

Minutes of a meeting of CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne on Monday 23 February 2026.

PRESENT

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

In attendance: Town Clerk G. Hughes, Deputy Clerk S. Syeda Bowen

114 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

25/26

All Councillors were present.

115 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

25/26

No declarations of interest were made.

116 MINUTES

25/26

To confirm the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 26 January 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2026 were AGREED.

117 PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

25/26

No members of the public were present.

118 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

25/26

a. Somerset Councillors

- Somerset Council – Their application to increase council tax beyond the permitted threshold has been refused.
- Somerset Rivers Authority – The deadline for the current round of funding has now passed but is expected to re-open in a few months' time. There is a proposal to amend the assessment criteria to allow greater flexibility for Town and Parish Councils.
- Potholes – Works will prioritise major routes in the first instance. The junction of Hermitage Street / West Street / Market Street is scheduled for resurfacing in the early part of the new financial year. The Clerk advised that this will be communicated once the works are formally confirmed. Councillors queried whether this information could be shared with the public now, even without a confirmed date.

b. Local Community Network (LCN) representative

Cllr. Head reported that an Active Travel meeting had taken place to discuss the possibility of a cycle path/walking route from the Taylor Wimpey site to the town centre. This is still ongoing.

c. Crewkerne Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)

The Clerk has met with the new beat manager, and he is working on obtaining the updated statistics.

119 **CLERK'S PROGRESS REPORT**

25/26

The Town Clerk reported that:

- The statutory notice of vacancy has been displayed following the resignation of Simon Woodland. Electors have 14 working days from 18th February to write to Electoral Services to request an election. If no request is received within that period, the vacancy will be filled by co-option.
- One member of the Grounds Team has successfully completed his course and now holds a chainsaw certificate.
- Two new bleed control kits have been installed alongside the defibrillators at the George Shopping Centre and Wadham School.
- The book swap in the phone box is now up and running. All donations can be taken to the LIC.

120 **FINANCE**

25/26

a. To approve the accounts for payment for January 2026 as listed.

Cllr. Head verified the accounts for payment in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. Accounts for payment for 31 January 2026 in the sum of £13,642.85 were APPROVED.

b. To report that the bank reconciliation for January 2026 has been completed

Cllr. Head verified the bank reconciliations for January 2026. It was noted that cash in hand as of 31 January 2026 was £662,426.33.

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

Cllr. Head verified the Trust accounts and it was noted that cash in hand as of 31 January 2026 was £7,439.01

121 **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

25/26

To consider the recommendations of the Policy & Resources Committee

The following Community Grants for 2026/27 were unanimously AGREED:

Organisation	Purpose of grant	Amount Requested	Proposed Award
Crewkerne & District Museum & Heritage Centre	Operating costs	£1,500	£500
Crewkerne in Bloom	Mulch for town flower beds	£1,000	£1,000
Enhayes Centre	Operating costs	£3,000	£1,500
Merriott Majorettes	Competition costumes	£500	£500
Somerset Farmers Market	Ground rent	£1,000	£500
Rotary Club of Crewkerne District	Contribution towards fireworks display	£500	£500

CAB South Somerset	Crewkerne CAB Service	£1,131	£1,131
Crewkerne & District Shed	Running costs	£1,000	£1,500
Crewkerne Pegasus Karate Group	Crash mats, pads and head guards	£1,000	£500
CUDOS	A-Frame Ladder	£170	£170
Severalls Jubilee Bowls Club	Concrete base and shed	£500	£500
Severalls War Memorial Gardening Group	Maintaining gardens	£400	£400
Crewkerne & District Twinning Association	Contribution to hospitality and entertainment	£500	£500
Awe & Wonder	Hire costs for GRC	Free room hire (value £1,577)	£0 cash and free room hire to the value of £1,577
Friends of Crewkerne Station	To refresh seasonal planters	£300	£600
Crewkerne Allotment Team	Water containers, solar pump and battery	£500	£250 + offer of a water bowser
Crewkerne RFC Youth	Training equipment	£2,000	£1,000
Crewkerne & District University of the Third Age (u3a)	Presentation equipment	£890	£500
Crewkerne Brownies	Life skills items	£500	£500
Crewkerne Cricket Club	Operating costs	£500	£500
Crewkerne Boxing Club	Training Equipment	£1,500	£1,000
		TOTAL	£15,128 (including free room hire value)

The following applications were considered but are not recommended for award on this occasion:

- South Somerset Music Centre (£900 requested)
- Crewkerne Timebank (£1,000 requested)
- Crewkerne Business Group (£3,750 requested) – It was noted that they do not yet have a community bank account.

122 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF ELECTORS

25/26 To determine the format

- 6.15pm – 7.00pm
Honoured Citizens and Young Crewkernian Reception in the Council Chamber.
- 7.00pm – 7.45pm
Informal 'drop-in' networking event in Victoria Hall with community group representatives
- 7.45pm – 8.15pm
Formal Annual Town Meeting

The format and timetable of the meeting, along with the presentation of the Honoured Citizen and Young Crewkernian Awards was AGREED with delegated authority to the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

123 **INTERNAL CONTROLS**
25/26 To note that the annual review has been carried out

The internal controls review was NOTED.

124 **ROOM HIRE**
25/26 To review requests for room hire

a. Pop Up Orchestra

A request for free hire of Victoria Hall for a music event on 28th March 2026. Councillors noted that this event had been held previously and that it is a charitable event.

It was **RESOLVED** to waive the room hire costs for this event, subject to the organiser:

- Providing appropriate public liability insurance;
- Covering any applicable PRS fees; and
- Agreeing to undertake fundraising in support of a local charity.

b. Homes2Inspire (Shaw Trust)

Councillors considered a request for the Council Chamber for staff meetings on three Tuesdays a month. It was noted that this is a non-profit organisation that supports independent living. The council website states that the chamber is available 'free of charge to community groups looking for occasional meeting space'.

It was AGREED not to grant the request for use of the Council Chamber, as it related to regular, rather than occasional, use.

c. Awe and Wonder

A request to use the Beech Suite at the George Reynolds Centre free of charge on a fortnightly basis in 2027 was considered, along with a request to use Bincombe Beeches for outdoor play sessions. Councillors noted that revenue-generating bookings should be prioritised to help maintain the Centre's financial sustainability.

It was RESOLVED not to grant the request for the Beech Suite, and it was suggested that the applicant consider applying for a grant later in the year to support this activity. The use of Bincombe Beeches was AGREED, as it is a public open space.

125 **FLAGSHIP CREWKERNE**
25/26 To consider support for the event

Councillors AGREED for the Clerk to draft a letter of support for the event.

126 **GRC NEWSLETTER**
25/26 To approve the first GRC newsletter

Councillors requested that the paragraph regarding the new youth provision be expanded to provide additional detail. They also asked that the statement asserting the George Reynolds Centre is the only venue in Crewkerne permitting bouncy castles be checked and verified for accuracy prior to publication.

127 **RBL TEA PARTY EVENT**

25/26 To approve the use of the War Memorial Gardens on Saturday 30th May.

Councillor Samuel explained that the event would run from 11am-4pm. Councillors AGREED the use of the gardens.

128 **TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES**

25/26

- a) Reports from Town Council representatives to outside bodies
- b) Joint Burial Committee: 7th October 2025
- c) Planning & Highways Committee: 12 January 2026
- d) Policy & Resources Committee: 12 January 2026
- e) Staffing Sub-Committee: 8 December 2025

All minutes above were duly noted and AGREED.

129 **TO RECEIVE MATTERS OF REPORT (for information only)**

25/26

Councillors discussed the following points:

- The hole in the churchyard has been filled
- Councillors wished to express their thanks to Councillor Livesley for litter picking and clearing drains
- Councillor Ashton explained that there will be a 'resilience testing' meeting at Clapton Village Hall. The Environment Agency, Somerset Council and Somerset Rivers Authority will be in attendance and will discuss various scenarios and how to support residents.
- The South Somerset West Primary Care Network and Symphony Healthcare Services are hosting a Health and Wellbeing Day at the Henhayes Centre on Saturday 28th February from 10am-3pm.

130 **NEXT MEETING**

25/26

Monday 23 March 2026, 18.45, Council Chamber, Town Hall, Market Square, Crewkerne.

It was AGREED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable that the public and press be excluded and were instructed to withdraw.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION: EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC – Staffing Matters.

131 **STAFFING MATTERS**

25/26

To approve the recommendations of the Staffing Sub-Committee

One element of the matter was AGREED to be suspended. The other remaining elements were AGREED as recommended.

132 **STAFFING MATTERS**

25/26

To approve the Facilities and Contracts Officer Recruitment Pack

The recruitment pack was AGREED in principle, however it was RESOLVED to postpone the recruitment.

The meeting closed at 19.52.

Signed:

Dated:

TC23February2026