



CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN HALL
MARKET SQUARE
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Councillors are hereby summoned to attend an informal meeting of the **Full Council** to be held remotely on **Monday 28 June 2021 at 6.45pm.**

Note:

- **Members of the public who wish to attend can access the meeting through the following link:**
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTA9K-7L4Onjcli2Gtz7tCg>
- **Members of the public who wish to speak at the "Open Forum" section of the meeting are kindly requested to contact the Town Council office (details above), where they will be given joining details.**

P. Davidson

Peter Davidson, Town Clerk
22 June 2021

A G E N D A

1. **To note apologies for absence**
2. **Open Forum:** Questions may be put to the Council during this Public Participation Session of up to 15 minutes and a maximum of 3 minutes per person.
3. **To confirm the minutes of the Town Council Meetings** held on 29 March, 12 April, 4 May, 10 May and 14 June 2021.
4. **Declarations of interest** in items on the agenda.
5. **To receive reports from the County and District Councillors.**
6. **Clerk's progress report:** to receive an update report (for information).
7. **Planning:** To consider the following application requiring observations before the next Planning and Highways Committee meeting:
21/01788/S73 Queensbury House, Station Road, Crewkerne. Erection of a single storey rear extension, car port to side and reinstatement of northern boundary line and former driveway encompassing existing gate access and change of use of section of field to increase residential curtilage (Application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of planning approval 19/01737/FUL to alter the design of the extension).
8. **Finance:**
 - a) To approve the accounts for payment for June as listed.
 - b) To report the bank reconciliation for May 2021 has been completed.
 - c) Internal audit: to receive the second report of the Internal Auditor.
 - d) To formally approve the internally audited accounts for 2020/21.
 - e) To approve the Annual Return year ending 31 March 2021:
 - i. To note that the "except for" matter raised by the External Auditor in the previous year's audit – the lack of an annual review of financial risk - had been addressed through the review of risk carried out at the Full Council meeting held on 29 June 2020 and that this was being reviewed annually, as evidenced by the review of risk being an agenda item in this meeting.



- ii. Section 1: to approve the Annual Governance Statement.
 - ii. Section 2: to approve the Accounting Statement.
 - iii. To receive the Internal Auditor's audit report.
 - iv. To authorise the signatures of the Mayor and Clerk.
- f) Risk register: to review the Financial Risk Register.
9. **Severalls war memorial and associated grounds:** to receive a report on the recent meeting between key stakeholders on ownership and ongoing maintenance of the Severalls war memorial and grounds and to consider the recommendations for the way forwards.
10. **SSDC "Welcome back" fund:** to consider the proposal that Cllr. Cottle and the Clerk have delegated authority to determine how best the SSDC "Welcome Back" funding should be utilised to support the local business community.
11. **MTIG Environment fund:** to consider a proposal from Cllr. Samuel and the Deputy Clerk for submission of an "expression of interest" regarding the SSDC Market Towns Investment Group (MTIG) Environment grant fund.
12. **Management of the GRC:** to consider a proposal that the GRC working group should be abolished and replaced by a committee consisting of all Councillors.
13. **Grant funding for the Men's Shed:** to consider the correspondence received from the Men's Shed community group and their proposal to re-purpose the grant funding already provided.
14. **To receive Committee and Working Group minutes:**
- a) Amenities Committee meeting held on 10 May 2021.
 - b) Planning and Highways Committee meetings held on 10 May and 14 June 2021.
 - c) Policy and Resources meeting held on 14 June 2021.
 - d) Joint Burial Committee meetings held on 8 June and 17 June 2021.
15. **To receive Matters of Report** (for information only)
16. **Next meeting** on Monday 26 July 2021 at 6.45pm



FINAL

Internal audit report 2020/21

Visit 2 of 2

CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 25th May 2021

Report author: R Darkin-Miller
Email: r.darkin@darkinmiller.co.uk

Introduction

This report contains a note of the audit recommendations made to Crewkerne Town Council following the carrying out of internal audit testing remotely on 25th May 2021.

The audit work has been carried out in accordance with Crewkerne Town Council's bespoke Internal Audit programme, which is based largely on Appendix 9 of the 2014 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide' and supplemented by the additional tests required by the AIAR section of the 2018/19 and 2020/21 AGAR.

An internal audit covers the review of the operation of the Council's internal control environment. It is not designed to review and give full assurance over every transaction carried out by the Council. Instead it enables the auditor, following the sample testing of a number of different types of transaction, to give an opinion as to whether or not the control objectives are being achieved across a range of financial and governance systems.

Audit Opinion

The internal audit for 2020/21 has now been completed in accordance with the provisions of the Practitioners' Guide and the CIPFA code of internal audit practice.

Based on the sample testing carried out at this final audit visit and during the year, all of the Council's current financial controls appear to be operating effectively with the exception of the item noted below:

N: Publication

I checked to see that the Council complied with the publication requirements for the previous year's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Council had to publish before 01/09/20 and at least one day before the start of its public rights period (15/07/20) ss1&2 of the AGAR, and the public rights notice including a declaration that the accounting statements were unaudited.

On or before 30/11/20, the Council was required to publish the notice of conclusion of audit, and ss1-3 of the AGAR (including the completed external audit report).

I can confirm that all documents required to be published were present on the Council's website at 25/05/21.

In previous years, the External Auditor has confirmed that proof of publication could only be provided via a website audit trail. The Council has no such facility, so was unable to provide this proof. Consequently I have assessed this test as 'not covered'.

Audit Recommendations

Recommendations made during the audit are shown in appendix one to this report.
Recommendations are graded as follows:

Rating	Significance
High	Either a critical business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is substantial non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Medium	Either a key business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is a degree of non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Low	Either minor non-conformity with procedure or opportunity to improve working practices further.

The number of recommendations made at this audit visit and their priority are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number
High	1
Medium	2
Low	1
Information	0
TOTAL	4

The number of recommendations made at all of the audit visits in 2020/21 and their priorities are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number		
	Visit 1	Visit 2	TOTAL
High	0	1	1
Medium	1	2	3
Low	1	1	2
Information	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	4	6

I would like to thank Peter Davidson, Town Clerk and Paula Hewitt, Finance Officer for their assistance during this audit.

Darkin Miller ~ Chartered Accountants
2020/21 INTERNAL AUDIT OF CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL
FINAL REPORT VISIT 2 OF 2: 25th MAY 2021

Appendix 1 – Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation number	Detail	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Management Response	Responsible Officer	Due Date
2.1 – Update FRs for PCR 2015	<p>I checked to see that items and services above a de minimis amount have been competitively tendered. I found that the majority of goods and services were procured in compliance with the Council's financial regulations, which require best value under £3k; two quotes for expenditure between £3k-£10k; three quotes for expenditure between £10k-£50k; and 3 tenders over £50k.</p> <p>The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) also require in-scope bodies to publish all advertised UK public sector procurement opportunities and contract awards above certain thresholds on Contracts Finder. The threshold for local authorities is £25k, meaning that any procurement processes over that amount should be advertised on Contracts Finder. This requirement is not currently noted in the Council's Financial Regulations.</p> <p>I recommend that the Financial Regulations are updated to include the requirements for contracts over £25k.</p> <p>During the year, the Council also worked to develop its approach to the Falkland Square toilets refurbishment,</p>	M	Noted with thanks. Financial Regulations will be updated accordingly.	Town Clerk	Sept 2021
2.2 – Comply with PCR 2015		H	Noted with thanks.	Town Clerk	N/A

	<p>an iterative process which made it impossible to create a tender specification at the start of the procurement process. The total value of the award made for the toilets contract was over £50k.</p> <p>Whilst the Council was unable to clearly specify exactly how the toilets were to be refurbished at the outset of the project, it should have been possible to advertise an opportunity for a supplier to assist in the process and then complete the refurbishment works.</p> <p>I recommend that all opportunities over £25k are advertised on the Contracts Finder website as required by PCR 2015.</p>							
<p>3.3 – Approve minutes and sign each page</p>	<p>I reviewed the minutes to confirm that there was no unusual financial activity. I found no such activity, but did note that the minutes of the Staffing Committee of 14/05/20 were not on file, and that they had been neither approved nor signed to confirm that they were accurate.</p> <p>I also noted that some of the Staffing Committee minutes are only signed on the final page. All pages of the minutes should be signed to evidence their approval.</p> <p>I recommend that the minutes are printed, approved and signed as soon as possible, and that all pages of future minutes are signed.</p>	<p>L</p>	<p>Noted with thanks. The error in the Staffing Committee minutes will be corrected.</p>	<p>Town Clerk</p>	<p>July 2021</p>			

14.1 -- Screenshot the uploading of AGAR publications	<p>I checked to see that the Council complied with the publication requirements for the previous year's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Council had to publish before 01/09/20 and at least one day before the start of its public rights period (15/07/20) ss1&2 of the AGAR, and the public rights notice including a declaration that the accounting statements were unaudited.</p> <p>On or before 30/11/20, the Council was required to publish the notice of conclusion of audit, and ss1-3 of the AGAR (including the completed external audit report).</p> <p>I can confirm that all documents required to be published were present on the Council's website at 25/05/21.</p> <p>In previous years, the External Auditor has confirmed that proof of publication could only be provided via a website audit trail. In April 2021, the External Auditor confirmed that screenshots could be used as evidence where a website audit trail was not in place.</p> <p>I recommend that the Council screenshots the uploading all the public rights and notice of conclusion of audit documents in future in order to evidence compliance with the publication requirements.</p>	M	Noted with thanks.	Finance Officer	N/A
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RISK IDENTIFIED	EVALUATION- PROBABILITY AND VALUE, AND CONSEQUENCES	RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES TO AVOID / REDUCE OR CONTROL THE RISK	FURTHER ACTION NEEDED
Non-adherence to the agreed Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures.	Low risk, medium value	Everyone concerned with finance (members and staff) to have clear understanding of the Regulations, Standing Orders and Procedures and to adhere to them. Training undertaken by new Councillors. Regular review and revision of the Regulations, Procedures and Risk Management.	This is current practice Clerk to provide training for all members of the council in order to raise awareness of financial responsibilities This is current practice
Spending money with no legal power to do so.	Low risk, low value	Awareness of the regulations pertaining to public spending. Finance Officer to check all payments are legal and within spending powers. All invoices signed by Clerk.	This is current practice
Accounts do not balance at year end.	Low risk, low value Time and effort to put right. Will not be signed off by auditor.	This end-of-year problem should be prevented by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly reconciliation of bank accounts. • Monthly VAT reconciliation • Use of the accounting software Checking and signing of the reconciliation figures and original bank statements by Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk and by a Councillor	This is current practice This is current practice
Loss of, or damage to assets	Low risk, high value	Maintain an up-to-date Asset Register	This is current practice
Loss of Business Continuity due to substantial damage to Town Hall	Increased Insurance in future Low risk, high value Inability to deliver services	Regularly review the insurance of all council property and effects. Adequate insurance cover	This is current practice This is current practice
Crewkerne Leisure Management has control of a major council asset	Low risk, high value Loss/non-performance of CLM resulting in consequential loss	Regular review of Business Continuity Plan Annual Report by CLM at the Annual Town meeting each year. Annual accounts available to Council after audit. Meetings as required between CLM and CTC. Periodic re-valuation of Aqua Centre undertaken.	This is current practice Current practice Current practice Current practice Revaluation undertaken 2019

<p>Inability to deliver the activities or services expected of the council resulting from lack of budgeted funds</p>	<p>Low risk, low value</p> <p>Insufficient funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair • Replace • Deliver <p>Loss of reputation</p> <p>Expensive litigation</p>	<p>Detailed Precept discussions and preparation of appropriate information by the Policy & Resources Committee for the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current year's budget and spending • Determine the cost of spending plans • Assess levels of income. • Bring together spending and income plans. <p>Provide for contingencies and annually review the level of earmarked and general reserves.</p> <p>Approve the Budget and confirm the Precept.</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>The inability of the Joint Burial Committee to deliver the services expected at a Cemetery</p> <p>JBC needs funds to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properly maintain lodge, chapels and grounds • Ensure accurate burial records are kept 	<p>Low risk, medium value</p> <p>Loss of reputation of CTC</p> <p>Unexpected expensive maintenance</p> <p>Future precept increases to taxpayers</p> <p>Potential expensive litigation</p>	<p>Town Councillors receive copies of minutes of JBC meetings</p> <p>Ensure a robust forward planning assessment in liaison with JBC</p> <p>Good communications between office and undertakers about burials etc</p> <p>Cemetery plots for both old and new sections accurately mapped</p> <p>Cemetery administration software ensures accurate record keeping</p> <p>Regular assessment of asset forward maintenance requirements, reporting into the Amenities Committee meetings</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>Town Clerk appointed as Clerk to JBC and CTC responsible for staff and undertaking all maintenance - current practice</p> <p>Current practice</p> <p>Current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Insufficient Reserves to deal with unexpected / emergency events</p>	<p>Low risk, medium value</p> <p>Unexpected expensive maintenance</p>	<p>Detailed forward planning in readiness for budget deliberations</p>	<p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Overspend and underspend of budgets</p>	<p>Medium risk, medium value</p> <p>Reduction of reserves</p> <p>Effects on other budgets</p>	<p>Production of Quarterly Reports on expenditure and variances from budget</p> <p>Maintain adequate reserves, as indicated in the Reserves Policy.</p> <p>Level of earmarked and general reserves reviewed when setting precept</p> <p>Virement of funds when necessary.</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Loss of income through failure to review fees / rents / charges</p>	<p>Low risk, low value</p> <p>Loss of income</p>	<p>Annual review of hire charges and rents prior to budget deliberations</p>	<p>This is current practice</p>

<p>Internal fraud / corruption</p>	<p>Low risk, high value Loss of public money.</p> <p>Inability to deliver services.</p> <p>Public disgrace and loss of reputation.</p> <p>Possible expensive litigation.</p>	<p>Adherence to and regular review of Financial Regulations and Procedures.</p> <p>Contracts for all members of staff provide clear description of role responsibilities</p> <p>Deputy Clerk trained to cover all key weekly/monthly financial tasks</p> <p>Tight control of cash income</p> <p>Monthly statements of accounts for payment presented to and agreed by the council. Prepared by the FO, checked by the Clerk/Deputy Clerk and also independently checked by a Councillor prior to approval by Council.</p> <p>Monthly reconciliation of bank accounts presented to the council. Original bank statements inspected by Clerk/Deputy Clerk. Monthly check of bank reconciliations by nominated Cllr.</p> <p>Annual Reconciliation of bank accounts presented to the council when the Annual Accounts are presented.</p> <p>Diary of regular income payment dates and follow up when overdue.</p> <p>Register of Members Interests in place.</p> <p>Established Petty Cash system, and regularly reimbursed.</p> <p>Approval of petty cash expenditure on Accounts for payment. Checked monthly by Clerk/Deputy Clerk. All petty cash chits signed off by a Councillor.</p> <p>Payroll System and evidence of PAYE & NIC being correctly deducted and paid to the Inland Revenue.</p> <p>BACS salary payment authorisation schedule checked and signed by two councillors with a countersignature from the Clerk.</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
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<p>External fraud / corruption</p>	<p>Low risk, medium value</p> <p>Loss of funds</p> <p>Inadequate services from suppliers.</p>	<p>Detailed consideration of estimates and tenders and contracts by Operations Manager/Clerk.</p> <p>Checking of invoices. Obtain professional expertise and /or the Operations Manager to verify work where necessary</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting on use of grants made by the council. Reports occasionally requested from beneficiaries.</p> <p>Comprehensive back-up of data and use of software virus protection</p> <p>Accounts software is web-based</p> <p>Monitoring of outstanding invoices and chasing up late payers.</p> <p>Aim to reduce outstanding invoices at the end of the financial year to an absolute minimum.</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Loss of data resulting from fire or theft of computers or failure of the operating system</p>	<p>Low risk, low value</p> <p>Inability to deliver some services.</p>	<p>Regular review of insurance policy</p>	<p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Bad Debts</p>	<p>Low risk, medium value</p> <p>Loss of income</p>	<p>Inform insurance company of notable purchases/changes</p> <p>Periodic revaluation of Council properties</p> <p>Regular review of all risk assessments by Health & Safety officer, covering all buildings and amenities.</p> <p>Appropriate H & S training of grounds and office staff</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Inadequate Insurance (Property/Fidelity/Public Liability/Commercial Combined)</p>	<p>Low risk, high value</p> <p>Possible expensive litigation.</p> <p>Large repair / replacement bills.</p> <p>Low risk, high value</p>	<p>Playground equipment checked weekly by the Council's qualified grounds staff and documented. Independent quarterly and annual playground inspections</p> <p>Maintain reports on all H & S issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review of Public liability insurance (PLI). • Copies of PLI from organisations renting the Victoria Hall • Copies of current PLI from all organisations having a lease/license with the Council 	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Accidents (to staff, Councillors and members of the public)</p>	<p>Potential loss of reputation</p> <p>Potentially expensive claims against Councils Insurance</p>	<p>Annual maintenance contract for Victoria Hall and GRC lifts, to include regular inspections and servicing</p>	<p>This is current practice</p>

Contractor Health and Safety	Low risk, high value	<p>Ensure adequate H&S Policies of contractor and verify insurance policies of contractor</p> <p>Routine request for method statements and PI and Employer liability insurance</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
Security of Council assets	<p>Low risk, high value</p> <p>Insurance Claims</p> <p>Expensive Replacement</p>	<p>Annual review of insurance cover (see Inadequate insurance)</p> <p>Alarm systems installed in Town Hall, Victoria Hall, George Reynolds Centre and Aqua Centre.</p> <p>All employees to be aware of the need to secure property and equipment on leaving the work place.</p> <p>During meetings in the Council Chamber the Office doors to be locked.</p> <p>All employees are not permitted to use Council equipment for own use without Council's permission</p> <p>Annual review of equipment verified with asset register</p> <p>New users to be given written instructions as part of the hiring agreement. This will also apply to one-off users.</p> <p>Premises Fire Risk Assessments conducted and reviewed on a regular basis as required by the Health & Safety Policy.</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
Loss of documents	Low risk, high value	<p>Periodic checks of Town Council land boundaries</p> <p>Deeds held in secure cabinet of Clerk's office or with solicitor</p>	<p>This is current practice.</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
Loss of Finance Officer	Medium risk, low value	<p>Deputy Clerk trained in the computer systems and financial procedures and has regular practice.</p> <p>The Clerk ensures all duties are covered and maintains basic understanding of finance packages</p> <p>Assistance to be sought from neighbouring town councils and additional training from software providers as deemed necessary.</p> <p>Contract for FO to incorporate 2 months' notice</p>	<p>Training underway</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>

<p>Loss of Maintenance Contracts officer</p>	<p>Medium risk, low value</p>	<p>Maintenance contracts officer to keep Clerk and Amenities Chairman regularly updated with ongoing tasks</p> <p>Contract for maintenance contracts officer to incorporate 2 months' notice</p>	<p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Loss of Clerk</p>	<p>Medium risk, low value</p>	<p>Finance Officer and Deputy Clerk to undertake ongoing training of Proper Officer duties and responsibilities to enable duties to be covered</p> <p>Ongoing training to enable support of duties and responsibilities split between members of staff:</p> <p>Maintenance contracts officer - Amenities Committee including all amenities maintenance.</p> <p>Deputy Clerk – Planning & Highways Committee and all planning and highways matters</p> <p>Finance Officer - Policy and Resources Committee and Finance on Town Council agendas.</p> <p>Health and Safety - Health & Safety officer with support from the Chairman of Amenities</p> <p>Agendas and matters arising from the minutes with support from the appropriate Chairmen</p> <p>Assistance/ guidance from neighbouring town councils and SALC as necessary</p> <p>Contingency provision within precept for additional hours of salary payments to cover duties by other staff</p> <p>A calendar of periodic tasks and work reminders is kept up to date.</p> <p>Contract for Clerk to incorporate 3 months' notice.</p> <p>Deputy Clerk to keep Clerk updated with ongoing tasks</p> <p>Contract for Deputy Clerk to incorporate 2 months' notice</p>	<p>Finance Officer fully competent. Deputy Clerk is CilCA qualified</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This current practice</p> <p>This current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p> <p>This is current practice</p>
<p>Loss of Deputy Clerk</p>	<p>Medium risk, low value</p>	<p>Contract for Deputy Clerk to incorporate 2 months' notice</p>	<p>This is current practice</p>

Loss of Admin Officer	Medium risk, low value	Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer to be familiar with all Admin Officer administration tasks	This is current practice
Loss of member of grounds staff	Medium risk, low value	Clerk to be familiar with Council's website software	This is current practice
Loss of Council vehicle	Low risk, medium value Some difficulty to deliver some services.	Clerk to manage working duties with grounds staff and staff training to ensure flexibility of operations Regular maintenance and periodic replacement. Comprehensive insurance cover to enable replacement temporary vehicle.	This is current practice
Loss of reserves due to failure of a bank	Low risk, high value	Compliance of Reserves Policy	This is current practice
Large Project risks	Med risk, high value Cash flow insufficient Cost escalation and delays Changes/amendments to specifications within the contract. VAT problems Non completion of defects within contract period Time slippage/non completion within contract time. Grants threatened Contractor going bankrupt	Financial Package in place prior to commencement. Due diligence checks prior to contract award. Early clarification of VAT implications with HMRC. Tender process complies with Financial Regulations. Adequacy of opening reserves with reference to the Reserves Policy. JCT contract in place. Payment on measured valuation. Practical completion only given by dual signatures of Contracts. Adequacy of Building Insurance, evidence required. Any variations to previously agreed plans must be ratified by Full Town Council first. Appoint an independent professional Contracts Administrator/Project Manager. Monthly reports from Contracts Administrator and Contractors Contract should include insurance backed by guarantee and/or insurance performance bond.	Action as appropriate

Reviewed and ratified at Town Council meeting 28 June 2021, minute ref. XX

Agenda item 9

Ownership of Severalls War Memorial and gardens

A site meeting was held on 4 June 2021 of key stakeholders, to consider ownership and management of the Severalls war memorial and associated oval garden area. Notes from this meeting are attached.

For agreement at Full Council:

- 1. Ownership of the Severalls war memorial to transfer from SSDC to CTC.**
- 2. SSDC to retain ownership of the oval garden area and associated verges.**
- 3. Should in the future SSDC cease to exist (as a result of the change to a unitary authority), then ownership of the oval garden area to revert to CTC ownership.**

Report from a meeting of stakeholders at Severalls War Memorial Gardens held on site on Friday 4 June 2021.

Present

Cllr. R. Pailthorpe, Catherine Bacon (Crewkerne in Bloom), Geoff Carr and John Davies (Severalls War Memorial Gardening Group), Stephen Fox (SSDC), Anthony Samuel (Royal British Legion) and Laura Gowers (Deputy Clerk, Crewkerne Town Council)

Background to the meeting

Crewkerne Town Council (CTC) had made an application to SSDC to transfer the Severalls War Memorial (known as "Tommy") and the oval garden area into Town Council ownership. SSDC in turn had proposed that the ownership of Tommy could be transferred, but they preferred to keep ownership of the garden area.

At a meeting between CTC and SSDC, it was agreed that a site meeting should be held involving the key stakeholders, to agree a way forwards.

Discussion points

- Cllr. Pailthorpe explained to the group that, at the meeting between SSDC and CTC, SSDC had reaffirmed their agreement that Tommy be transferred to CTC ownership, but had reiterated their desire to retain ownership of the oval garden area and surrounding verges.
- Cllr. Pailthorpe added that CTC supported this position, but with the caveat that, should in the future SSDC cease to exist as part of the change to a unitary authority, then ownership needed to revert to CTC.
- Stephen Fox reiterated SSDC's commitment to supporting the maintenance of the oval grounds and providing full support to the work of the Severalls War Memorial Gardening Group.
- Anthony Samuel asked if Tommy was to be replaced, as per the request from the Royal British Legion (RBL). Many of the features were weathered and worn and the RBL hoped that a replacement would be in place for their 100th anniversary. The Deputy Clerk explained that a specialist stonemason had been contacted and a quote received for repair and conservation. His conservation could ensure Tommy stayed in situ for another 20 years, providing he was cleaned and treated every 5 years with a shelter coat to reduce further erosion.
- All parties agreed to the above way forwards.