

Minutes of a meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Market Square at 18.45 on Monday 26 June 2023.

PRESENT

Cllrs. A. Samuel (Mayor), S. Ashton, N. Draycott, K. Head, D. Livesley, J. Nathan, J. Morris, and A. Stuart.

In attendance: Town Clerk K. Sheehan and 12 members of the public.

OPEN FORUM

Members of the public raised the following issues:

- Bins at Happy Valley were in need of attention, with mismatched colour coding for general waste and dog bins.
- The bin located near the school was rusted through and could do with replacing.
- Councillors were urged to support the proposal for a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) at Kithill, as provision of green space would be hugely beneficial for the community.

23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

23/24

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Best, Bond, Maxwell and Wakeman (all personal).

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

23/24

None.

25 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2023

23/24

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 22 May 2023 were AGREED as a true and accurate record.

26 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE

23/24

Cllr. Ashton reported that:

- The Somerton and Frome parliamentary by-election meant a period of purdah was in place. He noted that a Somerset Council by-election would also be called in due course.
- The Area South Planning Committee would meet on 27 June to consider the Goldwell Farm application again.

Cllr. Head (LCN representative) reported that:

- The inaugural meeting of the Crewkerne and Ilminster LCN in Donyatt had been well attended.
- Cllr. Best had been elected to chair the LCN.
- Ideas and priorities had been discussed in breakout groups and future meetings would be bi-monthly starting from September.

27 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

23/24

The Town Clerk reported that:

- The tennis courts refurbishment had been delayed due to contractor illness; the planned start date was now hoped to be the following week.
- Three Neighbourhood Plan drop-in sessions had been held over the weekend to support the draft Aims and Objectives consultation; the two day time sessions had been well attended.
- The office was currently short staffed, responses were taking longer than usual.
- A large limb had fallen from a tree at Severalls, the Clerk had reported this to the Somerset Council Highways Tree Officer and requested that the trees be reassessed as higher priority for works on safety grounds.

28
23/24

FINANCE

- a. To approve the accounts for payment for June 2023 as listed
The Clerk reported that Cllr. Head had verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Accounts for payment for 26 June 2023 in the sum of £68,221.48 were APPROVED.
- b. To report the bank reconciliation for May 2023 has been completed
The Clerk reported that Cllr. Head had verified the bank reconciliation for May 2023. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31 May 2023 was £791,396.07.
- c. To receive the second report of the Internal Auditor
The second report of the Internal Auditor was noted, with Cllr. Samuel highlighting that this was a completely clear audit, with no non-conformities, and thanking the staff for their efforts.
- d. To formally approve the internally audited accounts for 2022-2023
The internally audited accounts for 2022-2023 were formally APPROVED.
- e. To approve the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2023.
 - i. Section 1: to approve the Annual Governance Statements
The Annual Governance Statements were APPROVED.
 - ii. Section 2: to approve the Accounting Statements
The Accounting Statements were APPROVED.
 - iii. To receive the internal auditor's audit report
The internal auditor's audit report was noted.
 - iv. To authorise the signatures of the Mayor and Town Clerk
The signatures of the Mayor and Town Clerk on the Annual Return were AUTHORISED.

All documents were signed by the Mayor and Town Clerk.

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23/24

GOVERNANCE

- a. To adopt an updated Equality & Diversity Policy
The Equality & Diversity Policy was AGREED.
- b. To adopt a Customer Service Policy
The Customer Service Policy was AGREED.

30 **QUEEN ELIZABETH II COMMEMORATION**

23/24 To consider suggestions to commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth II

After discussion, the Clerk was asked to obtain a price for a mature Cedar of Lebanon tree for planting at the Cemetery, subject to the approval of the Joint Burial Committee. Councillors also indicated that they would be interested in planting more trees if possible.

31 LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

23/24 To note this Council's intention to apply for Quality Council status

Councillors AGREED to apply for Quality Council status under the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS).

32 BINCOMBE BEECHES

23/24 To consider a proposal regarding an activity day based at Bincombe Beeches Nature Reserve

It was AGREED to delegate authority to the Deputy Clerk in conjunction with a small working party of councillors to arrange for an autumn activity day to take place at Bincombe Beeches.

Councillors Samuel, Nathan, Head and Morris expressed interest in sitting on the working party.

33 YOUTH OUTREACH

23/24 To receive a report from the youth outreach team on ongoing work at Happy Valley

An interim report from the youth outreach team was noted. A full report would follow at the end of term. Councillors felt that it might be worth considering funding the outreach work for a longer period of time.

34 LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

23/24 To receive a progress report regarding the proposed Local Nature Reserve at Kithill

Councillors noted a progress update from the Deputy Clerk and AGREED to authorise her to approach the relevant landowners in order to be able to progress this matter.

35 LIGHTING UP AND CHRISTMAS MARKET DATES 2023

23/24

The dates for the above events were confirmed as Friday 24th November and Saturday 25th November.

The Town Clerk was asked to approach Somerset Council to request some free parking schemes in the run up to Christmas.

36 TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES AND APPROVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:

23/24

- a. Planning & Highways Committee 24 April 2023.
- b. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 18 April 2023.
- c. Amenities Committee 15 May 2023.
- d. Joint Burial Committee 3 April 2023.
- e. Policy & Resources Committee 13 February 2023.
- f. Youth Steering Group 20 March 2023.
- g. Reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies.

All minutes above were duly noted and any recommendations AGREED.

37 MATTERS OF REPORT

23/24

Councillors raised the following issues:

- There would be a road closure at East Coker until 30th June to repair a burst water main.
- Instances of attempted vandalism had been noted around the back of the public toilets.
- Crewkerne District Rotary were looking for additional storage in the town centre.
- The two drain covers on Mount Pleasant had now been repaired.
- The bin store behind the former M&Co building was looking well cared for and tidy. The Clerk was asked to express thanks to the Management Company for their efforts.
- It was noted that the proposed extension to the fair's one way system had been deferred to the following financial year due to budgetary constraints.
- Planters in Falkland Square were going to be moved closer to the entrance by the Management Company.

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DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

23/24

Monday 24 July 2023, 18.45, Council Chamber.

The meeting closed at 19.31.

Signed:

Dated:

TC26June2023