

Minutes of a meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne on Monday 22 September 2025.

PRESENT

Cllrs. Best, N. Draycott, K. Head, D. Livesley, P. Maxwell, J. Nathan, C. Rawe, A. Samuel, and S. Woodland.

In attendance: Town Clerk G. Hughes and Finance Officer P. Martin-Hamblin

No members of the public were present.

049 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

25/26

Cllrs. J. Morris (personal) and A. Stuart (work commitments). Cllr. Ashton was absent.

050 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

25/26

There were no declarations of interest made.

051 MINUTES

25/26

To confirm the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 28 July 2025, and the extraordinary meeting held on 8 August 2025.

The minutes of the meetings held on 28 July 2025 and 8 August 2025 were AGREED.

052 HONOURED CITIZENS

25/26

The passing of Honoured Citizens David Cuthbertson (2015) and Eleanor Dixon (2003) was noted, and a one-minute silence was observed in their memory.

Cllr. Nathan took this opportunity to apologise for a comment made at a previous meeting that may have caused upset to members of the public.

053 PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

25/26

No members of the public were present.

054 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

25/26

a. Somerset Councillors

Cllr Best reported that updates are awaited regarding the planning situation. Applications for fewer than ten dwellings are no longer referred to committee, and it is possible that only outline applications will be considered, rather than reserved matters.

It was noted that Government may be considering relieving Somerset Council of its planning responsibilities. This could impact the distribution of CIL and s106 monies and may affect the local community if planning officers are not based locally. If such a decision is made, there would be no right of appeal.

b. Local Community Network (LCN) representative

Cllr. Head reported that there had been no recent meetings.

c. Crewkerne Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)

A written report had been circulated. It was noted that some of the categories were not clear. The Clerk will raise this when the new beat manager is in post.

055 CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT

25/26

The Town Clerk reported that:

- Work has begun on installing new LED floodlights at Happy Valley.
- The position of Deputy Clerk is currently being advertised. The recruitment pack is available on the Council website.
- Grant applications for 2026 are now open. The closing date is Friday 3 October.
- Somerset Council have launched a consultation on Sunday parking charges, seeking views on introducing charges across all Council-run car parks. The closing date is 20 October.
- Stallholders are being sought for the Christmas Market on Saturday 29 November.

056 FINANCE

25/26

a. To approve the accounts for payment for August 2025 as listed

Cllr. Best verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Accounts for payment for 31 August 2025 in the sum of £64,931.82 were APPROVED.

b. To report that the bank reconciliation for July and August 2025 has been completed

Cllr. Best verified the bank reconciliation for July and August 2025. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31 July 2025 was £897,545.23, and as of 31 August 2025 £875,761.44.

c. To note that the monthly accounts for the War Memorial Commemoration Trust have been checked

Cllr. Best verified the Trust accounts and it was noted that cash in hand as of 31 July 2025 was £5,616.98, and of 31 August 2025 £6,212.78.

057 PLANNING

25/26

To consider applications requiring comment before the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting:

a) **25/02024/HOU 69 Hermitage Street Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8EX**

Removal of existing conservatory and erection of a replacement single storey extension to rear of dwelling, replace garage doors to provide a workshop and associated internal alterations

Councillors commented that they could not see any issues with the application, and that it would tidy up the area.

Recommend: APPROVAL

b) 24/00639/FUL Blacknell Lane Trading Estate Blacknell Lane Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7HE

Demolition of existing building and erection of 3 no. industrial buildings (Revised Plans)

It was noted that this application was originally brought to the Councillors in May 2024, and the council was in support of the application.

Recommend: APPROVAL

c) 25/02256/NMA Crewkerne Key Site 1 Land East Of Crewkerne Between A30 And A356 Yeovil Road Crewkerne Somerset TA18 7HE

Notification Only - Non Material Amendment to approved application 23/00006/REM to simply rotate Plot 125 so that it fronts onto the highway

058 CREWKERNE HOSPITAL

25/26 To note the response received from Andy Heron, Chief Operating Officer

The following points were discussed:

- Cllr Head reported that she had been in correspondence with Andy Heron and the Communications Officer.
- A public consultation is being undertaken, including visits to local community groups, with a visit to the Farmers' Market also planned.
- The League of Friends were asked to consider three possible options. They voted in favour of retaining all sixteen beds and seeking to utilise the other available space.
- From October, a Cardiac Team will be holding a clinic twice a month.
- Councillors requested that the Clerk invite the two officers to a Full Council meeting.
- It was noted that the category of patients has now changed, and there are no longer bedbound patients at the hospital.
- Some work has been carried out on the building exits to improve access, although further work is restricted by the building's listed status.

059 TOWN CRIER

25/26 To consider a request from the Town Crier for an annual honorarium

Councillors discussed the support the Town Crier has provided to the town over the years. It was noted that he now lives further away and currently finances his own trips and outfits. It was AGREED to approve an annual honorarium of £500 in recognition of his voluntary service and contribution to the town. This honorarium will include his membership of the Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers.

060 YOUTH PROVISION

25/26 To note the termination of the ALS contract from 31 October 2025

Councillors noted the termination of the contract. The Clerk explained that an upcoming meeting would provide further details regarding the end of the contract.

Cllr Best explained that discussions were taking place regarding establishing an overarching youth organisation covering Crewkerne, Chard, and Ilminster Town Councils. Each town would continue to run its own provision while benefiting from economies of scale.

061 NATIONAL PAY SETTLEMENT

25/26 To note the conclusion of pay negotiations for the current financial year, backdated to 1 April 2025, for all employees on NJC pay scales.

This was noted, and the Clerk confirmed that payroll adjustments had been made to reflect the backdated pay increase.

062 STAFFING

25/26 To note the appointment of the new Finance Officer and Town Clerk.

Councillors noted these appointments.

063 TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES

25/26

- a) Reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies
- b) Youth Service Steering Group minutes: 10 April 2025, 8 July 2025
- c) Staffing Sub-Committee minutes: 7 May 2025, 16 June 2025, 20 June 2025 and 18 July 2025.

All minutes above were duly noted and AGREED.

064 TO RECEIVE MATTERS OF REPORT (for information only)

25/26

Councillors discussed the following points:

- Cllr Best confirmed that there is no update on the s106 funds for Millers Garage.
- The general appearance of the town was noted as poor. The Clerk advised that this will be considered at the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting.
- Gullies reported to the council as cleared recently still appear to be full of mud.
- Since the bin was removed at West Street, rubbish has been accumulating next to the bench.
- The lamppost in the churchyard is still awaiting repair. The Clerk explained that, as the damage was caused by a contractor, it is part of an ongoing insurance claim.
- Councillors enquired whether Open Doors are paying to hire the GRC for the Repair Café; the Clerk confirmed that they were paying.
- Questions were raised about the bales at Bincombe being contaminated and whether they are being sold on. The Clerk will make enquiries.
- Cllr Head reported that a wooden bench will be installed in Falkland Square, opposite Savers.
- Overgrown brambles along the pavement on Blacknell Lane towards the Recycling Centre were noted. Cllr Best explained that Taylor Wimpey are willing for s106 monies to be used to improve pavements rather than cycleways, but Somerset Council would need to approve this.
- Overgrown vegetation near Bob's Tyres on Blacknell Lane has been reported to Somerset Council by the Clerk.
- Councillors asked whether the gate from Lawrence's to Henhayes could remain open at all times. The Clerk confirmed that she had written to the owners last year. The gate is on private land, and its opening hours are at the owners' discretion. Currently, it is opened and closed daily by an employee at their cost.

065 NEXT MEETING

25/26

Monday 27 October 2025, 18.45, Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne.

066 STAFFING MATTER

25/26 To consider salary arrangements for additional responsibilities undertaken by staff

Salary arrangements for additional responsibilities undertaken by staff were considered and AGREED.

067

STAFFING MATTER

25/26

To consider a request relating to time off in lieu arrangements

A request relating to time off in lieu arrangements was considered and AGREED.

The meeting closed at 19.35.

Signed:

Dated:

TC22September2025

DRAFT