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Town Clerk:
Katharine Sheehan

2 February 2024

Cllr. Dixie Darch, Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change
Via email: dixie.darch@somerset.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Darch,

Proposed closure of Crewkerne Household Waste Recycling Centre

Crewkerne Town Council discussed the proposals to closure the town's HWRC at its recent Full Council meeting. My Councillor colleagues have asked me to write and express their firm opposition to the proposal and ask, in the strongest possible terms, that Crewkerne's HWRC be removed from the list of sites slated for closure.

As our site is only open three days a week, it is inevitable that it will process less waste than the sites operating seven days a week. It seems inequitable to use this data as part of the justification for closing it. Councillors and residents are rightly concerned that this is not a 'pure' saving – the number of car miles added to our highways when our residents bring their waste to Chard or Yeovil instead is not in keeping with environmental commitments made by Somerset Council, and will add wear and tear to the road network. If all the visits made to Crewkerne HWRC were instead routed to Chard, it would add in excess of 600,000 car miles to Somerset's highways.

Additionally, there will inevitably be an associated increased in fly-tipping which will be detrimental to our countryside and create additional financial pressures to clear up. Black bin collections are now only once every three weeks, but the lack of a locally accessible HWRC will mean that people fill their general waste bins even more. Again, this contradicts Somerset Council's commitment to be cleaner and greener.

There is rightly a high level of concern in our town that this valuable service could be lost. Petitions are being circulated I understand that it is yet to be decided and that a public consultation will take place in due course. However, the Town Council wants to express its firm opposition to the closure in the hope that it will be taken off the table completely. We also understand that the proposal has been amended to 'make savings from the core contract' but would like to seek assurances that this does not include any change to provision to the Crewkerne site.

I would be grateful for your comments as soon as possible and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

Cllr. Alice Samuel
Mayor of Crewkerne

cc. Cllrs. Mike Best and Steve Ashton, Ward Members, Somerset County Council
Katharine Sheehan, Town Clerk, Crewkerne Town Council
Mickey Green, Managing Director, Somerset Waste Partnership