

Councillors are hereby summoned, and members of the public and press are invited, to attend a meeting the **Annual Meeting of the Full Council** to be held on **Monday 18th May 2026**, starting at 18.45, in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne for the purpose of transacting the business outlined on the agenda below.

Notes:

- The recording of the meeting will be uploaded for members of the public who wish to view it via the following link: [Crewkerne Town Council - YouTube](#)
- Members of the public requiring assistance or reasonable adjustments to aid their attendance at council meetings are asked to contact the Council Offices in advance using the above contact details. Documents are available in large print by request.
- Recording of meetings is permitted under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014; please refer to the Council's Policy on Audio/Visual Recording & Photography at Meetings ([Recording Meetings policy](#))
- Public participation is welcome during the allocated Public Open Forum session, please refer to Section 3 of the Council's Standing Orders ([Standing-Orders-May-2025.pdf](#))

Gemma Hughes PSLCC, Town Clerk (signed on original)
12 May 2026

Agenda

- 001/2627** **Election of Mayor** and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- 002/2627** **Election of Deputy Mayor** and signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- 003/2627** **To receive and approve apologies for absence.**
a. To record members present:
Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires:
 - a record be kept of the members in attendance.
 - this record forms part of the minutes of the meeting.
 - Members who are unable attend a meeting should tender apologies in advance to the Town Clerk and the grounds for apologies tendered will also be recorded.b. To approve any apologies for absence:
Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires:
 - Members present to decide if the reason(s) for a member's absence are acceptable.
- 004/2627** **To receive declarations of pecuniary or personal interests in items on the agenda and any dispensations.**
The Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct requires:
 - Members to declare any interests not currently recorded in the Member's Register of Interests or not notified to the Monitoring Officer of it.
 - Requests for Dispensations should be made in writing to the Clerk in advance of the meeting.
- 005/2627** **To approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting** held on 27th April 2026.

- 006/2627** **One Minute Silence:** To note the passing of Ron Spencer (Honoured Citizen 2005). The Council is asked to observe a one-minute silence in their memory.
- 007/2627** **Public Open Forum:** Questions may be put to the Council 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. The Mayor reserves the right to vary or extend these time limits.
- 008/2627** **To elect:**
a) Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning and Highways Committee
b) Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee
c) Chair and Vice Chair of the Amenities Committee
- 009/2627** **To appoint:**
a) The members of the Joint Burial Committee
b) Councillors to sub-committees and steering groups listed in the attached report
c) Banking signatories and online banking authorisers for payments
d) Councillors to check the invoices and reconciliations each month prior to Full Council meetings
e) Representatives to Outside Bodies listed in the attached report
- 010/2627** **To reaffirm the following (minor changes highlighted):**
a) Standing Orders
b) Financial Regulations
c) Code of Conduct
d) That the Council remains eligible to use the General Power of Competence (GPC) because it continues to meet the requirements
- 011/2627** **To receive reports from:**
a) Somerset Council
b) Crewkerne & Ilminster Local Community Network
c) Crewkerne Neighbourhood Policing Team
- 012/2627** **Clerk's progress report:** to receive a verbal update report (for information only).
- 013/2526** **Finance & Procedure:**
a) To approve the accounts for payment for April 2026 as listed.
b) To report the bank reconciliation for April 2026 has been completed.
c) To note the monthly accounts for the War Memorial Commemoration Trust have been checked.
- 014/2526** **Newsletter:** To approve a draft copy and accompanying annual report
- 015/2627** **IT contract:** To review quotations for an IT contract
- 016/2627** **To receive the following minutes:**
a) Reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies
b) Planning & Highways Committee: 9 February 2026
c) Amenities Committee: 12 January 2026
- 017/2627** **To receive Matters of Report** (verbal reports for information only).
- 018/2627** **Next meeting:** Monday 22nd June 2026, 18.45, Council Chamber, Town Hall.

Appointment of Councillors to Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Committees, Working Groups and other appointments: 2026/27

| Committee/Working Group | | 2025-26 | 2026-27 |
|--|--|---|---------|
| Mayor | | Cllr. Alice Samuel | |
| Deputy Mayor | | Cllr. Kathy Head | |
| Planning & Highways Committee | Chair | Cllr. Jan Nathan | |
| | Vice Chair | Cllr. Paul Maxwell | |
| Policy & Resources Committee | Chair | Cllr. Andrea Stuart | |
| | Vice Chair | Cllr. Christine Rawe | |
| Amenities Committee | Chair | Cllr. Mike Best | |
| | Vice Chair | Cllr. Nigel Draycott | |
| Joint Burial Committee | | Cllr. Mike Best | |
| | | Cllr. Nigel Draycott | |
| | | Cllr. Alice Samuel | |
| | | Cllr. Andrea Stuart | |
| | | Cllr. Christine Rawe | |
| Staffing Sub-Committee | Mayor: Cllr. Alice Samuel Cllr. Mike Best Cllr. Nigel Draycott Cllrs. Andrea Stuart and Christine Rawe (reserves) | This year there will be 4 sub-committee members and ONE reserve | |
| Youth Service Steering Group | Cllr. Jan Nathan VACANT | | |
| Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group | Town Council representatives: Cllr. Kathy Head VACANT Cllr. Jan Nathan <u>Plus four non councillors</u> | | |
| Happy Valley Working Group | Cllr. Best Cllr. Stuart Cllr. Draycott Cllr. Nathan VACANT | | |
| Road Markings and Parking Working Group | Cllr. Best Cllr. Ashton Cllr. Nathan | | |
| Bincombe Beeches Working Group | Cllr. Nathan Cllr. Maxwell | | |
| Grievance, Capability and Disciplinary Committee | Mayor: Cllr. Alice Samuel Cllr. Mike Best Cllr. Christine Rawe VACANT Cllr. Nigel Draycott Cllr. Steve Ashton | | |
| Appeals Committee | Deputy Mayor: Cllr. Kathy Head Cllr. Paul Maxwell Cllr. David Livesley Cllr. Jan Nathan Cllr. Andrea Stuart Cllr. Judith Morris | | |
| Other appointments | | | |
| Banking signatories for cheques and online banking authorisers | Cllrs. Best, Head, Stuart, Draycott, Samuel and Nathan | | |
| Cllrs to check invoices and reconciliations each month prior to Town Council meetings | Cllrs. Best, Morris, Nathan and Head | | |

| AGENDA ITEM | 2025-2026 | 2026-2027 |
|--|--|------------------|
| ABCD | VACANT | |
| Birds Almshouses (Official charity title: Robert Bird Cottage Homes) | Cllr. Rawe Reserve: Cllr. Head | |
| Chubbs Almshouses (Official charity title: The Matthew Chubbs Almshouses) | Cllrs. Best and Samuel | |
| Crewkerne Christmas Committee | Cllrs. Best, Head, Nathan, Samuel | |
| Crewkerne Leisure Management (CLM) | Cllr. Best | |
| Crewkerne Local Information Centre | NOT CURRENTLY MEETING | |
| Crewkerne Voluntary Transport Committee (Official charity title: Crewkerne Welfare Transport Committee) | Cllr. Draycott | |
| Henhayes Community Centre | Cllrs. Ashton and Best | |
| Heritage Centre | Cllr. Head Reserve: Cllr. Nathan | |
| League of Friends of Crewkerne Hospital | Cllr. Head Reserve: Cllr. Morris | |
| Local Community Network (Somerset Council) | Primary: Cllr. Head Substitute: Cllr. Maxwell | |
| Crewkerne Community Safety Group | Cllrs. Best, Samuel and Draycott | |
| Twinning Association | Cllr. Morris | |
| Crewkerne Business Group | Cllrs. Ashton and Best | |
| PPG (Crewkerne Health Centre) | Cllr. Ashton | |



Crewkerne

Town Council

Standing Orders

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Note: Text in **bold** may not be suspended as these are statutory in origin.

1. Rules of debate at meetings

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion, as amended, becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his/her own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. in exercise of a right of reply.
- p During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he/she considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he/she is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his/her decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
- i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his/her right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r) above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. Disorderly conduct at meetings

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) above is ignored, the chairman of the

meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. Meetings generally

Full Council meetings ●
Committee meetings ●
Sub-committee meetings ●

- a ● **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b ● **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c ● **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d ●● **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of any matter affecting Crewkerne.
- f Members of the public wishing to address the meeting will be asked to complete a contact details form prior to the start of the meeting. At the start of the public participation period the chairman of the meeting shall ask members to introduce themselves to the meeting, stating their names and organisations represented.
- g The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- h Subject to standing order 3(g) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- i In accordance with standing order 3(e) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- j A person shall raise his/her hand when requesting to speak but is not required to stand when speaking unless requested to do so by the Chairman.

- k A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his/her comments to the chairman of the meeting. When a meeting is being recorded or streamed, the chairman should ask all participants, including councillors to speak clearly towards microphones provided. Councillors and members of Town Council staff in attendance will be provided with a name plate for use in meetings.
- l Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- m Footage of council meetings will be made available on the Council's YouTube channel until such time as the minutes of each meeting are formally agreed and signed by the chairman of the meeting in question. Recordings will then be removed.
- n ●● **Members of the press or public must not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he/she is present at the meeting of the council or its committees but otherwise may:**
 - i. **Film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting**
 - ii. **Use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later**
 - iii. **Report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.**

in accordance with Crewkerne Town Council's policy on audio/visual recording at Council meetings.
- o ●● **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- p ● **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council.**
- q ● **The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- r ●●● **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- s ●●● **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his/her casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.**
- t ● **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his/her vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on**

the agenda.

- u The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors present and absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors;
 - iv. whether a councillor left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - v. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vi. the resolutions made.
- v **●●● A councillor who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his/her right to participate and vote on that matter** (see 13 below).
- w **● No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.** *See standing order 4d(viii) below for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*
- x **●●● If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- y A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 1/2 hours except in a unanimous vote to continue.

4. Committees and sub-committees

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**
- c **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;

- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 7 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
- vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
- viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which shall be no less than three;
- ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xii. may dissolve a committee.

5. Ordinary council meetings

- a In an election year, the annual meeting of the council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.**
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d In addition to the annual meeting of the council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the council directs.**
- e The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council.**
- f The Mayor of the Council, unless he/she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.**
- g The Deputy Mayor of the Council, unless he/she resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Mayor of the Council at the next annual meeting of the council.**
- h In an election year, if the current Mayor of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a successor Mayor of the Council has been elected. The current Mayor of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i In an election year, if the current Mayor of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a new Mayor of the Council has been elected. He/she may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of**

votes.

- j Following the election of the Mayor of the Council and Deputy Mayor of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Mayor of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Mayor of the Council of his/her acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - vi. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4 above;
 - vii. Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
 - viii. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - ix. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the council remaining eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
 - x. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next annual meeting of full council.

6. Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees and sub-committees

- a **The Mayor of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.**
- b **If the Mayor of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within 7 days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested by to do so by 7 councillors, those 7 councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee [and a sub-committee]. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the 7 councillors.

7. Previous resolutions

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 8 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

8. Voting on appointments

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 10 clear days before the meeting (unless the Chairman and Clerk agree that it may be 6). Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least 6 clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.

- f Subject to standing order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.

10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer;
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - viii. to require a written report;
 - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
 - xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xvii. to close a meeting.

11. Handling confidential or sensitive information

- a The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

12. Draft minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the

agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i) above.
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he/she shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:
“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his/her view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. Code of conduct and dispensations

See also standing order 3(t) above.

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless he/she has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest.**
- c Unless he/she has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he/she has another interest if so required by the council’s code of conduct. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest**
- d Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to

- which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g. Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f) above, dispensations requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- h. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by the Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Mayor of this fact, and the Mayor shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below.
- c The council may:
 - i. Provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - ii. Seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d **Upon notification by the Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him/her. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences or, by agreement with each councillor, by email, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda.**
See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3 (c) above for a meeting of a committee.
 - ii. **give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them);**
 - iii. subject to standing order 9 above, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 6 days before the meeting confirming his/her withdrawal of it;
 - iv. **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his/her office;**
 - v. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
 - vi. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
 - vii. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
 - viii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
 - ix. process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
 - x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
 - xi. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the council in paper and electronic form;
 - xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
See also standing order 22 below.
 - xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations
 - xiv. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority;
 - xv. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman of the Planning & Highways Committee (or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman) within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning & Highways committee or full Council meeting;
 - xvi. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
 - xvii. retain custody of the seal of the council which shall not be used without a

resolution to that effect.
See also standing order 22 below.

16. Responsible Financial Officer

- a The council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. Accounts and accounting statements

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide.
- b All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council’s financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the council’s receipts and payments for each quarter;
 - ii. the council’s aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported

and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the council’s receipts and payments for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the full council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The annual return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. Financial controls and procurement

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;

- ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below ~~£25,000~~ £60,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**
- ~~f. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the "light touch" arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved~~

~~suppliers (framework agreement).~~

- ~~g. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:~~
- ~~i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;~~
 - ~~ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;~~
 - ~~iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;~~
 - ~~iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;~~
 - ~~v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;~~
 - ~~vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.~~
- ~~h. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.~~
- ~~i. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**~~

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of council or the Staffing Committee is subject to standing order 11 above.
- b Subject to the council's policy regarding absences from work, the council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of the Staffing Committee or, if he/she is not available, the vice-chairman of the Staffing Committee, of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Staffing Committee at its next meeting.

- c The chairman of the Staffing Committee or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by the Staffing Committee.
- d Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the council's most senior employee (or other employees) shall contact the chairman of the Staffing Committee or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman of the Staffing Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Staffing Committee.
- e Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the Staffing Committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the Staffing Committee, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Staffing Committee.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above if so justified.
- i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to the Clerk and/or the Mayor of the Council or the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

20. Requests for information

- a Requests for information held by the council shall be handled in accordance with the council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor in his/her absence. The full council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

21. Relations with the press/media

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's Media Policy.

22. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii) above.

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 22(a) above, the council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

23. Communicating with Unitary councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the Unitary Council representing its electoral ward.
- b Unless the council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the Unitary Council shall be sent to the Unitary Council councillor representing its electoral ward.

24. Restrictions on councillor activities

- a Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
 - i inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii issue orders, instructions or direction

25. Standing orders generally

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least two thirds of the councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 above.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he/she has delivered his/her acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

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Crewkerne Town Council

Financial Regulations

CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*.
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The Town Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly. The Finance Officer (FO) will be responsible for day-to-day operation of the Council's accounting procedures and work as directed by the RFO, to achieve all the Council's financial and accounting objectives. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**
 - **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**

- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts; and
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £5,000.

2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. **The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. **At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
 - **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
 - **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
 - **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
 - **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
 - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. At least once in every month and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair, shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in

place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
 - **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
 - is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council.
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
 - perform any operational duties for the council;

- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually in October for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council or Policy and Resources Committee.
- 4.3. No later than December each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the full council.
- 4.5. The Policy and Resources Committee shall review the draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council not later than the end of December each year.
- 4.6. The draft budget and forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee and a recommendation made to the council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and forecast, the council shall determine its council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**

- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or Policy and Resources Committee.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 ~~Public Contracts Regulations 2015~~ or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the RFO shall seek at least 2 fixed price quotes;
- 5.9. Where the value is between £1,000 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the RFO shall try to obtain 2 estimates, which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, the RFO shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

¹The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council or relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- The Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below £5,000 excluding VAT.
- the council for all items over £5,000.

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute (in the case of council or committee decisions) or other auditable evidence trail.

5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference, except in an emergency.

5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £3,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Lloyds bank. The council's other investments are detailed in the Investment and Borrowing Management policy. The arrangements shall be reviewed regularly for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO.
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking or cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee, or a delegated decision by an officer, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:
 - i. Any payments of up to £1,000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. Payments of up to £3,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. Any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 6.7. Prior to each Full Council meeting a councillor other than the Chair shall examine and verify all invoices for accuracy. The RFO shall present a schedule of these payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by

the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO and Finance Officer shall be appointed as the Service Administrators. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify at least three councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to two authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and appended to the minutes.
- 7.9. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Clerk, Finance Officer and/or a member. This is a potential area for fraud and

the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.

7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

7.14. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members.

8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

9. Payment cards

9.1. The Town Council Corporate Purchase card and any trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the RFO and FO and any balance shall be paid in full each month. The Corporate Purchase card shall be restricted to a maximum spend of £3,000 per month. Before any order above the value of £100 is placed using the Corporate Purchase card, a Purchase Authority shall be signed by two councillors who are cheque signatories.

9.2. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

10. Petty Cash

10.1. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

11.1. As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.

11.2. Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.

11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council. However, where nationally agreed pay rises apply as a contractual right, this shall be implemented automatically by the RFO and noted by council at the next meeting.

- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short-term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the RFO. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted by the due date.
- 13.7. Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.
- 14.2. Any variation of, addition to, or omission from a contract must be authorised by the RFO to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

- 15.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No interest in land/property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the land/property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.
- 17.2. The RFO shall promptly arrange additional insurance cover for all new risks, properties or vehicles which are required to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

18. Charities

- 18.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 19.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of Clerk or RFO. The RFO shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 19.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 19.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

Appendix 2 – Financial Procedures

The Council Accounts are computerised using AdvantEdge software. All council financial procedures will comply with the statement of Financial Regulations.

Income

Money received by the Town Council is banked on the day of receipt unless it arrives after the bank has closed. Such un-banked money is kept in a locked money box in a locked cupboard in the office over-night. Receipts are issued for all monies received. Receipts will also record the relevant invoice numbers where appropriate. A further record of receipts is the bank paying-in book which will also show a record of the receipt number to which the money refers.

Some income is transferred to the council by means of the BACS system. A record of such transfers is received from the payees and placed in a file. Further evidence of BACS payments is provided by the monthly Bank Statements.

Computer records are kept of all income transactions and are comprehensively backed up.

Expenditure & Payment of Invoices

Agreement for payment will be made by the RFO after having checked the invoice against an order or tender and where the sum has been agreed by the council. When the payment of an invoice has been authorised (normally at a Town Council Meeting), the FO will arrange for payment using either a cheque or through the online banking system.

Cheques

A cheque is made out and then signed by any two authorised Councillors, who also initial the counterfoil.

Online banking

The invoice value is entered through the online banking system and is authorised for payment online by any two authorised Councillors. A printout of the Councillor's authorisation is attached to the associated invoices.

A monthly statement of accounts to be paid will be presented to the Council for approval. The cheques will be signed, having previously been prepared and the online payments will have been authorised. Salary payments by BACS shall be made in accordance with Financial Regulations. The Inland Revenue returns and Superannuation payments may be paid promptly but must be recorded by payment method and description only on the monthly statement of accounts in order to preserve staff confidentiality. Bills may be settled prior to the Council Meeting so as not to incur penalties (See Financial Regulations).

Computer records are kept of all expenditure transactions, including petty cash payments. Computer records are held on an IT workgroup server and access to the secure shared data is via individual staff passwords. All computer records are backed up on an ongoing daily basis.

Actual expenditure and income against the budget are reported on a quarterly basis.

Bank Transfers

The RFO will transfer funds to and from the 32 Day Notice and Business Call accounts as necessary to ensure that there are adequate funds in the Business Call account to cover all outstanding payments and taking advantage of higher interest on reserves in the 32 Day Notice Account.

There is “drip feed” arrangement between the Current Account and Business Call Account to maintain a daily Current Account balance of £50,000.

Salaries Records

Each employee has a separate excel spreadsheet showing the employee’s name, rate of pay, the hours worked, the total gross wages earned and the deductions for national insurance, taxation and superannuation etc., together with the employer’s contributions, and finally the net amounts payable by the Council to the employee, and to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). Staffology payroll software is used to calculate the national insurance and taxation deductions, and employer contributions. The RFO will provide the Finance Officer with an internal document of the latest amended, approved salaries countersigned by the Mayor. National pay increases and incremental pay rise calculations will be double checked by the RFO, and a copy of each spreadsheet shall be initialled accordingly and kept in the Audit File.

Bank Reconciliation

Bank statements are received after the end of each month and all accounts are balanced with the computer records. After checking by the RFO, printed records are then placed in an Audit File and bank statements are kept in a separate file. A copy of the monthly Bank Reconciliation is presented to the Town Council Meeting.

Audit

As soon as possible after 31st March the accounts are finalised and an income and expenditure account, balance sheet and Annual Return produced. At this stage the accounts have been audited by the Internal Auditor. They should then be approved and signed by resolution as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and at least within the advised time limit. These accounts are then subject to audit by the External Auditors appointed by the Smaller Authorities’ Audit Appointments (SAAA) or other authorised body. Prior to audit the approved accounts must be displayed on the public notice board for a given period of time and the public are given notice that the full accounts are available for inspection.

The RFO will ensure that the Council considers the annual internal and external written reports and demonstrates that by inclusion in the agendas and minutes. Following a satisfactory audit the accounts are signed off and a written statement from the auditor is added to the accounts statement. A public notice placed is on the board for the required time and subsequently retained, for audit evidence purposes.

Appendix 3 – Role of the Independent Internal Auditor

The internal auditor shall:

- be allowed to have direct access to the Council
- have no other role or be related to any member within the Council
- prepare a report in writing in his/her own name and addressed to the Council
- be competent to carry out the work i.e.(i) shall have an understanding of basic accounting processes (ii) shall have an understanding of the role of internal auditor in reviewing systems rather than undertaking detailed checks that are more appropriately the responsibility of management (iii) shall have an awareness of risk management issues (iv) shall have an understanding of accounting requirements of the legal framework and powers of local councils.
- undertake the work in an ethical manner with integrity and objectivity.

Responsibility

To report on the adequacy of the systems of financial control in operation. This will include:

1. Review of internal controls in place and their documentation as listed in Section 5 of the 'Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales – A Practitioners' Guide'.
2. Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place, recorded and correctly applied.
3. Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions.
4. Review and testing of systems and arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, including risk management processes.
5. Testing of disclosures.
6. Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management.
7. The War Commemoration Trust Recreation Ground separate accounts and financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission.
8. Reports of fraudulent or corruption findings depending on the type shall be reported to the Mayor in the first instance, the RFO (as appropriate), Chairman of Policy and Resources and the Council.

Appendix 4 – Duties of the Responsible Financial Officer

1. To prepare financial reports for the Policy and Resources committee, and/or the Council. These reports will cover budget monitoring, fund balances, receipts to date, payroll summary, payment of accounts, and other relevant current matters.
2. To prepare draft estimates. When approved by Council these will form the annual budget monitoring during the year. To report thereon to the Policy and Resources committee.
3. To submit the precept to the Unitary Council and supply any breakdown requested.
4. To ensure regular banking (daily if necessary) of all money received and expended by the Council.
5. To ensure that all money due to the Council is billed and collected promptly.
6. To identify the duties of all officers, including the RFO dealing with financial transactions, and ensure, as far as possible, the division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to larger transactions. In other words, to ensure that there is as much internal checking as possible.
7. To manage cash flow and control investments and bank transfers.
8. To control payments by cheque, corporate card and online banking.
9. To handle the overall management of payroll, including Local Government Pension Scheme. To ensure prompt payment of tax and national insurance to the collector of taxes monthly. Also to ensure, where appropriate prompt payment of sums due to the pension authority.
10. To take overall responsibility for submission of monthly VAT returns and to deal with VAT inspections.
11. To verify the budget code of suppliers' invoices prior to certification for payment.
12. To ensure the preparation and balance of the final accounts are in accordance with the regulations and report thereon to Policy and Resources Committee and the Full Town Council.
13. To produce accounts and records for external audit in accordance with the regulations.
14. To arrange for internal audit material of all aspects of the Council's financial affairs.
15. To monitor compliance with the Council's financial regulations and ensure correct financial systems are in place.
16. To manage insurance risk. To process claims as necessary. To report annually to Policy and Resources Committee or council on insurance risk covered.
17. To ensure that the Council's register of property and assets is maintained.

18. To be familiar with the computerised accounting system in place.

VERSION CONTROL:

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting held on 10th February 2025.

Amended at Full Council 19th May 2025, Minute Reference 009/2526 b.

REVIEW:

As a core governing document, Financial Regulations are to be reviewed annually at the Annual Town Council Meeting, or sooner if changes or legislation requires it.

Due: May 2026.

Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to city, town and parish councils.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, city and town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold **the**

Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments.

This includes conduct in informal and private digital communication channels such as WhatsApp groups, Messenger chats, and other online forums where councillor or public-facing discussions take place. This includes the inappropriate sharing or forwarding of private messages, screenshots, or confidential communications where this could reasonably damage trust or relationships.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor. Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation

of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct

Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer will be able to advise on any matters that relate to the Code of Conduct.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack. **Respect applies equally to online interactions, including tone, language, and the sharing or commenting on posts relating to council business or colleagues.**

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others. **Bullying and harassment may include repeated online behaviour, including messaging, posting, tagging, or commenting, even where each individual act may appear minor in isolation.**

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the council

As a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral. They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
 - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - iv. the disclosure is:**
 - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements**

of the local authority; and

3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct. **This includes behaviour in both public and private settings, including online activity, where such conduct could reasonably be expected to damage public confidence in the role of councillor or the authority.**

6. Use of position

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local authority or authorising their use by others:

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Consideration of advice

As a councillor:

8.1 I will, when reaching decisions on any matter, consider and pay due regard to any relevant advice provided to me by the Council's Responsible Finance Officer in accordance with their legal requirements.

8.2 I will give reasons for departing from the advice of the Responsible Finance Officer.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to have regard to advice from your Responsible Finance Officer where they give that advice under their statutory duties. As a councillor you must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any legal requirements and any reasonable requirements imposed by your local authority.

9. Complying with the Code of Conduct as a Councillor:

9.1 I will undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local County Association (SALC) or by the Monitoring Officer.

9.2 I do not make trivial or malicious complaints against other councillors.

9.3 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

9.4 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings including the complainant and any witnesses.

9.5 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. **The Code applies regardless of whether communication takes place in formal council settings or informal group environments involving councillors discussing council-related matters.** If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority

10. Interests as a councillor:

10.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Appendix C**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Clerk or the Monitoring Officer.

11. Gifts and hospitality as a councillor:

11.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

11.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it

is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Clerk or Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B - Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office or within 28 days of your interests changing you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Appendix C (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Appendix D (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"**Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"**Partner**" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non-participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Appendix C**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensations may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

5. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Appendix D**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Appendix C) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you

must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
 - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in

Appendix D

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

8. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:
- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the parish affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

In the event that your non-registerable interest relates to -

- (1) an unpaid directorship on a company owned by your authority or
- (2) another local authority of which you are a member,

subject to your declaring that interest, you are able to take part in any discussion and vote on the matter.

Appendix C: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

| Subject | Description |
|--|---|
| Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation | Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. |
| Sponsorship | <p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p> |
| Contracts | <p>Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p> |
| Land and Property | <p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p> |
| Licenses | Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <p>Corporate tenancies</p> | <p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of. |
| <p>Securities</p> | <p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class. |

*'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

*'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Appendix D: Other Registerable Interests

You must register as an Other Registerable Interest :

- a) any unpaid directorships

- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority

- c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Appendix E

Guidance on Bias and Predetermination –This does not form part of the Code of Conduct _

- Where you have been involved in campaigning in your political role on an issue which does not impact on your personal and/or professional life, you may participate in a decision on the issue in your political role as a councillor. However, you must not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence you in the performance of your official duties.
- The courts have sought to distinguish between situations which involve predetermination or bias on the one hand and predisposition on the other. The former is indicative of a ‘closed mind’ approach and likely to leave a decision susceptible to challenge by Judicial Review. Whereas being predisposed on a matter is acceptable provided you remain open to listening to all the arguments and changing your mind in light of all the information presented at the meeting.
- Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a councillor should not be regarded as having a closed mind simply because they previously did or said something that, directly or indirectly, indicated what view they might take in relation to any particular matter.
- In the circumstances, when making a decision, consider the matter with an open mind and on the facts made available to the meeting at which the decision is to be taken.
- As a councillor you will always be judged against an objective test of whether the reasonable onlooker, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would consider that you were biased. If you have predetermined your position, you should withdraw from being a member of the decision-making body for that particular matter.

Version Control:

Adopted at Full Council 16 May 2022 Minute No. 17 22/23

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or council practice.

Review Date: **May 2027**



Community Engagement



Thank you to everyone who joined us for this year's Community Engagement Meeting – it was fantastic to see so many residents taking the time to get involved in their community.

The evening provided a great opportunity to meet and engage with a wide range of local groups, including Crewkerne in Bloom, the Banking Hub, Friends of Crewkerne Station, the Twinning Association, Severalls Memorial Gardeners, Open Doors and Flagship Crewkerne.

Residents also had the chance to speak directly with Crewkerne Town Councillors and Somerset Council Councillors, helping to strengthen connections and have conversations about the future of our town.

The Mayor reflected on the past year and shared exciting plans for the year ahead, as well as presenting her awards. We were also pleased to award grants to a number of community groups, supporting the valuable work they do locally. Thank you again to everyone who attended and to all the groups and volunteers who make Crewkerne such a special place to live. We look forward to seeing you again next year!

YOUTH CLUB

Looking for a fun, safe place to hang out after school? We've got you covered! Our friendly youth sessions at The George Reynolds Centre are the perfect place to relax, and enjoy a range of activities in a welcoming environment. Every week during term time, plus selected holiday dates too!

- **Tuesdays, 6–8pm: Ages 8–11**
- **Wednesdays, 7–9pm: Ages 12–17**

Each session offers a chill-out zone, a tuck shop, and a variety of fun activities for everyone to get involved in. It's a great opportunity to build confidence and make new friendships. Bring your friends along, join in the activities, and best of all... it's completely FREE!

For further information, please email janet@cyp.me.uk



ATTENTION ALL 8-17 YEAR OLDS!
JOIN THE CREW!
NEW YOUTH CLUB ALERT!

TUESDAYS: 8-11 YEARS
6:00PM - 8:00PM

WEDNESDAYS: 12-17 YEARS
7:00PM - 9:00PM

FREE ENTRY
EVERY WEEK, SELECTED HOLIDAY DATES OPEN TOO

THE GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE
SOUTH STREET
CREWKERNE
TA18 8DA

CHILL OUT ZONE **MEET NEW FRIENDS** **TUCK SHOP** **FUN ACTIVITIES!**

The Bincombe Summer Bash

Saturday, 25th July 2026
10am – 4pm

Get ready for the event of the summer!

A fun, friendly day with FREE entry and something for everyone. Enjoy the sunshine, catch up with friends, and take part in a range of exciting activities. Don't miss it!

More details coming soon.

NEW COUNCILLOR

We are pleased to warmly welcome Rosan Cosgrove to the Council.

Rosan has lived in Crewkerne all her life and attended St Bartholomew's School, Maiden Beech Academy, and Wadham School. She is already well known within the local community through her involvement with a number of organisations, including Crewkerne District Rotary, The Henhayes Centre, Crewkerne Heritage Centre, Friends of Crewkerne Hospital, and the U3A.

Outside of her community commitments, Rosan enjoys visiting National Trust properties and spending time walking, running, and playing the ukulele. She also has a strong interest in history and keeps active through pilates, circuit training, and salsa.

We are delighted to have Rosan join us and look forward to the energy and commitment she will bring to her role and to serving the local community.



BOOK BOOTH

A huge thank you to everyone who has kindly donated their good quality, unwanted paperback books. The response has been fantastic. To help us keep the Book Booth tidy, well organised, and running smoothly for everyone, we kindly ask that all future book donations are handed in to the Local Information Centre. This will help us manage space more effectively and avoid overfilling.

We would also like to gently remind everyone that donations must be good quality paperback books only. Unwanted CDs, DVDs, and hardback books can be donated to local charity shops

Your generosity is very much appreciated, and following these simple guidelines helps us continue to maintain a welcoming and accessible Book Booth for all. Keep reading! There are lots of great books available for all ages to enjoy in the Book Booth.





SEVERALLS TENNIS COURTS

Tennis rackets and balls are available from a borrow box

Download the app: ClubSpark Booker

clubspark.lta.org.uk/SeverallsTennisCourts

You can pay to play for £6 a hour or purchase an annual pass for £35.

How do I book?

Defibrillators & Bleed Kits

We are pleased to announce that two new bleed kits donated by Avon & Somerset Police have recently been installed at Wadham Sports Centre and at McKinlays in the George Shopping Centre, alongside the existing defibrillators. These kits contain essential equipment to help manage severe bleeding injuries until professional medical help arrives and are designed to be easy to use in an emergency.



Crewkerne Town Council would like to thank Avon & Somerset Police as well as those involved in supporting and improving access to emergency lifesaving equipment within the community.



THE GEORGE REYNOLDS CENTRE

Children's Parties

Now Available To Book!

Stress Free Party Planning For Parents:

- Large indoor space to make your own
- Kitchen access for all catering requirements
- Great location with easy parking right next to the recreation ground

Plus We Say YES To Bouncy Castles!

Weekend dates are filling up fast. Secure the best spot in Crewkerne for your child's party today

Celebrate Your Special Day With Us!

Contact Holly for availability:
 Email: grcmanager@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk
 Phone: 01460 73972

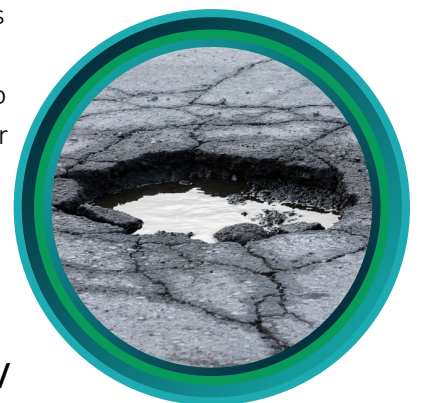
Follow us on Facebook!  www.facebook.com/crewkernetowncouncil

Terms & Conditions apply

Did you KNOW?

Did you know that many local issues can be reported directly to Somerset Council online through their website? Residents can quickly and easily report problems such as potholes, road hazards, fly-tipping, noise nuisance, overflowing bins and blocked gullies. Reporting issues online helps ensure they are logged promptly and directed to the appropriate service team for action.

Visit the Somerset Council website to report an issue or find out more:



<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/>

Speak to your Councillors!



Do you have a question, idea or concern you'd like to raise? Our monthly Council Surgeries are a great opportunity to come and chat informally with one of your councillors, share your thoughts, or find out more about what's happening in the town. Everyone is welcome, your councillors are here to listen.




The next surgeries will be held from 10.30-12 noon in the Local Information Centre on:

Saturday 27th June
Saturday 25th July

TOWNSEND CEMETERY

Annual Open Day

SUNDAY 26TH JULY 2026

Discover History in Our Chapel & Grounds!
Established in 1874, the chapel and cemetery are full of stories.
Cemetery records will be available to view in the chapel from 12 noon until 3.30pm, with refreshments also available.
Join Tracey Warren from Stoodley & Son at 2pm for a guided talk on notable graves and their fascinating connections to local and social history.

⚠️ Parking is very limited – please do not park on the main driveway.

POLICE DROP IN SESSIONS



This is an opportunity to come along and meet a member of your Local Neighbourhood Policing Team. The sessions will take place in the Crewkerne Local Information Centre at 11am on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 17h June**
- **Wednesday 15th July**
- **Monday 3rd August**
- **Tuesday 8th September**
- **Wednesday 7th October**

| Councillor | Tel. No. | Email |
|---|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Cllr. Steve Ashton | 07436 821809 | steve.ashton@somerset.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Mike Best (Chair, Amenities Committee) | 01460 74245 | mike.best@somerset.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Rosan Cosgrove | 01460 74001 | rosan.cosgrove@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Nigel Draycott (Vice Chair, Amenities Committee) | 01460 74001 | nigel.draycott@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Kathy Head (Deputy Mayor) | 07704 197469 | kathy.head@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. David Livesley | 01460 74001 | david.livesley@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Judith Morris | 07809 404377 | judith.morris@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Paul Maxwell (Vice Chair, Planning & Highways Committee) | 01460 74001 | paul.maxwell@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Jan Nathan (Chair, Planning & Highways Committee) | 07718 234421 | jan.nathan@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Christine Rawe (Vice Chair, Policy & Resources Committee) | 01460 74001 | christine.rawe@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Alice Samuel (Mayor) | 01460 74001 | alice.samuel@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Cllr. Andrea Stuart (Chair, Policy & Resources Committee) | 07776 414267 | andrea.stuart@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |



Crewkerne Town Council ANNUAL REPORT

Report No.23 -
May 2026

Crewkerne Town Council, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7LN
Tel: 01460 74001 Email: towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk

The Mayor's Report

Welcome to the 2025/26 edition of Crewkerne Town Council's Annual Report. Inside this report, you will find updates from each of the Council's Committees, a summary of our financial position, and highlights of the projects and initiatives completed over the past year. Crewkerne Town Council continues to play a key role in supporting local services, particularly as Somerset Council faces ongoing financial pressures.

This year, we are proud to have made progress on a number of community projects, maintained our public spaces and facilities, and responded to local needs with resilience and creativity. We also reflect with gratitude on the contributions of all our Councillors and staff, whose dedication ensures that our town remains a welcoming and vibrant place to live.

As ever, we welcome your comments and suggestions. Please do get in touch at towncouncil@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk – your feedback helps guide our work and priorities for the year ahead.



Clr. Alice Samuel, Mayor of Crewkerne

Honoured Citizens, Mayor's Commendation & Young Crewkernian Awards 2026



Honoured Citizen -
Chris Howard

Mayor's
Commendation -
Jeffrey Hutson

Young
Crewkernian -
Moken Mills

The Mayor, Clr. Samuel, was proud to present awards to a number of outstanding individuals in recognition of their valuable contributions to the town. The Honoured Citizen Award recognises individuals nominated by residents for their long-standing and dedicated service to Crewkerne. The Mayor's Commendation is awarded at the Mayor's discretion to acknowledge those who have made a notable impact on the community. This year also marked the second year of the Young Crewkernian Award, which celebrates the important contributions made by young people to the life of our town.



www.facebook.com/crewkernetowncouncil



[@crewkernetowncouncil](https://www.instagram.com/crewkernetowncouncil)



**Cllr. Mike Best,
Chair, Amenities
Committee**

Amenities Committee

Over the past year, the Amenities Committee has continued to focus on the upkeep, development and enhancement of our community buildings and public spaces, ensuring they remain welcoming, safe and well used.

A key development has been the appointment of a Centre Manager for the GRC. This has enabled a more proactive approach to programming and has already led to an increase in the use of the venue, helping to strengthen its role at the heart of the community.

We have also been delighted to support the launch of a new free youth club, open to all children, providing a valuable and inclusive space for young people to meet, take part in activities, and socialise safely. In addition, the transformation of the former telephone box

into a community book booth has created another accessible and free resource for residents to enjoy.

Looking ahead, a number of important maintenance and improvement projects are planned. These include the replacement of a flat roof section at Crewkerne Town Hall to help preserve the building for future generations, repairs to a historic wall around Bincombe Allotments, and proposals to install additional play equipment at Happy Valley, further enhancing facilities for families and children.

The Committee remains committed to investing in our spaces and ensuring they continue to serve the community effectively, both now and in the years ahead.

Planning & Highways Committee

The Planning and Highways Committee has reviewed 41 planning applications this year, with a further 18 considered by Full Council. Councillors have continued regular site meetings with officers from Somerset Council to discuss ongoing highways concerns across the town.

By highlighting priority areas and pressing for investment where it is most needed, we have seen progress on long-standing issues, including road surface repairs and refreshed road markings, although there is still more to do. Councillors have also continued to monitor concerns relating to speeding, parking, and pedestrian safety in a number of key locations.

Ongoing communication with residents helps ensure that local priorities are regularly raised with the relevant authorities and agencies.

Many issues raised by residents come through the Council's monthly surgeries on the fourth Saturday of each month, providing an opportunity to speak directly with councillors about local concerns and ideas for improvement.



**Cllr. Jan Nathan,
Chair, P&H Committee**

Policy & Resources Committee

The Policy & Resources Committee has continued reviewing and updating Council policies and procedures in line with the agreed review schedule, helping to ensure that the Council remains effective, transparent and up to date in its governance.

During the past year, the Committee adopted a number of new policies, including a Volunteer Management Policy to support those giving their time to the community, a Martyn's Law Policy to strengthen awareness around public safety and preparedness, and a Memorial Bench and Tree Policy to provide a clear and consistent process for applications within our open spaces.

One of the Committee's key responsibilities each year is overseeing the Council's budget and ensuring that resources are managed carefully and responsibly. Budget discussions are held in public meetings, and we continue to welcome suggestions and feedback from residents.

Community input remains an important part of the decision-making process, and we value the ideas and views shared with us throughout the year.



**Cllr. Andrea Stuart,
Chair,
Policy & Resources
Committee**

Finance Report

The accounts for the current year, which ended 31 March 2026, will not be audited until later in the year. The final accounts will be approved at the June meeting of the Town Council. Members of the public will have the opportunity to examine the full accounts on request. Please see opposite for last year's audited statement of accounts ----->

Income and Expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2026 is as follows:

| | Income £ |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Aqua Centre | 1,000 |
| Allotments | 331 |
| Bank Interest | 9,114 |
| Cemetery Income | 32,387 |
| CIL Funds | 0 |
| Events | 5,175 |
| George Reynolds Centre | 22,281 |
| Grounds Maintenance | 576 |
| Misc. | 590 |
| Henhayes Car Park | 10,272 |
| Precept | 663,503 |
| Projects | 1,977 |
| Town Hall | 9,340 |
| Victoria Hall | 8,262 |
| War Memorial Grounds Cont | 0 or 4,336 |
| TOTAL | 764,808 |
| | Expenditure £ |
| Aqua Centre | 311 |
| Cemetery | 39,762 |
| Events | 15,755 |
| General Administration | 60,290 |
| George Reynolds Centre | 44,338 |
| Grants | 13,627 |
| Grounds Maintenance | 55,134 |
| Projects | 3,949 |
| Public Toilets | 18,280 |
| Salaries | 262,572 |
| Town Hall | 29,906 |
| Victoria Hall | 20,101 |
| War Memorial Grounds | 7,027 |
| Youth Service | 16,988 |
| TOTAL | 588,038 |

Statement of Accounts for year ending 31st March 2025

| | 31 March 2024 | 31 March 2025 |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Balances b/fwd | 315,952 | 355,800 |
| Annual Precept | 527,656 | 637,714 |
| Total other Receipts | 101,693 | 111,292 |
| Staff Costs | 238,525 | 236,621 |
| Loan Int/Capital Repay't. | 0 | 0 |
| Total other Payments | 350,977 | 459,390 |
| Balances c/fwd | 355,800 | 408,795 |
| Total Cash & Investments | 382,829 | 451,623 |
| Total Fixed Assets | 6,936,876 | 6,926,654 |
| Total Borrowings | 0 | 0 |

The External Auditor raised no matters of concern

Crewkerne and West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee (JBC)

The management of Townsend Cemetery is overseen jointly by West Crewkerne Parish Council and Crewkerne Town Council via the Joint Burial Committee (JBC).

The Committee is responsible for the overall management of the grounds, including maintenance of the cemetery, memorials, and the administration of burials. Over the past year, several improvements have been made across the site to enhance both accessibility and the visitor experience.

A memorial post box has been installed to provide a space for visitors to leave messages to their loved ones. A new tree has also been planted within the turning circle, contributing to the ongoing enhancement of the cemetery environment.

In addition, one of the chapels has been replastered, and the lodge has benefitted from refreshed guttering and exterior woodwork repainting.

During the past year there have been 37 interments, which includes both full burials and ashes burials. 27 grave plots have been purchased.

Cllr. Mike Best, Chair, Joint Burial Committee



2026/27 Precept information

You may have noticed a change in the Crewkerne Town Council element (the precept) of your Council Tax bill from April. The amount you pay depends on the Council Tax band of your property. For example, for a Band D property, the increase this year equates to approximately 16 pence per week towards the work of Crewkerne Town Council. For nearly nine in ten households in Crewkerne, the increase will be even less than this.

Overall, Crewkerne Town Council receives around 10p in every £1 of Council Tax paid, with the remainder going to Somerset Council, as well as funding for police, fire and other public services.

We do not take decisions to increase the precept lightly. However, it enables us to continue maintaining and investing in our historic assets, public buildings and sports facilities, supporting local community groups through our grants scheme, and delivering local events and services for residents.

Cllr. Alice Samuel, Mayor of Crewkerne

Awards to the Community - Grant Awards 2026-27

Crewkerne Town Council's Community Grant Awards scheme opens for applications each year in September. For further details please contact the Council offices.

| Community Group/Organisation | Grant Awarded |
|---|----------------|
| Crewkerne & District Museum & Heritage Centre | £500 |
| Crewkerne in Bloom | £1,000 |
| The Henhayes Centre | £1,500 |
| Merriott Majorettes | £500 |
| Somerset Farmers Market | £500 |
| Rotary Club of Crewkerne District | £500 |
| Citizens Advice Bureau South Somerset | £1,131 |
| Crewkerne & District Shed | £1,500 |
| Crewkerne Pegasus Karate Group | £500 |
| CUDOS | £170 |
| Severalls Jubilee Bowls Club | £500 |
| Severalls Gardening Group | £400 |
| Crewkerne & District Twinning Association | £500 |
| Awe & Wonder - GRC room hire to the value of | £1,577 |
| Friends of Crewkerne Station | £600 |
| Crewkerne Allotment Team | £250 |
| Crewkerne RFC Youth | £1,000 |
| Crewkerne & Distict u3a | £500 |
| Crewkerne Brownies | £500 |
| Crewkerne Cricket Club | £500 |
| Crewkerne Boxing Club | £1,000 |
| Total | £15,128 |

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| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Report subject | To consider quotations for an IT contract |
| Committee name | Full Council |
| Meeting date | Monday 18 th May 2026 |
| Report author | Gemma Hughes, Town Clerk |
| Report contact details | townclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk |
| Consultees | Local councils |
| Decision required? | Yes |

1. Purpose

To consider quotations for the provision of a new IT support contract for the Council and to determine the preferred supplier and level of service.

2. Background information

The Council's previous IT support contract has expired, and support is currently being provided on a pay-as-you-go basis. This approach does not provide cost certainty or proactive system management.

In addition, the Council's previous provider has been taken over and is no longer locally based, with support now delivered remotely. This presents an opportunity to review IT provision to ensure it is cost-effective, secure, and aligned with operational requirements.

Three quotations have been obtained from Contractors A, B and C.

3. Detailed Consideration

Contractor A (located within 10 miles)

Two options have been provided:

- Standard Package
Includes remote monitoring, proactive support, service desk, endpoint protection, security patching, cyber awareness guidance, remote engineering support, and a guaranteed 4-hour response time.
Total annual cost: £4,001.40 (excl. VAT)
- Advanced Package
Includes all Standard features plus onsite engineering, asset management, email security, and additional system tools.
Total annual cost: £4,879.20 (excl. VAT)

This contractor offers a structured, fixed-cost support model with clear service levels and optional onsite support included in the advanced package.

Contractor B (local provider)

There are two options for consideration, both based on a modular IT support and security model:

- Option 1 – IT Support and Security (No Infrastructure Upgrade)

Monthly cost: £399.45

Annual equivalent: £4,793.40 (excl. VAT)

One-off costs:

Microsoft 365 migration and setup: £1,680

This option provides IT support and cyber security services without replacing existing infrastructure. It represents a lower upfront cost but retains reliance on current hardware.

- Option 2 – Secure and Compliant Network (Including Infrastructure)

Monthly cost: £341.05

Annual equivalent: £4,092.60 (excl. VAT)

One-off costs:

Microsoft 365 migration and setup: £1,680

Firewall: £742 (may be required depending on existing network security)

Modem: £96 (may not be required)

Wi-Fi access points: £555 (only required if existing Wi-Fi coverage is insufficient or not business-grade)

Installation and setup: £560

This option includes a full infrastructure upgrade, providing a more secure and resilient network. It offers a lower ongoing monthly cost but requires additional upfront investment. There is also the option to include internet and telephony services if required, which have been excluded from this comparison.

Contractor B is currently used by another local town council and has been recommended based on their experience. This provides an additional level of assurance regarding their understanding of council operations and service delivery within a local government context.

Contractor C (nationwide, council sector specialist)

This quote is a comprehensive managed service tailored to councils, including enhanced cyber security, training, and user support.

Annual recurring cost: £5,998.80 (excl. VAT)

One-off costs: £4,592.50

The one off costs include a wide range of implementation and service onboarding elements. For clarity, they can be broadly categorised as follows:

Core implementation and migration services (required to deliver the system):

- Data architecture and scoping £325
 - Device deployment and security configuration £975
 - SharePoint and Teams configuration £325
 - Email migration £650
 - Data migration £975
- Total of implementation and migration services £3,250*

User setup and onboarding (standard but not strictly essential):

- Council onboarding and familiarisation session £195
 - Council digital skills plan £295
 - Councillor training sessions £325
- Total of user setup and onboarding £815*

Optional / enhanced service elements:

- Training and management (Cloud-eHub) £162.50
 - Prepaid support hours for councillors £365
- Total of enhanced elements £527.50*

This package also includes 24/7 cyber monitoring, Microsoft 365 management, cloud backup, councillor support, and a dedicated training platform.

Comparison Table:

| Contractor | Annual Cost (excl. VAT) | One-off Costs | Onsite Support | Key Features |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|
| Contractor A (Standard) | £4,001.40 | None | No | Fixed cost, remote support, core security |
| Contractor A (Advanced) | £4,879.20 | None | Yes (included) | Adds onsite support, enhanced security |
| Contractor B (Local) | £4,793.40 | £1,680 | Potential (not inclusive) | Includes infrastructure upgrade, higher monthly cost |
| Contractor B (Local) | £4,092.60 | £1,680-£3,633 | Potential (not inclusive) | Includes new infrastructure, lower monthly cost |
| Contractor C (Nationwide) | £5,998.80 | £4,592.50 (includes core implementation + optional training/support elements) | Additional cost likely | High security, training, council-focused service |

Councillors are asked to consider the balance between cost, level of service, cyber security resilience, and long-term system management requirements.

- Contractor A (Standard) provides a straightforward, fixed-cost solution with core IT support and minimal change to current systems.
- Contractor A (Advanced) offers enhanced resilience through onsite support and additional security features at a moderate cost increase.
- Contractor B provides a local provider option with either a lower ongoing cost (Option 2) or a lower initial change approach (Option 1), but requires consideration of potential infrastructure upgrade requirements.
- Contractor C provides the most comprehensive managed service, including advanced cyber security, training, and full Microsoft 365 ecosystem management, but at the highest overall cost and complexity.

Councillors may therefore wish to consider whether priority is given to:

- cost certainty and simplicity,
- enhanced local support,
- infrastructure modernisation, or
- a fully managed, high-security solution.

4. Financial implications

The Council is currently operating under a pay-as-you-go arrangement, which may lead to unpredictable costs.

The quotations received range from approximately £4,001 to £5,999 per annum (excl. VAT), with some providers requiring additional one-off implementation costs.

5. Crime and Disorder considerations

Robust IT provision supports cyber security, reduces the risk of fraud and data breaches, and ensures compliance with data protection requirements. Higher-tier packages, particularly Contractor C and Contractor A Advanced, provide enhanced protection.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1. It is recommended that the Council:
- a) consider whether their priority is:
 - lowest cost and continuity of current systems (Contractor A Standard), or
 - enhanced support and onsite resilience (Contractor A Advanced), or
 - infrastructure modernisation with a local provider (Contractor B), or
 - a fully managed, higher security and training-focused solution (Contractor C).
 - b) Select the preferred contractor and service level from the options presented.
 - c) Delegate authority to the Clerk, to agree final contract terms and confirm any optional or variable infrastructure requirements.