunt. She noted that there was an element of risk with horses and dogs in the roads and that AAF were in contact with Avon & Somerset Police and the County Council regarding this issue.

104 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

22/23

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Wakeman (unwell).

105 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

22/23

No declarations were made at this point. Declarations of interests were made later at the start of the confidential session and are listed at that point.

106 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2022

22/23

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24 October 2022 were AGREED as a true and accurate record.

Cllr. Best responded to a question on timescales for Millers Garage planning applications.

107 COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

22/23

Police Sergeant George Flint reported that:

- He had recently taken over from PS Rob Jameson – the area covered by the team was known as the 'Chard Cluster' and comprised Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, South Petherton and all parishes in between – 46 in total.
- He anticipated an additional Beat Manager joining the team in the New Year.
- In the previous 12-month period for Crewkerne and Misterton, there had been 418 reported crimes (an increase of 26%), including 219 incidents of anti-social behaviour (which is a decrease).
- The team were hoping to carry out more community engagement events including community walkabouts, 'coffee with a copper' and beat surgeries going forward.

PS Flint left the meeting following his report.

108 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

22/23

Cllr. Ashton reported that:

- A Boundary Commission consultation would be closing soon. Proposals included that Wayford and West Crewkerne parishes would no longer be in the same constituency.

Cllr. Best reported that:

- Somerset County Council budgeting process was underway, and would conclude in February.
- Local Community Networks would be confirmed in April.

109 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

22/23

The Town Clerk reported that:

- Lighting Up had been well attended and the street collection had raised £477.
- A revised transfer document had been received from South Somerset District Council (SSDC) in respect of the war memorial and gardens, new searches were underway.
- A grant had been received from the War Memorials Trust to support a professional conservator's report on the war memorial.
- The Community Fridge would reopen in the George Reynolds Centre from 1 December.

110 PLANNING

22/23

To consider planning applications due before the next Planning & Highways Committee meeting

22/03256/TPO

Land North of A356, Station Road, Crewkerne
Application to fell no. 2 trees as shown with the South Somerset District Council (CREW 2) 1993 Tree Preservation Order

Councillors noted that:

- The developer had originally been advised that a smaller junction would be acceptable, meaning that the trees would not need to be lost on visibility grounds.
- There was strong agreement that these mature trees form a very significant part of the visual landscape on the approach to Crewkerne and that the removal of the trees will permanently alter this.
- The trees might not be impacted negatively by the construction traffic and site and suggested that it would be worthwhile leaving them in situ and monitoring them.

- It was felt that the Tree Protection Orders were put on these trees for very good reasons, which still stand.
- The trees do not need to be lost in order for the link road to be delivered – the road is not, and should not, be contingent on this.
- At a time when this town is losing significant numbers of its mature tree specimens to Ash Dieback disease, it seems particularly important to preserve healthy mature trees.

It was AGREED that the Town Council would formally write to the Tree Officer at SSDC to request a site meeting with representatives of the developer and Highways to explore how best the trees could be retained.

22/02747/REM Land adj. to Crossways, Broadshard Road to Furringdons Cross
Reserved Matters Application for approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of approval 19/01064/OUT; Outline application for the erection of 1 No. dwelling and outbuildings

Crewkerne Town Council has no objections to this application but notes that the detailed plan of the dwelling does not correspond with any buildings denoted on the site layout plan (Figure 3).

20/03708/OUT Land at Goldwell Farm, Yeovil Road
Outline application for the development of up to 67 dwellings with associated access and highway works, drainage and attenuation, open space, play area and landscaping (access to be determined, all other matters reserved).

RECOMMEND REFUSAL on the following grounds:

- The strong objections that the Town Council submitted against the previous application (copied below, dated March 2021), are still valid.
- There are multiple inconsistencies and errors in the documentation for the application (i.e., out of date information pertaining to the CLR site).
- The proposal for the junction of the development to exit opposite Wadham Secondary School is extremely dangerous. The newly enlarged secondary school attracts a lot of traffic and young pedestrians twice a day and it would be very hazardous to have vehicles exiting the proposed development onto Ashlands Road at this point. Crewkerne Town Council regards the location of this proposed junction as unsafe and inappropriate.
- Furthermore, there is a detrimental cumulative impact upon the town due to multiple large development sites already underway in and around Crewkerne, putting excessive pressure on the town's infrastructure.

22/03181/FUL Lawrence Fine Art Auctioneers, South Street, Crewkerne
Erection of an entrance canopy.

RECOMMEND APPROVAL.

111 FINANCE
22/23 a. To approve the payments for November 2022

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Morris had verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Accounts for payment for 28 November 2022 in the sum of £51,193.65 were APPROVED.

b. To report the bank reconciliation for October 2022 has been completed

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Morris had verified the bank reconciliation for October 2022. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31st October 2022 was £541,393.78.

c. To note the interim report of the internal auditor

The report was noted and Councillors thanked the staff involved, noting that only three minor issues had been identified.

112 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

22/23 To agree content and draft of the town newsletter

The draft was AGREED without comment or change.

113 SOUTHMEAD GARAGES

22/23 To receive a verbal report from a site meeting with Abri

Cllr. Best reported that there had been a productive site meeting with Abri and the Neighbourhood Policing Team at Southmead Garages to discuss anti-social behaviour in the area. The Town Council would work with Abri on suggested measures to deter further incidences.

114 TREE PLANTING SCHEMES

22/23 To receive a report on a proposal for tree planting schemes on Town Council-owned land

Councillors responded positively to a report outlining a proposal to provide a detailed planting proposal from a local arborist. This proposal would relate to private planning projects in Crewkerne where he has advised that the client should seek off-site tree planting spaces as their own sites don't have room for more trees. This would demonstrate sustainability and gain in the local community.

115 SOMERSET EMERGENCY COMMUNITY CONTACTS

22/23 To identify up to three emergency contacts

Cllrs. Head, Best and Ashton agreed to act as emergency contacts. The Clerk was asked to submit details to the Civil Contingencies Unit.

It was noted that the production of a Community Resilience/Emergency Plan for Crewkerne should be revisited when a new member of staff was recruited.

116 TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES AND APPROVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN

- a. Planning and Highways Committee 5 September 2022 & 10 October 2022
- b. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 11 October 2022
- c. Amenities Committee 11 July 2022
- d. War Memorial Commemoration Trust 27 June 2022
- e. Youth Steering Group 18 July 2022
- f. Reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies (none)

Items detailed above were received, and recommendations agreed.

117 MATTERS OF REPORT

22/23

Cllr. Stuart noted that the gas works on Mount Pleasant were now completed, and works were now taking place on Ashlands Road.

118 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

22/23

Monday December 12th, 2022, following the meeting of Planning & Highways Committee, Council Chamber.

It was AGREED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable that the public and press be excluded and were instructed to withdraw.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION: EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC – CONTRACTUAL AND STAFFING MATTERS

Prior to the commencement of the confidential session, Cllr. Head declared a personal interest in the item relating to grant application by virtue of being a member of the Rugby Club, CUDOS and Crewkerne in Bloom. Cllr. Best declared a personal interest in the same item due to also being a member of CUDOS.

119 STAFFING COMMITTEE

22/23

To receive the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 11 November 2022 and agree the recommendations contained therein

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2022 were received and all recommendations duly AGREED.

120 COMMUNITY GRANTS APPLICATIONS 2023-24

22/23

The grants applications received were reviewed by Councillors. Further documentation would be required from one organisation.

121 BUDGET & PRECEPT 2023-24

22/23

To consider the draft budget and precept

No changes were made to the draft budget, which would be considered again at the January meeting of Policy and Resources, with the precept being set at the January Full Council meeting.

122 CEMETERY LODGE AND WORKSHOP PROJECT

22/23

To consider a report and agree a way forward on refurbishing the Lodge and unused chapel for use as an office and workshop space with associated implications for the lease of Unit 2

Councillors considered the report and AGREED:

- To proceed with the planned refurbishment of the Lodge and chapel for use as outlined above and in the report.
- To seek formal approval for this project from the Joint Burial Committee.
- To serve the landlords of Unit 2 with three months' notice to quit on 1st January 2023, ending the tenancy on 31st March 2023.
- To delegate authority to the Clerk in conjunction with the Chair of the JBC to proceed with relevant planning applications to move this project forward.



Cllrs. Best and Ashton agreed to investigate funding sources for insulation and report back.

The meeting closed at 20.30.

Signed:

Dated:

TC28Nov2022