

Councillors are hereby summoned, and members of the public and press are invited, to attend a meeting of the **Policy & Resources Committee** to be held on **Monday 15 January 2024**, following the Planning & Highways Committee meeting, and not commencing before 19.00 in the Beech Suite, George Reynolds Centre, Crewkerne.

Note:

- **Members of the public who wish to view the meeting proceedings, either in real time or afterwards, can access the meeting through the following link:**
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTA9K-7L4Onjcli2Gtz7tCg>

K. Sheehan, Town Clerk (signed on original)
9 January 2024

Agenda

Open Forum: Questions may be put to the Committee in person during this Public Participation Session of up to 15 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes per person. Issues notified to the Clerk a minimum of 3 working days before the meeting (i.e., by 5pm on the preceding Wednesday) will receive a response during this session. Issues raised in this session without prior notice may be referred to the Clerk to respond to within 10 working days or listed on a subsequent agenda.

1. **To note apologies for absence.**
2. **Declarations of interest** in items on the agenda.
3. **To confirm the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting** held on 9 October 2023.
4. **Clerk's Progress Report:** to receive a verbal update report (for information).
5. **Finance:**
 - a. Third quarter income and expenditure financial report: to receive a report.
 - b. Earmarked Reserves: to receive a report on predicted Earmarked Reserves as at 31 March 2024.
 - c. General Reserves: to receive a report on the estimated level of general reserves as at 31 March 2024.
 - d. Community grant application awards for 2024/25: to review the draft proposal for award of grants for recommendation to Full Council.
 - e. Budget for 2024/25: to consider the draft of the budget and associated precept calculation, for recommendation to Full Council.
6. **To receive Matters of Report** (for information only).
7. **Next meeting:** Monday 12 February 2024 at 18.45 following the Planning and Highways Committee meeting, Council Chamber, Town Hall.

**Quarterly Report: 3rd Quarter 2023/24
Overall Summary**

	Actual 2022/23			Budget 2023/24			Income/Expend to date 31/12/23			Yr. End Forecast 2023/24			Net expenditure: comparison of year end f'cast to budget	Prime reason(s) for variance	ER Used
	Expend	Income	Net	Expend	Income	Net	Expend	Income	Net	Expend	Income	Net			
Staff Costs	219415	0	219415	251104	0	251104	171915	0	171915	246085	0	246085	-5000		
Admin and bank interest/charges	52920	1266	51654	52800	40	52760	58597	3514	55083	83675	4492	79183	26400	Election expenses £28k/Temporary staff costs drawdown from ER £1.7k	1757
Town Hall & Victoria Hall	30023	8944	21079	39325	8384	30941	31865	7464	24400	59139	8978	50161	19200	Victoria Hall floor restoration overspend £3k. Town hall boiler£18k from ER	18000
Grounds Maintenance & Open Spaces	62166	14358	47808	96409	4330	92079	49762	3272	46490	83666	5040	78626	-13500	Increase in business rates £2k. Drawdown from ER £2.3k. Workshop project contingency £10k not used	2300
War Memorial Grounds	4271	3895	377	3050	2750	300	4269	0	4269	12641	5680	6961	6700	Pillar repair £8.6k - £4.5k drawdown from ER & £2.3k grant funding	4500
Cemetery	63471	142957	-79486	42,273	31,856	10417	27484	22628	4856	59346	32031	27315	16900	Path improvements drawdown from ER £15k	15000
Aqua Centre	1026	1776	-750	500	1000	-500	0	750	-750	500	1000	-500	0		
George Reynolds Centre	47113	19411	27702	42093	14300	27793	39850	17963	21887	55067	23881	31186	3400	Drawdown £2.8k from ER for air conditioning	2800
Grants	14136	0	14136	10000	0	10000	8499	0	8499	10000	0	10000	0		
Youth service	17492	0	17492	20162	0	20162	16951	0	16951	20932	0	20932	800		
Public toilets	11617	0	11617	14500	0	14500	8313	0	8313	10500	0	10500	-4000		
Projects	8602	16882	-8280	2500	0	2500	1488	2973	-1485	2973	2973	0	-2500	Neighbourhood plan £1k drawdown from ER	1000
Events	18697	8033	10665	16000	400	15600	9658	7605	2054	26143	7605	18538	2900	Bincombe extra event. Drawdown £2.1k from ER for Coronation/Bincombe/Christma s. £5k grant received for Art W/S	2100
TOTAL	550950	217523	333428	590716	63060	527656	428651	66169	362482	670666	91680	578986	51300		47457

Earmarked Reserves

2023/24

	Opening	Forecast		Year end balance	Proposed Transfer of unused expend	Year end total	Comments
		Yr end added	Yr end used				
Tennis Courts Upgrade	9,356.43			9,356.43		9,356.43	
Invest for Crewkerne's Future	6,751.69			6,751.69		6,751.69	
Bincombe	843.75		391.88	451.87		451.87	Bincombe fair
Youth Town Council	4,940.19			4,940.19		4,940.19	
Playgrounds	2,157.33			2,157.33		2,157.33	
Barn Street rec. ground	1,436.05			1,436.05		1,436.05	
Town Hall Project	19,355.39		18,000.00	1,355.39		1,355.39	Boiler
Victoria Hall Lift Upgrade	2,000.00			2,000.00		2,000.00	
Staff Costs	3,491.07		1,756.93	1,734.14		1,734.14	Temp staff costs
Neighbourhood Plan	1,000.00		1,000.00	0.00		0.00	
Service Devolution	1,100.00			1,100.00	2,500.00	3,600.00	
New Projects	19,950.00		600.00	19,350.00		19,350.00	Bincombe sculptures
Events	1,185.45		1,185.45	0.00		0.00	Coronation/Christmas
Severalls Pillar Repair	4,500.00		4,500.00	0.00		0.00	
GRC Project	2,800.00		2,800.00	0.00		0.00	
Grounds Maintenance	2,368.58		2,368.58	0.00		0.00	
Grounds Workshop	0.00			0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	
Imagination Tribe Art W/S	0.00	5,200.00	5,200.00	0.00		0.00	
Christmas Lighting Up	2,850.31	497.03		3,347.34		3,347.34	From Christmas Committee + street collection
CIL Funds	581.00	492.00		1,073.00		1,073.00	
Cemetery **	100,061.02	0.00	21,013.98	79,047.04		79,047.04	
TOTAL	186,728.26	6,189.03	58,816.82	134,100.47	12,500.00	146,600.47	

Cemetery **	Balance brought fwd	Added in year	Used in year	Total	Comments	West Crew 7%	Town Council 93%
Chapels				-		-	-
Trees	3,433.46			3,433.46		240.34	3,193.12
New Burial Grounds/Paths	15,000.00		15,000.00	-		-	-
Lodge	30,265.31		3,595.68	26,669.63		1,866.87	24,802.76
Total Allocated Reserves	48,698.77	-	18,595.68	30,103.09		2,107.22	27,995.87
Cemetery Unallocated Reserves	58,893.72		4,000.00	54,893.72		3,842.56	51,051.16
TOTAL CEMETERY RESERVES	107,592.49	-	22,595.68	84,996.81		5,949.78	79,047.03

Gate refurb/chairs/chairs/plaques

Estimated balance of General Reserves for the year ending 31 March 2024

	£	
Cash Balance		
Expenditure to date	428,651	
Forecast Expenditure to Year End	670,666	a
Income to date	66,169	
Forecast Income to Year End including Precept	619,336	b
Overall Cash Balance B/fwd as of 1 April 2023 **	315,952	c
Forecast Year End Cash Balance	264,622	d = c + b - a
** Excl. ABCD funds held & W.Crewkerne reserves held		
Earmarked Reserves		
Opening Balance 1st April 2023	186,728	
Balance as at		
Forecast Year End Earmarked Reserves	134,100	e
Plus transfer of unused expenditure to Earmarked Reserves	12,500	f
Forecast Year End Balance	146,600	g = e + f
General Reserves		
Forecast Year End Cash Balance	264,622	from d
Less Forecast Year End Earmarked Reserves	146,600	from g
Forecast General Reserves as at 31st March 2024	118,021	h = d - g
% of Precept	22.4%	

Conclusion

The estimated level of General Reserves at 31 March 2024 of approximately £ 118,021 represents 22.4% of the Precept. The minimum level of General Reserves required to be compliant with the Town Council's policy is 25%.

Report subject	Community Grant Applications: to review a draft proposal for award of grants for recommendation to Full Council.
Committee name	Policy & Resources Committee
Meeting date	15 th January 2024
Report author	Katharine Sheehan, Town Clerk
Report contact details	townclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

1. Purpose

To review the community grant applications received and make a recommendation to Full Council for the formal award of grants.

2. Background information

Twenty-one grant applications have been received for the Crewkerne Town Council Community Grants Fund 2024/25.

3. Detailed consideration

Organisation	Purpose of grant	Amount Requested	Proposed Award
Crewkerne & District Museum & Heritage Centre	Running costs	£1,500	£500
Crewkerne in Bloom	New self watering planters and compost	Any	£300
Enhayes Community Centre	Running costs	£2,000	£500
Merriott Majorettes	New costumes	£750	£500
Citizens Advice South Somerset	Crewkerne Community Access Point costs	£972	£972
Crewkerne & District Shed	Running costs	£1,000	£1,000
1 st Crewkerne Scout Group	New tents	£1,000	£500
Crewkerne Pegasus Karate Club	Floor mats, head guards, mitts	£1,000	£1,000
CUDOS	Communication system	Any	£200
Speedwell Club	Kitchen upgrade	£1,000	£250
St Bartholomew's School	Forest School area	Any	£250
Severalls War Memorial Gardening Group	Tools, plants and soil	£400	£400

Severalls Jubilee Bowls Club	Increased seating area and improvements to ramp	£1,000	£250
Phoenix Brass	New music stands	£950	£250
Crewkerne Gardening Club	Table coverings for flower show	£200	£200
Crewkerne Cricket Club	Renovation/weed killing of cricket square	£1,000	£500
Rotary Club of Crewkerne District	Contributions towards traffic management costs for the Fair	£750	£750
Crewkerne Wellbeing CIC	Convert kitchen to IT suite and meeting room	£1,000	£0
Crewkerne & District Twinning Association	Hospitality for twinning visitors	£500	£250
Rockin Daddy's Emporion CIC	PRS Licence	£207	£207
St Margaret's Hospice	Contribution towards Community Nurse Specialist	£1,500	£0
		TOTAL	£8,779

4. Financial implications

In previous years, Councillors have allocated a budget line of £10,000 for the community grants fund. Any underspend in the initial grant allocations determined in the January prior to the start of the financial year was reserved for any in-year applications.

The draft budget for 2024/25 also contains provision for £10,000 for community grants. The draft grants proposal currently allocates £8,779, leaving £1,221 for grant applications received during the financial year, particularly with regards to those groups facing unforeseen financial hardship.

5. Equalities considerations

Crewkerne Town Council's Grant Awarding Policy outlines the groups eligible for grant awards as well as those who are not entitled to apply and the reasons for this.

6. Council Action Plan objectives supported

1.3.3 Support Sports Clubs to improve pitch quality.

9.4 Support opportunities to bring the community together.

10.2 Grow and promote Crewkerne Town Council's Community Grants programme.

7. Recommendation

7.1. It is recommended that the Committee **RESOLVES** that:

- a) The draft grant awards as outlined above be recommended to Full Council for formal approval.

Report subject	Budget for 2024/25 – to consider the draft budget and associated precept calculation for recommendation to Full Council
Committee name	Policy & Resources Committee
Meeting date	15 th January 2024
Report author	Katharine Sheehan, Town Clerk
Report contact details	townclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To consider the draft budget and precept calculation for the forthcoming financial year and make a formal recommendation to Full Council to approve both budget and precept.

2. Background information

- 2.1. The budgeting process is taking place against a backdrop of financial uncertainty at Somerset Council, which faces significant financial pressures and has indicated that the way in which assets and services will be funded and delivered across the county will be changing.
- 2.2. Councillors have received various bulletins and emails from Somerset Council outlining the situation.
- 2.3. Somerset Council will not take a final decision on assets and services until 20th February 2024, which is after the latest deadline for town and parish council precept-setting and submission.

3. Detailed consideration

- 3.1. Councillors must consider the expectations that the community has of the standard of services currently provided by Somerset Council.
- 3.2. Councillors have been provided with data from a recent consultation exercise to better understand resident's priorities in the town.
- 3.3. The draft budget contains provision to meet the Crewkerne Town Council continuing workstream and, additionally, potentially support elements of the services devolved from Somerset Council.
- 3.4. Crewkerne Town Council workstream and 'headline' projects currently contained in the draft budget:
 - Increased public-facing office and LIC hours, including extended hours of telephone lines being open. Support increase in footfall to offices, volume of telephone calls and emails from members of the public/contractors/partners. Enables contractors etc. to communicate effectively after 1pm. Enables members of the public to access the Customer Access Point and other advice and support services for extended periods each week.

- Repainting and restoration of Town Hall’s exterior woodwork to prevent further deterioration.
 - Restoration of the internal chapel workshop walls and refurbishment/replacement of guttering in accordance with the listing.
 - Continued programme of works across all CTC-owned sites to tackle Ash Die Back disease and associated replanting schemes.
 - Continued provision of town events such as Lighting Up, Christmas Markets, Summer events e.g. Henhayes Fair, tennis courts launch.
 - Continuation of Community Grants Fund which supports multiple community groups and projects.
 - Provision of twice-weekly Youth Service sessions for 5–11 year olds and 6-19 year olds (Fun Time and Youth Zone).
 - Play Day events and continuation of Youth Outreach work at alternative CTC sites such as Happy Valley.
 - Establishment of a Youth Council/Advisory Group or ‘Youth Voice’ group for the Town.
 - Provision for by-election costs at new Somerset Council rates of £14,000 per by-election.
 - Continuation of the production and delivery of the town newsletter and annual report.
 - Ongoing support for the Community Kitchen to prevent food going to landfill being donated to the community by provision of a base.
 - Support for toddler free-to-access art classes by provision of a location.
 - Delivery of a hearing loop for the Council Chamber to meet obligations under the DDA.
 - Support for the annual summer town centre planting/hanging baskets.
- 3.5. Additionally, the budget provides for the ongoing maintenance, staffing, insurance and safe operation of all the Council’s open spaces, play equipment, assets, venues and offices including:
- Town Hall
 - Victoria Hall
 - Local Information Centre
 - Open space at front of Town Hall for markets, events etc
 - The George Reynolds Centre
 - Aquacentre
 - Cemetery Lodge
 - Cemetery Chapels
 - Severalls Band Hall
 - Henhayes Recreation Ground, sports pitches and play areas
 - Townsend Cemetery
 - Bincombe Beeches Nature Reserve
 - Henhayes car park
 - Happy Valley
 - Southmead Playground
 - Barn Street Recreation area
 - Bincombe Allotments
 - Severalls Allotments
 - Severalls Bowls Club
 - Severalls Tennis Courts
 - Severalls War Memorial Gardens and ‘Tommy’ war memorial

- Falkland Square Public Toilets
- 3.6. In addition to the Crewkerne Town Council workstream as outlined above, the budget builds in flexible support to allow for the accommodation of services no longer provided by Somerset Council. Councillors received a list of Somerset Council services under consideration on 8th January. The document, however, emphasised that final decisions would not be taken until 20th February.
- 3.7. The CTC draft budget allows for additional operational support which would allow for many of the at-risk services, including an additional council vehicle to allow for the more efficient deployment of the existing grounds team.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. Crewkerne Town Council must set a budget and precept for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 4.2. The draft budget circulated has the following effect on a Band D property:

	2023/24 Financial Year (current)	2024/35 Financial Year
Equivalent Band D charge	£209.52	£249.78
£ change in Band D charge (per year)	£19.59	£40.26
£ change in Band D charge (per week)	£0.37	£0.77

5. Council Action Plan objectives supported

1.1.6, 1.3.3, 1.9.7, 2.1.1, 3.12, 3.13, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 6.6, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.6, 9.1, 9.2, 9.4, 10.2

JBC Action Plan objectives: 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.10

6. Recommendation

- 7.1. It is recommended that the Committee **RESOLVES** that:
- a) The draft budget and associated precept calculation (precept of £636,114) circulated be formally recommended to Full Council for approval OR the draft budget and associated precept calculation as amended be formally recommended to Full Council for approval.

APPENDIX A: Draft budget and precept calculation for 2024/25.

Crewkerne Town Council

APPENDIX A

PRECEPT 2024/25 SUMMARY PAGE	23/24 Precept			2024/25 Precept			Comments
	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	
SALARIES	251,104	0	251,104	308,729	0	308,729	
ADMIN	52,800	40	52,760	74,238	2,500	71,738	
TOWN HALL AND VIC. HALL	39,325	8,384	30,941	46,547	9,629	36,918	
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	96,409	4,330	92,079	97,541	4,567	92,974	
WAR MEMORIAL GROUNDS	3,050	2,750	300	7,077	5,582	1,495	
CEMETERY	42,273	31,856	10,417	41,908	32,818	9,090	
AQUA CENTRE	500	1,000	-500	500	1,000	-500	
GRC	42,093	14,300	27,793	50,385	19,000	31,385	
GRANTS	10,000		10,000	10,000		10,000	
YOUTH PROVISION	20,162		20,162	18,935		18,935	
PUBLIC TOILETS	14,500		14,500	12,500		12,500	
PROJECTS	2,500		2,500	26,000		26,000	
EVENTS	16,000	400	15,600	18,350	1,500	16,850	
SUB TOTALS	590,716	63,060	527,656	712,711	76,596	636,114	
AMOUNT TO COLLECT FROM CREWKERNE COUNCIL TAX PAYERS			527,656			636,114	
TAX BASE			2,518.38			2,546.69	Tax base confirmed
Equivalent Band D charge			£209.52			£249.78	Per annum
£ change in Band D charge			£19.59			£40.26	Per annum

Signed

Date