

Minutes of a meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Market Square at 18.45 on Monday 25 September 2023.

**PRESENT**

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

In attendance: Town Clerk K. Sheehan and 5 members of the public.

**OPEN FORUM**

A member of the public highlighted their concerns regarding the running costs associated with the George Reynolds Centre and asked Councillors to consider way to maximise income to reduce pressure on the public purse.

Cllr. Samuel welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded Councillors to speak clearly for the benefit of the live stream.

56  
23/24 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Draycott (personal) and Wakeman (work commitments).

57  
23/24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Cllr. Nathan declared an interest in the request from the Rotary Club to locate a shipping container on Henhayes by virtue of being a member of the Rotary Club.

Cllrs. Samuel and Morris declared interests in the request from the Royal British Legion to hold an event outside Town Hall by virtue of being members of the RBL.

58  
23/24 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2023**

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24 July 2023 were AGREED as a true and accurate record.

59  
23/24 **TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr. Ashton reported that:

- The Full Council would meet later in the week.
- Budget discussions would be starting shortly and were expected to be challenging.
- He had attended a briefing on funding available through the Rural England Prosperity Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Cllr. Best reported that:

- Adult Social Care costs continued to escalate and would cause budgetary pressures again. Additionally, care home places were increasingly at a premium as are being utilised to relieve pressure on hospital beds.

- The latest Crewkerne & Ilminster area LCN meeting had taken place, with a focus on Highways issues.

Cllr. Head (LCN representative) reported that:

- The September meeting of the LCN had focused on Highways issues, noting that some useful data had been presented, which would be circulated in due course. Highways Officers in attendance were very knowledgeable and took away a number of concerns and issues. The next meeting will be 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- A duty officer system would be implemented for urgent issues due to the length of time 101 calls were taking to be answered.

60 **CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT**

23/24

The Town Clerk reported that:

- The barrister who had previously given planning advice on the outline planning application at Kithill had responded to say they would be available to give an assessment of fees towards the end of September.

61 **PLANNING**

23/24

To consider applications due before the next meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee

Councillors noted the following application:

**23/02271/TPO 4 Lambourne Court Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7DF**

Application to carry out Tree Surgery works to No. 1 Tree as shown within the South Somerset District Council (CREW 1) 2007 Tree Preservation Order.

Councillors reported difficulty accessing documents from the planning portal and were reminded to report such issues directly to Somerset Council.

62 **FINANCE**

23/24

- To approve the accounts for payment for September 2023 as listed  
The Town Clerk reported that Cllr. Head had verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Accounts for payment for 25 September 2023 in the sum of £46,487.21 were APPROVED.
- To report the bank reconciliation for July and August 2023 have been completed  
The Town Clerk reported that Cllr. Head had verified the bank reconciliations for July and August 2023. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31 July 2023 was £717,508.85 and cash in hand as of 31 August 2023 was £678,226.49.
- To consider rents and hire charges for forthcoming budget deliberations, to include setting a season charge for the sports clubs for the current year  
Cllrs. Best and Head declared an interest by virtue of being members of Cudos, Cllr. Head also declared an interest by virtue of being a member of the rugby club. After a brief discussion, the item was deferred to a future meeting.
- To note the conclusion of the External Audit for 2022/23 with no issues raised

Councillors noted the completion of the audit process for the previous financial year and thanks were extended to the Finance Officer and Town Clerk for their efforts.

**63** **SMALLHOLDINGS AND ALLOTMENTS ACT**

23/24 **To note receipt of requests with regards to allotment provision and to delegate to the Town Clerk to make further enquiries with relevant authorities**

The Town Clerk reported that six requests had been received requesting that the Town Council considers providing additional allotment space using the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908. Councillors noted the requests and the Clerk was asked to make further enquiries regarding potential costs and the process with the relevant authorities.

**64** **HENHAYES RECREATION GROUND**

23/24 **To consider a request from Crewkerne District Rotary to locate a shipping container on Henhayes**

Councillors noted that a shipping container currently located on Henhayes was no longer usable and would be removed at the end of the rugby season to avoid damage to the pitch. A request from the Rotary Club to use the space for a new container for storage of the sleigh was considered. Further information on the size and type of the proposed container was requested, as well as details on how the sleigh would be accessed without damaging the playing surface.

**65** **ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

23/24 **To consider a request from the RBL to hold an awareness event outside Town Hall**

It was **AGREED** that the RBL could hold an awareness event outside Town Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> October, subject to receipt of a risk assessment and public liability insurance.

**66** **COUNCILLOR SURGERIES**

23/24 **To identify Councillors to support surgeries October - January**

Two Councillors were identified for each surgery until January, with the exception of October, where one further Councillor was still required.

**67** **CHRISTMAS EVENT ARRANGEMENTS**

23/24 a. **To consider a quote for the installation of Christmas lights.**

A quote for £6110.80 + VAT from Knight Electrical was ACCEPTED. A dispensation for proceeding on the basis of only one quote was made on the basis that the lighting system is bespoke and would be difficult for a contractor unfamiliar with the set up to undertake the work. However, it was noted that while the lights were up, a walk through with another electrical contractor would be undertaken to allow them also to quote for the work in 2024.

b. **To consider a quote for the Christmas Lighting Up road closure operation.**

A quote for £1783.54 + VAT from Bradsons was ACCEPTED.

**68** **TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES AND APPROVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:**

23/24

- a. Planning & Highways Committee 7 August 2023.
- b. Amenities Committee 10 July 2023.
- c. Youth Steering Group 15 May 2023.
- d. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 11 July 2023.
- e. Reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies.

All minutes above were duly noted and any recommendations AGREED. No reports from representatives to outside bodies were received.

69 **MATTERS OF REPORT**

23/24

Councillors raised the following issues:

- Ongoing roadworks on Ashlands Road/ Bincombe Drive – the Clerk had already contacted Wessex Water for an update.
- Overflowing dog bins which have been reported. Concerns raised about how frequently Somerset Council were emptying them. Cllr. Best agreed to highlight these concerns with the Somerset Council officers.
- Requests for a bus shelter on Furland Road had been received.

70 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

23/24

Monday 30 October 2023, 18.45, 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 – Staffing and commercially sensitive information.**

71 **YOUTH SERVICE REVIEW**

23/24

To receive the external report on the Youth Service and determine next steps/approve tender documentation

This item was deferred to a future meeting to enable all councillors to review the documents.

72 **APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY CLERK**

23/24

Councillors AGREED the recommendation of the Town Clerk regarding the appointment of a candidate for the Deputy Clerk position, who would commence work on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

The meeting closed at 19.58.

**Signed:** .....

**Dated:** .....

TC25September2023