

Minutes of a meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Market Square at 18.45 on Monday 30 October 2023.

PRESENT

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

In attendance: Town Clerk K. Sheehan, Deputy Town Clerk G. Hughes and approximately eleven members of the public.

OPEN FORUM

Members of the public raised the following issues:

- Whether there would be an update on the requests received by the Town Council to consider compulsorily hiring or purchasing land adjacent to Henhayes.
- Flash flooding in the town centre during heavy rainfall over the weekend. Some discussion took place about previous investigations into water running from the Chard Road, and it was hoped that this could be discussed on the next Highways walkaround.
- A query was raised about the gravel purchased for the Lodge driveway, which the Town Clerk clarified, noting that two different types of gravel were purchased, a small amount for a path and a greater quantity for the driveway and rear. The member of the public also referred to high electricity usage at the George Reynolds Centre.
- The applicant for the planning application relating to 2 Church Path highlighted that the steps under construction were reinstating some steps previously located outside the property. He noted that he now understood the requirements of renovating a Listed Building, hence the retrospective nature of the application.
- Councillors were thanked for their efforts in getting the tennis courts at Severalls refurbished and reopened. They were asked if they would consider providing a box of tennis racquets and balls for people to borrow when using the courts. The member of the public would be able to arrange a ready supply of donated racquets and the Town Clerk was asked to liaise with her to get suitable storage in place to support this request.

79 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

23/24

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

80 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

23/24

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.

81 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2023

23/24

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 9 October 2023 were AGREED as a true and accurate record.

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

23/24

Cllr. Best reported that:

- Somerset Council was giving an early warning that a S114 process was very likely to be commenced, perhaps as early as February 2024. Pressures from Adult Social Care requirements continued to rise and Town and Parish Councils were being strongly encouraged to budget for additional pressures.

Cllr. Head (LCN representative) reported that:

- The next meeting would be on 15 November at the Shrubbery Hotel in Ilminster.

83
23/24

CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

The Town Clerk reported that:

- The Bincombe Beeches Activity Day had been very successful and well attended despite the inclement weather. £73.01 had been donated for tree planting.
- The newly refurbished tennis courts were now open for bookings and a number of annual passes had been purchased, and bookings made. A formal launch event would hopefully be held in the spring.
- Councillor Simon Woodland had attended Town Hall to sign his declaration of acceptance of office and associated paperwork.
- Gutter cleaning at the Town Hall, Lodge and GRC would take place later in the week, with apologies to users of these buildings for any disruption to access.

Councillors expressed thanks to the staff for putting on the day, with particular thanks to the Grounds Supervisor and welcomed the arrival of the new wooden chainsaw sculptures for the nature trail.

84
23/24

PLANNING

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

23/01690/LBC 2 Church Path Crewkerne Somerset Ta18 7HX

Proposed en-suite shower room, replacement roof light, construct new entrance steps, replacement inspection drain cover and sunken light-well to cellar.

Councillors noted that the steps are not in keeping with the appearance of the Listed Building or the Conservation Area in which they are situated. Councillors had concerns over the size, design and quality of the steps. Fencing had been erected and left for some time which was felt to be visually detrimental to the Conservation Area, and unsightly on one of the major entrance routes to an historic market town.

Crewkerne Town Council raised no objections to any of the internal alterations in this application. However, it strongly objected to the entrance steps on the grounds outlined above, and asked that the LPA to clarify its understanding of the land ownership in this location. The Town Clerk was asked to submit the relevant Land Registry plans to show that the steps are not located on land belonging to 2 Church Path.

Recommend **REFUSAL**.

23/02482/ADV 9 Market Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7JP

Display of 2 No. non-illuminated fascia signs.

Crewkerne Town Council raised no objections to the signage but queried loading/unloading arrangements. It was felt that while the internal layout and therefore possible loading/unloading proposals were not part of this planning application they would nonetheless have serious implications for traffic and parking in the town centre and Councillors expressed hope that the developer would look again and perhaps provide reassurance that loading and unloading will continue to be carried out at the back of the building.

85
23/24 **FINANCE**

- a. To approve the accounts for payment for October 2023 as listed
The Town Clerk reported that Cllr. Nathan had verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Accounts for payment for 30 October 2023 in the sum of £60,722.43 were APPROVED.
- b. To report the bank reconciliation for September 2023 has been completed
The Town Clerk reported that Cllr. Nathan had verified the bank reconciliation for September 2023. It was noted that cash in hand as of 30 September 2023 was £639,661.71.
- c. To agree the payment of overtime to the Grounds Team in respect of Bincombe Beeches Activity Day, Lighting Up and the Christmas Market events
It was AGREED to pay overtime to the Grounds Team for the above events which were taking place at either evenings or weekends.

86
23/24 **SMALLHOLDINGS AND ALLOTMENTS ACT**
To receive a verbal update from the Clerk and to consider next steps

The Town Clerk reported that she had followed up with enquiries regarding the process of acquiring land using this legislation. Somerset Council had advised that it was unable to participate in this process due to resource issues but had suggested making contact with a specialist law firm. It was noted that two days specialist legal work could potentially cost £6,000. The Clerk was asked to pursue initial contact with the specialist solicitors to gather further information about process and costs and report back to Council.

87
23/24 **HENHAYES RECREATION GROUND**
To receive updated proposals from Crewkerne District Rotary regarding shipping container storage on Henhayes.

It was AGREED that Crewkerne District Rotary could purchase and install a shipping container on Henhayes once the disused container was removed, providing that Rotary undertake to rectify any damage caused to playing pitches when accessing the container.

88
23/24 **GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE**
To consider quotations for the cleaning of the GRC building

Following discussion about the previous cleaning contract and the need to identify alternative cleaners, it was **AGREED** to award the cleaning contract to AIS contract cleaners at a cost of £680 + VAT per four weeks.

89
23/24 **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**
To appoint a Town Council to the vacant position on the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr. Woodland agreed to consider this position.

90 **NEWSLETTER**
23/24 To approve the autumn town newsletter

The circulated draft newsletter was AGREED for publication.

91 **CHRISTMAS EVENT ARRANGEMENTS**
23/24 To receive an update on Christmas events from the Deputy Clerk

The Deputy Clerk reported that:

- The arrangements for the road closures had been made
- There was now only availability for outdoor stalls on the Saturday morning market
- Volunteers were required for both the Friday evening and Saturday

92 **TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES AND APPROVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:**
23/24

- a. Planning & Highways Committee 11 September 2023.
- b. Policy & Resources Committee 12 June 2023.
- c. 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.

93 **MATTERS OF REPORT**
23/24

Councillors raised the following issues:

- Issues with bins overflowing had been raised with the portfolio holder at Somerset Council. The response had identified that some households were struggling with three-weekly general waste collections, leading to bags being placed into public litter bins.
- Two streetlights opposite Cloverleaf Row were not working.

94 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**
23/24

Monday 27 November 2023, 18.45, Council Chamber.

The meeting closed at 19.59.

Signed:

Dated:

TC30October2023