

Councillors are hereby summoned, and members of the public and press are invited, to attend the annual meeting of the **Joint Burial Committee** to be held on **Tuesday 2 December 2025**, starting at **18.45** in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne.

Note: - Members of the public who wish to view the meeting proceedings will be able to access the meeting through the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTA9K-7L4Onjcli2Gtz7tCg>

G. Hughes, Town Clerk (signed on original)
26 November 2025

Agenda

- 033/2526 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.
- 034/2526 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.
- 035/2526 To approve the draft minutes of the Joint Burial Committee meeting held on 7 October 2025.**
- 036/2526 Public Open Forum:** Questions may be put to the Committee 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 Thursday) 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.
- 037/2526 Clerk's progress report:** to receive an update report (for information).
- 038/2526 Financial Matters for consideration:**
a. To approve the budget for 2026/27
b. To review the fees for 2026/27
- 039/2526 Cemetery Maintenance Contract:** To consider the tenders received

- 040/2526** **Terms of Reference:** To adopt the revised document
- 041/2526** **Dogs:** To consider whether to implement restrictions on dogs
- 042/2526** **Inspections:**
a) to receive feedback from recent inspections and
b) to make arrangements for cemetery inspections until February 2025.
- 043/2526** **Matters of report** (for information only).
- 044/2526** **Date of the next meeting:** Tuesday 7th April 2025, 18.45, Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne.

PRECEPT 2026/27	2025/26 Precept			2026/27 Precept		
SUMMARY PAGE	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost	Expenditure	Income	Net Cost
CEMETERY	42,302	26,627	15,675	49,800	22,970	26,830
SUB TOTALS	42,302	26,627	15,675	49,800	22,970	26,830
AMOUNT TO COLLECT FROM CREWKERNE			15,675			26,830
Percentage change compared to previous precept						71.2%
Crewkerne Town Council 93%						£ 24,952
West Crewkerne Parish Council 7%						£ 1,878
Increase in £ compared to previous precept for CTC						£ 3,003
Increase in £ compared to previous precept for WCPC						£ 226

Tax Base still to be confirmed

Report subject	To review the cemetery fees for 2026/27
Committee name	Joint Burial Committee
Meeting date	Tuesday 2 nd December
Report author	Gemma Hughes, Town Clerk
Report contact details	townclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk
Consultees	Local parish councils
Decision required?	Yes

1. Purpose

To review the cemetery fees and charges for the financial year 2026/27 and determine whether any adjustments are required.

2. Background information

The Council's cemetery fees were last revised in 2018/19, see Appendix A. Since then, operational and staffing costs have changed, and fees in neighbouring authorities have moved at varying rates. A comparison of regional cemetery fees will be presented alongside this report to support informed decision-making.

3. Detailed Consideration

3.1 There has been no change to cemetery charges for seven years. Over this period, the Council has experienced changes in inflation, grounds maintenance costs, materials, fuel, and staff pay awards. These factors have influenced the overall cost of providing cemetery services, although the degree of impact varies by cost category.

3.2 A review at this time provides an opportunity to consider whether the existing fee structure remains appropriate, whether it continues to meet the Council's cost-recovery ambitions, and whether any adjustments are required to ensure consistency, fairness, and long-term service sustainability.

3.3 Benchmarking with nearby councils shows a mixed picture: some authorities now charge higher fees, while others remain lower or comparable. A summary comparison table is set out below:

	Crewkerne Town Council	Chard Town Council	Ilminster Town Council	Martock Parish Council	South Petherton Parish Council	Yeovil Town Council
<i>Grave Plot (Adult)</i>	£650 Double 99 years	£321 Single 50 years	£399 Single 100 years	£600 Single 99 years	£225 Single £450 Double	£913 Single £1826 Double 75 years
<i>Ashes Plot</i>	£300	£226	£167	£250	£125	£550
<i>Interment of a body (adult)</i>	£250	£642	£255	£250	£150	£750
<i>Interment of ashes (adult)</i>	£180	£226	£255	£140	£100	£290

4. Financial implications

Any decision to increase, decrease, or maintain fees will have financial impacts.

- If fees remain unchanged, the Council may need to subsidise the service to cover operational costs.
- If fees are increased, additional income may help offset rising costs and reduce reliance on general funds.
- If fees are reduced, the level of subsidy required may increase.

The financial effect will depend on the scale of any fee adjustment.

5. Equalities considerations

Any change to charges must be applied consistently and must not disproportionately affect individuals with protected characteristics. Existing policies regarding concessions or support should be considered when reviewing fees.

6. Crime and Disorder considerations

There are no direct crime or disorder implications. Adequate funding for cemetery operations can support a well-maintained environment, which may contribute indirectly to site safety and public confidence.

7. Council Action Plan objectives supported

None

8. Recommendation

That the Committee reviews the cemetery fees for 2026/27, considers the benchmarking information provided, and determines whether any adjustments are required in light of operational costs, comparison data, and the seven-year period since the last review.

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| 8.1. It is recommended that Council REVIEWS the cemetery fees for 2026/27 and determines whether any adjustments are required. |
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CREWKERNE AND WEST CREWKERNE JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE**Fees 1st April 2025– 31st March 2026**

These charges apply to residents of Crewkerne & West Crewkerne Parishes, including residents who have recently moved out of these parishes to a nursing home or hospital, or where the purchaser does not live in the parish but the deceased did. **All Charges for residents outside these parishes are double.**

DESCRIPTION	FEE (£)
<u>Exclusive Right of Burial – 99 years</u>	Under 16: free Over 16:
Grave Plot – Double depth in New Section	650
Ashes Casket Plot	300
<u>Interment Fees</u>	Under 16: free Over 16:
Body in a grave	250
Cremated remains	180
Digging of ashes plot for interment	40
<u>Memorials</u>	
Headstone	180
Wooden Cross	90
Vase	90
Each additional inscription/Memorial/Tablet	90
Replacement Memorial	90
<u>Garden of Remembrance</u>	
Scattering of ashes on the garden	£ 90
Memorial plaque on the wall	£120
<u>Other fees</u>	
Use of the chapel	£100
Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial	£ 60
Statutory Declaration	£ 100
Administration Fee	£ 25
<u>Memorials in old section of Cemetery</u>	
Headstone not exceeding 5ft in height	£180
Kerbstones enclosing a space not exceeding 7ft by 3ft without rails, chains or palisades	£180
Vase – not exceeding 15 ins in height	£ 90

The Joint Burial Committee reserves the right to review and adjust charges throughout the year.

Report subject	Cemetery Maintenance Tender
Committee name	Joint Burial Committee
Meeting date	Monday 2 nd December 2025
Report author	Gemma Hughes, Town Clerk
Report contact details	townclerk@crewkerne-tc.gov.uk
Consultees	n/a
Decision required?	Yes

1. Purpose

To seek Council approval to award the Cemetery Maintenance Contract following a competitive tender process.

2. Background information

2.1 The Council issued a tender for the Cemetery Maintenance Contract on 27th August, with submissions invited from all interested contractors. The tender closed on 30th September.

2.2 The contract is from 1st March 2026 until 31st October 2028, with a total value below the Public Procurement threshold.

2.3 A total of five tenders were received by the closing date.

3. Detailed Consideration

3.1 All bids were reviewed for compliance with tender documentation, including insurance cover (Public Liability Insurance of at least £10 million), two references, and a complete pricing schedule.

3.2 Compliance summary:

Bidder	Percentage of compliancy to tender documents	Comments/Clarification required?
A	25%	No signed tender form, insurance information or references
B	75%	PLI £5 million, £10 million was requested
C	100%	

D	75%	PLI £5 million, £10 million was requested
E	100%	

3.3 Tender prices (all exclusive of VAT):

Bidder	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total Price	Comments
A	£60,034.98	£62,755.16	£65,605.57	£188,395.71	Non compliant tender
B	£21,760	£21,760	£21,760	£65,280	This is a maximum price based on 2 cuts a week
C	£42,920	£44,637	£46,422	£133,979	
D	£12,848.50	£12,848.50	£12,848.50	£38,545.50	
E	£29,950	£30,848	£31,773	£92,571	

3.4 All contractors, except for Bidder A, provided references. As Bidder A supplied none, no reference checks were possible for this contractor. References were obtained for Bidders B–E, all of which were rated as excellent.

3.5 Bidder D represents the strongest value-for-money option; however, Bidder B may also be a consideration as the second-lowest bidder, noting that their submission states a maximum price based on two cuts per week, which may not reflect the actual costs incurred.

4. Financial implications

The current contract value is £41,850 within the approved budget for cemetery maintenance, so bidders A, B, C and E would see an increase in this budget.

5. Equalities considerations

5.1 The contract does not introduce any adverse equality impacts.

5.2 The procurement process has been open and transparent, providing equal opportunity for all suppliers to bid.

6. Crime and Disorder considerations

6.1 The contractor will be required to comply with all relevant health and safety requirements.

6.2 There are no anticipated crime or disorder risks associated with this contract.

7. Council Action Plan objectives supported

3.2 Review Grounds Maintenance Contract

8. Recommendation

- 8.1. It is recommended that Council AGREES
- a) to approve the award of the Cemetery Maintenance Contract for the period 1st March 2026 until 31st October 2028
 - b) to delegate to the Clerk to finalise and sign the contract.

Crewkerne Town Council and West Crewkerne Parish Council

Joint Burial Committee

Terms of Reference with effect from 2nd December 2025

The Crewkerne & West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee ('the Committee') is empowered to manage and maintain Townsend Cemetery on behalf of Crewkerne Town Council and West Crewkerne Parish Council under the following Terms of Reference with effect from 2nd December 2025.

1. Background: The Crewkerne & West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee is a joint committee of Crewkerne Town Council and West Crewkerne Parish Council formed under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, to administer ~~the functions of the two councils~~ these councils' functions as Burial Authorities.

2. Name: ~~The Committee shall be known as~~ The Crewkerne & West Crewkerne Joint Burial Committee.

3. Functions: The committee will ~~exercise~~ operate the burial powers of ~~the~~ two Councils as provided by section 214 of the Local Government Act 1972.

4. Host Authority: ~~Under these Terms of Reference,~~ Crewkerne Town Council shall ~~act as the Host Authority and perform the role of lead authority for the Committee. This includes responsibility for in relation to legal liabilities, financial accountability, contracts, employment and other matters, and other administrative functions of the Committee,~~ on behalf of both Councils.

5. Composition: The Committee shall consist of the following number of Councillors, nominated by their respective Councils:

- Crewkerne Town Council: 5 members
- West Crewkerne Parish Council: 3 members

6. Terms of Office: ~~The Annual Meeting of Each Council shall will review and confirm their its Council's representatives~~ on the Committee ~~at its Annual Meeting.~~

7. Meetings: The Committee will meet on no fewer than four occasions in each year. One of those meetings will be an Annual Meeting, ~~to be held~~ normally held in June, at which the Committee members will elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman from among their members.

8. Rules: The Committee ~~will~~ shall comply with all procedural and legal requirements ~~applicable that apply~~ applicable to committees of Town and Parish Councils. The Committee will operate under the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations of Crewkerne Town Council as the host authority.

9. Finance:

(i) The full financial records of the Committee shall form part of the accounts of the Host Authority and shall be examined or audited ~~in accordance with~~ according to any statutory requirements and Proper Practices.

(ii) Before the end of November each year the Committee will prepare a budget for the following year, showing what financial contribution is required from each constituent Council.

(iii) The two Councils will each contribute to the budget of the Committee in the following proportions:

Crewkerne Town Council: 93%

West Crewkerne Parish Council: 7%

On a quadrennial basis, the committee shall review the latest available population figures of the parishes of Crewkerne and West Crewkerne and use this information to review whether the division of the budget contributions between the two parishes needs to be adjusted.

10. Property: Unless otherwise agreed and specified, ownership of the property will be held by the two Councils in accordance with the above proportions. Further, any rights and liabilities in respect of the property will be shared on the same basis. Where any property within the cemetery is rented to a third party, rental income will be apportioned on the same basis.

11. Appointments: The Clerk to the Host Authority will act as the Clerk to the Committee.

Version Control:

Adopted at the Joint Burial Committee: 7th December 2021 Min. No. 55 21/22

Updated at the Joint Burial Committee: XXXX

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

Review Date: October 2029