

Minutes of a meeting of the POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the Beech Suite, George Reynolds Centre, following a meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee on Monday 15 January 2024.

PRESENT:

Cllr. A. Stuart (Chair), M. Best, K. Head, D. Livesley, J. Morris, J. Nathan, A. Samuel and S. Woodland.

In attendance: Town Clerk K. Sheehan, Deputy Clerk G. Hughes and one member of the public.

OPEN FORUM

No one wished to speak.

20 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

23/24

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. T. Bond and N. Draycott, (both unwell), and Cllr. S Ashton (personal).

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

23/24

Cllr. Head declared an interest in the agenda item relating to grant applications by virtue of being a member of CUDOS and Crewkerne in Bloom. Cllr. Best declared an interest in the same item due to his membership of CUDOS and the Twinning Association. Cllr. Samuel declared an interest in this item due to being employed at St. Bartholomew's Primary School and Cllr. Nathan also declared an interest in the same item as a member of Crewkerne and District Rotary.

22 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

23/24

It was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 9 October 2023 be **APPROVED**.

23 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

23/24

None.

24 FINANCE

23/24

a. To receive the third quarter income and expenditure report

The report was noted with no questions asked.

b. To receive a report on the predicted status of Earmarked Reserves as at 31 March 2024

The report was noted. Cllr. Best queried the Reserve for the Victoria Hall lift upgrade and the Town Clerk was asked to investigate if works were up to date. It was noted that the works to the Severalls Pillars had been completed to a very high standard and that this would use up the Pillar Repair Reserve.

c. To receive a report on the estimated level of General Reserves as at 31 March 2024

Councillors noted the report, which estimated the year end level of General Reserves at 22.4%, which is lower than the minimum level required by the Town Council's policy of 25%. This was due to the cost of the October by-election at £14,000 and the strong likelihood of a second by-election in March.

d. To review the Community Grant applications for 2024/25 and make a formal recommendation to Full Council for approval

The list of proposed grant awards had been published and circulated:

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
Henhayes 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

The grant allocations as outlined above were **AGREED** without change for formal ratification by Full Council.

e. To consider the draft budget and associated precept calculation for 2024/25 and make a formal recommendation to Full Council for approval

Following discussion about the possible need to budget for two by-elections, the following adjustments to the draft budget and precept calculation were made:

- Provision for two summer holiday play days
- Minor upgrades to GRC and Town Hall alarm systems
- Clearance works behind the public toilets at Falkland Square

Cllr. Best noted that the Household Waste & Recycling Centre (HWRC) was on the list of sites proposed for closure and that increasing financial pressures on Somerset Council due principally to social care costs would likely entail further services in towns and parishes would either cease, or significantly change. Cllr. Stuart noted the long list of open spaces, community facilities and venues which were provided by the Town Council.

The amended budget and precept requirement of £639,414 were **AGREED** by all for recommendation to Full Council for formal approval. (Change to a Band D charge of an additional £41.55 p/a, or 79p per week).

25 **MATTERS OF REPORT**

23/24

None.

26 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

23/24

Monday 12 February 2024, following the Planning & Highways Committee meeting in the Council Chamber, Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 19.39.

Signed:

Dated:

Pr15January2024